

THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

ROMANISM
AND THE
COMMON SCHOOLS.

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED ON THANKSGIVING DAY, NOV. 24, 1853.

BY HENRY C. FISH,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEWARK, NEW-JERSEY.

Published by the special request of a large number of citizens of that city.

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A. B. STODOLSKY

DEVELOPED ON THE BASIS OF THE

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NEW YORK

HOWARD BROTHERS, 106 N. 3RD ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

1873

DISCOURSE.

1 Kings, iii. 25.—“ And the king said, divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.”

We have come together, to-day, at the recommendation of our chief Magistrate, to offer to Almighty God thanksgiving for the favors received at his hand. And surely there is no lack of instances of his goodness to incite our gratitude.

The *present* teems with mercies: mercies to ourselves as individuals, to our families and our country. And our *past*, either as individuals or communities, is marked by the dispensations of a kind and gracious Providence.

“ The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage.” “ He hath not dealt so with any nation.”

From the planting of the feeble colonies,

“ When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New-England shore,”

until now, when the small one has become a strong nation, has the Lord watched over us, and cherished our growing interests. He has given us strength in our trials, and wisdom in our counsels. He has directed us in the type of our government, and indicated to us the means by which that government might be consolidated, and bequeathed to those who should come after us.

Of these means you are not ignorant. Second to none is the *intelligence of the people*. This our forefathers well understood. Hard by the sanctuaries they reared the houses of education; and prominent among the plans of their devising was the *Common School System*, by which to all alike were opened the fountains of knowledge.

To this system, next to the influence emanating directly from the *churches*, are we indebted for our national greatness.

And it is touching this noble institution, that I propose at this time to speak. I am to speak in its *defence*; for, as you know, this bulwark of our liberties is, in many parts, being insidiously or openly assailed. Not indeed by the sons of its founders, but by those of foreign birth and sentiment, who dwell among us, but are not of us.

It is apparent to every observing mind that there is, in certain quarters, a settled aversion to our whole system of popular education; and that there are rapidly increasing efforts to effect its destruction, either directly, or by so far modifying it, as to render it impracticable and useless. It is in vain, and worse than in vain, that we shut our eyes against this painful fact. We may be compelled to open them, and that too when naught is left to us but to wonder at our stupidity, and mourn over our own folly.

I deem the present a fit occasion to call attention to this subject, as one of increasing interest and surpassing importance. The *School Question* is already one of the great questions before the American mind; and there can be no time so favorable for its careful examination as now, when no *party spirit* is yet awakened to bias the judgment, and when the whole subject may be looked at coolly and with an impartial eye. The subject may be thus stated: ROMANISM AND THE COMMON SCHOOLS.

By Common Schools, I shall, of course, be understood to mean those that are established and conducted under certain provisions on the part of the *State*, and which are open alike to all classes, sects, and denominations.

One of the principal measures by which the destruction of these schools is covertly attempted, (and I say *covertly* attempted, because, as might have been anticipated, the charge of hostility is denied,) is the *division of the public fund* by which they are supported, and which is the basis of the State control.*

The Pope of Rome, through his subordinates, is in sober earnest adopting the language of King Solomon, spoken to discover the true mother of a child about which two women were contending; and saying, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." Not less certainly had the life of the child been sacrificed in cutting asunder its tender body, than is the total ruin of our school system effected if the proposed measure shall prove successful. For this *fund* contains in itself the life and spring of all our State educational operations.

In discussing this subject, it will be well to trace the *nature and development* of the aversion alluded to, to detect its *origin and cause*, and learn our *consequent duty*.

* In the New-England, and a few other States, this fund, as the result of proceeds from property devoted to that purpose, and of taxation, is adequate to the entire support of the schools, making them strictly free. In this State the Legislature appropriates \$80,000 towards sustaining the public schools. The Common Council of this City appropriates to our schools, in addition to what they draw from the State, a sum sufficient for their entire support. But the schools in this State, generally, require a small tuition fee, besides the public appropriation.

