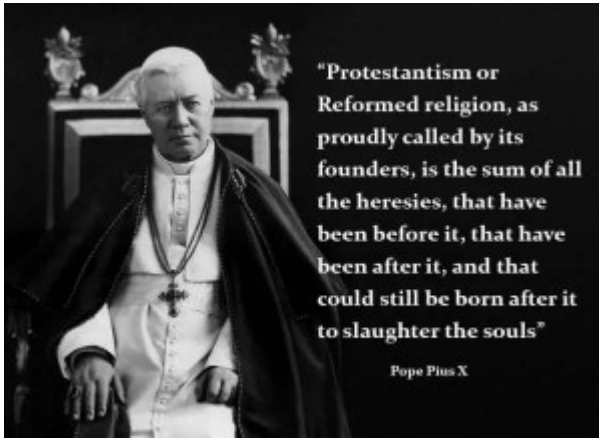


The Papal System – XXX. The Catholic Church and Public Education



Continued from [XXIX. The Family and Public Worship, and the Books of Protestants](#).

In a republic like our own, the education of the people is a great public necessity. Intelligence will not change a heart naturally wicked, but it qualifies a man to judge for himself, and renders it impossible for him so easily to be made the dupe of agitators political or sacerdotal (Catholic clergy). The ignorant march in masses at the command of a leader; and because he issues the order. The educated accept no leader but conscience, prejudice, or selfishness; and generally the sceptres of these three potentates work with immeasurably greater success for the public good, than the schemes of such men as commonly control illiterate multitudes.

A republic or a liberal constitutional monarchy cannot be permanently founded among an ignorant people. As there is a necessary descent for the ball thrown into the air down to the earth, so a people blessed with liberty and plagued with ignorance, will gradually perhaps, but surely sink until they reach some crushing tyranny wearing its own name, or a designation peculiar to liberty. Every country with political institutions in any measure like our own, can only shield its cherished and blood-bought rights, its heaven-given blessings of freedom, by the widest diffusion of light. As flowers receive their beautiful colors from the sun and turn to the King of day if twisted from him, so the institutions of liberty are fashioned and painted by the sun of intelligence, and wither when robbed of its blessed light.

For Centuries the Church of Rome has been the enemy of Education.

In the countries exclusively Catholic, where Rome has had everything her own way, these facts are as clearly seen as the rivers, lakes, mountains, and cities of those lands. Mexico, with an endless list of priests, rich endowments for the clergy, every facility for the Church to carry out her own plans, and with no Protestants to impede the progress of the priesthood in any chosen direction, is a fair intellectual specimen of the culture which Romanism aims to give. That land has dense clouds of ignorance brooding upon her people, like the volumes of darkness enveloping the earth before the

majestic words of the Everlasting were heard: "Let there be light."

Spain, of illustrious memories, with her mighty kings, proud armies, vast fleets, invincible heroes, with her fertile lands, and the wealth of the Indies added to the vast resources of her own people: Spain, where the Church was mightier than the king; where the Inquisition seized the loftiest and lowliest, and measured out punishments without stint, and without timidity; where, for centuries, the Church sat an imperious queen, mistress of every Spaniard and of all that he had, ought to show the exact marks and monuments which the Church aimed to produce. And Spain bears the harvests the Church planted: and dense, accursed ignorance is one of these harvests.

Three-fourths of the inhabitants of Ireland, for several hundred years, have been as much at the disposal of the Church of Rome as the people of the Eternal City in all religious and educational relations. There was not one earthly agency to hinder the instruction of the whole Catholic population of the island. The people are heartily in favor of education, and have an unusual readiness to receive the light of the school-house. A century after that grand, old, evangelical missionary, St. Patrick, went to heaven, the Irish were the best educated people in the west of Europe. But for ages their island home, unless where the Scotch have settled in Ulster, or in the large cities, has been given over to deplorable ignorance by the Catholic clergy. And that ignorance is all the more inexcusable, since the British Parliament votes annually a handsome grant for books and other school requisites, and for part of the teachers' salary, for every school in Ireland accepting its simple and non-sectarian conditions.