I. And as to THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THIS OPPOSITION, it should be observed that it first discovered itself in the City of New-York, on the alleged ground that the common schools were *sectarian* in their character; that the Protestant Bible was read in them, and religion taught contrary to the Romish (or, as generally called,) *Catholic* faith. The Catholics therefore asserted that a share of the fund ought to be given them for the support of such schools as they desired to establish.

In the year 1841 (12 years ago) they petitioned the Common Council of that City for such a division of the fund. Instead of granting the request, however, the trustees of the schools determined to remove the alleged ground of complaint, and ordered that the Bible should be withdrawn from the schools, and also all offensive religious instruction. As the result of the efforts of Romanists upon the Legislature, much the same thing was generally done throughout the State.

But all this did not give satisfaction. A new cry was now raised against the schools. They were *godless* in their character. The *religious* element was not found in them—it was not safe to trust their children there, lest they should grow up without a knowledge of religion. A result (observe in passing) attributable solely to *themselves*, who had banished religion from the schools. Hence, the demand for a share of the funds was still urged.

In this city efforts were made of the same nature, and at the same time, with those in New-York.

A Catholic free school was here established in 1830, (23 years since,) and the Romish priest having the thing in charge, very soon began a movement to secure for it the common fund. In the years 1842-3 the contest waged upon the question was exceedingly warm and persistent. The Common Council was frequently and urgently petitioned for an appropriation in their behalf. This request not being granted, a public indignation meeting was called by the Catholics, and resolutions were passed, filled with loud and bitter complaints against the action of the Common Council and the School Committee. That honorable body, and especially the School Committee, are worthy of all praise for the noble stand they made against this insidious demand. To their intelligent and decided action is the present flourishing condition of the common schools of this city largely indebted.

During the period that has since elapsed (the last ten years), this *papal* movement has been progressing in all parts of the country. It had not, however, until very recently, assumed half of its present importance. A crusade against the American system of popular education was probably concocted in the great Romish Council convened in Baltimore, in the spring of 1852. Since then the onslaught has become far more general, open, and persevering.

In this city, in New-York, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cincinnati, St. Louis,—

in *all* cities, the children of Catholic parents are being withdrawn from the public schools, and large and expensive houses are being projected and built, for schools to be under the control of Romish priests.

The press and public lectures are being everywhere resorted to, to influence the public mind in favor of the movement. These attacks are of the most shrewd but insolent and sophistical character imaginable.

Absolute untruths are unblushingly, and in open daylight, palmed off upon the public, and are exposed but to be again repeated. Witness the recent lecture in this city by the editor of the organ of Bishop Hughes of New-York, at the opening of a Catholic school on High-st.

In this we were told that all our political institutions are of Catholic (Romish) origin.

Protestantism, he said, was crumbling to the ground! Religion, outside the Catholic church, he considered "machinery, formalism, and mummerly." Infidels, such as Fanny Wright and Robert Dale Owen, he alleged, were the originators of the school system!

The State school he declared to be "a part of the *State Poor-house*". Such schools make "intellectual paupers." "They are public soup-houses, where your children are invited to bring their wooden spoons!" and "every such school is *an insult* to the religion and virtue of our people." And this tissue of unmitigated falsehood and slander was perpetrated in our very midst, not three months ago!

In a neighboring town (Jersey City), this papal movement is being violently urged, and has been for months past. An extract from the close of an address recently delivered there, will reveal the spirit of the movement. The speaker had already said that "the prototype of our school system is seen in the institutions of paganism," and now says, "unless the system be modified, and put the *Christian* school (Catholic) upon the same ground as the *godless* school (Protestant), it requires but little sagacity to perceive its speedy and utter destruction."

"Away with taxes for schools!" he cries, "if benefit is longer withheld." And thus he concludes, "Freemen! slumber not upon it, be up and active, and demand your dear-bought rights."

There was something very suggestive in the remark of the so-called Bishop of New-Jersey, just sent among us to care for our poor souls, when, in his address at his installation, he observed that one special object of his pious concern would be the promotion of the interests of the "houses of education in the State." *Some*, if not all, who heard it, inwardly digested that remark; and well understood its bearing.

We may rest assured that it is not for nothing that a Catholic See has been erected in our State, and that our goodly city has become the residence of a Bishop and Vicar-general. Who lives here for five years next to come, will have witnessed such a crusade against our common-school system as

was never witnessed in New-Jersey before. And that this is not limited to any *one* State is obvious to every discerning mind.

The Archbishop of Cincinnati (where the opposition has some time been in full blast) says that the war shall be a perpetual one till they carry their end. "We are only beginning," he says, "to agitate these questions." A daily paper in Rochester, N. Y., says, "there is every reason to suppose that the effort to ruin the public-school system, so long the glory of our State, will be strenuously renewed next winter." And of the Catholic bill which will virtually effect this, it says, "there is *great* reason to apprehend the passage of such a bill."

And mark this from the *Freeman's Journal* of New-York city:

"What we, Roman Catholics, must now do, is to get our children out of this devouring fire (the common school)! At any cost, and any sacrifice, we must deliver the children from these pits of destruction * * * under the name of public or district schools." The same paper calls the school system "unconstitutional, and of the very essence and operation of *despotism*."

And again this organ of the Bishop says, "This subject (of public schools) contains in it the whole question of the progress and triumphs of the Catholic Church in the next generation in this country. Catholics! let us all act together!"

Thus much as to the nature and development of this movement.

II. And now, secondly, WHAT IS ITS SOURCE? *Whence does it originate?* This poisonous stream arises in the seven hills of Rome.

The Pope of Rome and his officials are at the head of this whole difficulty. It is not the *people* of the Romish communion, but the *ecclesiastics*. Here, as ever, it is the *rulers* that are taking counsel against the truth. To my certain knowledge *some* Catholic parents in this city have refused to withdraw their children from the public schools.* There is no doubt but that, *if let alone*, Catholic parents, generally, would patronize the State schools.† But the priests are everywhere doing their utmost to excite in their people hostility towards the public schools, because the bishops enjoy it as a special duty. They are directed to withdraw the children of their flocks from these schools. And why? Not out of regard to the good of the *children*, but of the "*Church*." It is the *Pope*, and not the children, whose interests they have in view. The Pope of Rome claims

* For refusing to do this, a family were recently threatened with expulsion from the house they occupied: and, persisting, they were actually turned out of house and home.

† It is believed they are decidedly friendly to the public school system. It is stated that when the question of the repeal of the common school system was referred to the people of New-York, the Roman Catholic press strongly advocated its repeal, and urged all true Catholics to vote for this; on the Sabbath preceding the ballot, the priests in many of the Roman Catholic churches in the city of New-York charged the people to vote for the repeal of the school law. Yet, in the sixth ward of the city, the largest Roman Catholic ward, and where a majority of the inhabitants are of that denomination, of several hundred votes there were only 11 cast for the repeal.

to be God's vicegerent on earth. He rules here in the place of God, and by his special authority. He claims to exercise jurisdiction, not over *religious* matters only, but civil and political as well. He arrogates to himself the right of Supreme Ruler and head both of Church and State. He longs for universal dominion. All are *heretics* and *rebels* who do not acknowledge his authority.* Now the bishops in this country are in his interest, and under his direction and control. Every one of them is bound by a solemn oath, to promote, to the utmost of his ability, his ambitious designs. Mark it; it is not the interests of this republic, but those of *popedom*, which the bishops are sworn to advance. This oath, which the new bishop among us on his knees solemnly assumed at his recent consecration in New-York, abundantly confirms this assertion, if it were called in question. It is said he did not swear in the language of the oath as administered in some countries, "Heretics, schismatics and rebels to our said lord or his aforesaid successors, I will to my power persecute and oppose."