Rome, of all the cities on earth, should exhibit the peculiar fruits of sacerdotal toils. Legions of priests and nuns have labored there for long centuries. Hundreds of popes, most of whom held a temporal sceptre, as well as the mighty sword of St. Peter, have made it their home. The wealth of the world has flowed into it, enabling its pontiffs to spend fifty millions of dollars on St. Peter's, and incredible amounts on other structures sacred and secular. In statuary, and in paintings, the bishops of Rome have showed a superb taste and a lavish hand. But when you look for the education bestowed upon the Roman masses it is nowhere to be found. Nothing can be more distressing to the generous mind than the wretched ignorance of great numbers of those who occupy the city, rendered famous by the eloquence of Cicero. Seymour says, that "He proposed to one of the Jesuit professors in the Collegio Romano, to secure any number of Bibles that the inhabitants of Rome could require." The professor told the truth about the intelligence of the masses of the people, when he replied: "The people of Rome are very ignorant—are in a state of brutal ignorance, *are unable to read anything*, and therefore could not profit by reading the Scriptures, even if we supplied them gratuitously." Then the Church of Rome is not friendly to the education of the people at large, or the Romans would not be so ignorant.

Rome cherishes a deadly Hostility to Schools not completely under her own Care.

This fact is attested by the experience of every country where her devotees are mixed with Protestants. The Church of Rome wants all educational efforts

placed in her charge.

In Naples, in December, 1849, by a decree of the Minister of Public Instruction, "All students were placed under a commission of ecclesiastics, and were obliged to enroll themselves in some religious congregation or society. *All schools, public and private, were placed under the same arbitrary law.* The schoolmasters were bound to take all their pupils above ten years of age to one of the congregations, and to make a monthly return of their attendance." William E. Gladstone, the present Prime Minister of England, describes a catechism taught in these schools in 1851, "as the most singular and detestable work he had ever seen." The doctrines of this catechism are,

"That all who hold liberal opinions will be lost; that kings may violate as many oaths as they please in the cause of papal and monarchical absolutism; and that the Head of the Church has authority from God to release consciences from oaths, when he judges that there is suitable cause for it."

Now here is the Catholic idea of the relation of schools to the Church; all students placed under a commission of ecclesiastics, and all schools, public and private; and the entire scholars over ten years attending the Catholic Church. Any other school system is defective and dangerous in the estimation of the popish hierarchy.

In 1851, a concordat was ratified between Spain and the Holy See, the second article of which is:

"All instruction in universities, colleges, seminaries, and public and private schools, *shall be conformable to Catholic doctrine*, and no impediment shall be put in the way of the bishops, etc., whose duty it is to watch over the purity of doctrine and of manners, *and over the religious education of youth, even in the public schools.*"

That is the universal aim of the Romish clergy. They desire, if possible, to have supreme authority over the public schools of all lands, and failing in that they are

Bent on having Separate Schools where their Religion will be taught to Catholic Youth.

This determination is strongly expressed in the spacious school building adjoining every Catholic church in our large cities; a structure erected at great expense by a comparatively poor people, and conducted with vast labor and constant outlay. And we are confident that these Catholic schools are supplied with children unwillingly by parents. They know that the public schools are immeasurably superior in order, in the higher attainments, or better method of imparting instruction possessed by the teachers; and in everything characteristic of a good school. Not a few Catholics take a great interest in our public schools, and serve sometimes with evident satisfaction and ability, in boards having charge of their management. But *the clergy, from the highest to the lowest, look upon every school where they are not*

directors of the teacher, with alarm and hatred.

Pius IX. condemns the present Austrian Constitution for permitting heretics to be buried in cemeteries where they have none of their own; and "He considers it abominable (abominabilis) because it allows Protestants and Jews to erect educational institutions." Pius and his priests think that they should have supreme authority over the schools of all Christian countries. Many are under the impression that

The Removal of the Bible from the Schools

Would satisfy the priests, conciliate their people, and unite all in every community in sustaining our public schools. Never were men more deceived. There is not on record an instance of one Catholic child being converted by hearing the Bible read in the common school; the priests are not afraid of it there. It is perhaps something of a slight to them, which, if nothing depended on it, they would rather than otherwise have removed; but *the Bible in the common school is a perfect "godsend" to the clergy.* It enables them to denounce the whole system; to harp on the danger Catholic children risk from the Protestant Bible; to appeal to their own people to sustain Catholic schools; and to send out loud demands to all the unprincipled politicians of all parties to give them

A FAIR DIVISION OF THE SCHOOL FUND.

That is their aim. Take the Bible out of the schools, and then without any religion, they will denounce them as GODLESS SCHOOLS. When the English Government, in a fit of laudable generosity, established at great expense, and liberally endowed three colleges in Ireland, for the benefit of all creeds, without any religious instruction; and placed in them a list of talented men as professors: though the Catholics were represented among the presidents and teachers of these institutions, Pius IX. denounced them as "Godless, and forbade every good Catholic, as he valued his salvation, to allow his child to enter them."

The "Mission Book" of prayer, in the preparation it directs for a "General Confession," requires a parent to ask himself about his children: "Have you sent them to heretic or godless schools, to the danger of their faith?" The heretical schools are of course Protestant places of instruction. The "Godless Schools" must be our public schools. The "Mission Book" was specially altered to suit this country; and already the cry is raised in the confessional, that it is a sin to send your children to the *GodlessSchools.*

As far as thinking men can discern, the priests in our country are determined to have a share of the educational funds of our States to support their schools already built, and to erect and sustain other separate schools. Everything looks in that direction. They want to build a wall around their youth to shut out the free breathings of American Protestant children; they wish to stop their young ears against the inspirations of American liberty, floating from the lips of boys and girls, They are resolved, if their children must be instructed, that a "sister," unctuous with reverence for

“Holy Church,” and a “brother” of the “Christian Schools” devoted to the “Sacred Heart of Mary,” shall give a limited education, and impart a wholesale stock of papal piety at the same time.

Two Evils spring from such a Course.

The first is: The educational effort, if limited to the Catholic schools, will not generally succeed. Of course, we do not speak of the convent schools, got up especially to give a finished education, and the faith of the popes to Protestant young ladies, but of the parochial schools. Of one of these institutions Wylie says: “In St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic School, Edinburgh, instances have been frequent of children four years there, and yet unable to put two letters together; and of others who had been at school for ten years, and could not read. The Jesuits build schools, and appoint teachers, not to educate, but to lock up youth in prisons, miscalled schools, *as a precaution against their being educated.*”

Now, while this statement would be untrue, probably, of American Catholic schools, that is, in its full extent; a large measure of the same charge it is believed might be justly leveled against Catholic parochial schools. The second evil is: a body of youths is raised up among us, and yet not of us; a class of girls is brought up in our midst without having their sympathies linked to the great heart of Columbia. The men and women thus trained by foreign teachers, or native instructors with alien prejudices, in the dogmas of an Italian Church; and taught to render unlimited obedience to a great priest in Rome; led from childhood to regard their neighbors and their institutions as enemies of everything sacred to them, are excluded from the youthful and lasting friendships of American boys and girls; and are fitted to be foreigners and unfeeling strangers in our social and national movements while their lives last.

Every patriot should aim to knit his countrymen together; and to this end he should exert himself to destroy all exclusive systems; and especially all educational efforts tending to the isolation of any portion of the young from the other parts of our juvenile population. And as the education of our public schools, next to the gospel, is the greatest protectress of our liberties, he should pray for the prosperity of our common schools; and never cast a vote or perform an act by which any portion of our educational funds should be given to *any denomination*; or any part of our youthful population separated in their early struggles and training from the associates of their boyhood and girlhood. Let those who look on the same scenery, breathe the same atmosphere, and bask in the same bright beams, drink knowledge at the same fountain.

Continued in [The Papal System – XXXI. Sins Taken Away By Gifts And Favors](#)

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