But if he did *not* (and it is by no means certain that he did not), if the oath was modified for bishops in the United States, because it was not *wise* to uncover the *horn* on the ox that is wont to push, but rather to cause the people to think it had been *sawn off*—if, I say, this be so, *other* parts of that oath abundantly prove this. For he *did* swear to be "obedient to St. Peter," and "to his successors," and to "humbly receive and diligently execute the apostolic commands," and to "observe" and "*cause to be observed*" "*with all his might*," such decrees and ordinances. There is, then, among us an *imperium in imperio*; a power within a power; a government within a government. The bishops and priests are all functionaries of a *foreign power*. By that power they are governed, and the authority and designs of that power they seek by all means to promote. This is the key to all the Papal movements among us. This explains the whole difficulty about the common schools. *The common schools are not under the control of the Pope of Rome.* They do not only not advance his ambitious designs, but they mightily retard them.

The common schools are the great *enlighteners* of the people. Like

*In the writings of Alphonso de Castro, who has been called "the true representative of the Church of Rome," occurs the following: "Nor should any one wonder that the Pope, on account of the crime of heresy, deprives a king of his royal dignity, and strips him of his kingdom; for in the matter of faith, kings, like other subordinates, are the subjects of the sovereign pontiff, who can punish them as he does others." He also says, "it is so with other governors of the people, by whatsoever name they are known."

Bellarmino says, "The first opinion is, that the Pope, by divine right, hath supreme power over the whole world, both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs. This is the opinion of Augustus Triumphos, Alvarus Pelagius, Panormitanus, Hostiensis, Silvestus, and many others." (Bell. de Pontiff. v. i. Elliot ii. 156.) Thomas Aquinas says, "In the Pope is the summit of each power." (Bell. de Pontiff. v. i. Elliot ii. 156.) Ferraris, in his Ecclesiastical Dictionary, under the word *papa*, says, "On account of the excellency of his supreme dignity, he is called *bishop of bishops, ordinary of ordinaries, &c., divine monarch, supreme emperor and king of kings.* Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of Heaven, of earth, and (*inferiorum*) of hell. * * * Hence the common doctrine teacheth that the Pope hath the power of the two swords, the *spiritual* and the *temporal*."

ten thousand brilliant orbs hung among the hill-tops and in the valleys, they scatter the darkness, and into every nook and corner of the land pour their clear and steady light.

But Rome loves darkness. The mistress of abominations hates the light, and will not come to the light lest her evil deeds should be re-proved.

With her, "*ignorance is the mother of devotion.*"

If she let in the light, it must be through her own colored windows. It is unsafe to educate the masses. It is ticklish business. If she build schoolhouses in this country, it is only out of self-defence, and not because she approves of education *in itself* considered.

If otherwise, why does she not educate the children in countries where her power predominates? In Mexico, South America, and Portugal and Spain? And why, in *Italy*, where she holds her seat, is there not *one single common school-house* from Sicily to Savoy?

The very period of the greatest glory of the Papal Church is, by common consent, called the *dark ages*. She strikes her roots deepest where the darkness is most profound. And this, because her humbug miracles and shallow superstitions are liable to suspicion and exposure, except among a people blinded by the veil of ignorance.

The common schools are *the nurseries of free principles*. They promote the spirit of free inquiry, and foster the largest liberty of speech and opinion in all matters, whether civil or religious.

But all this is in direct opposition to the genius and tendencies of Romanism.

If in theory the system favors *civil* liberty, it *practically* does not; for the "slave of the altar must be the slave of the throne."

If a man pin his faith in *religious* matters to the sleeve of a priest; if he may not without a permit look into the Bible; if he cannot think except as commanded, being denied the privilege of exercising his own understanding touching matters of faith; and if a priest, "with the Index Expurgatorius in hand, may walk into his house, (as is the case in the Roman States,) and strip it of every book displeasing to the caprice, insolence, and ignorance of a *coterie* of monks in the Vatican;" if, I say, all his religious opinions are in the keeping of another, it is surely difficult to conceive how he can be prepared to think and act intelligently and independently in *civil* matters.

But if it be granted that Romanism is not unfavorable to civil, it certainly is to *religious* liberty; the frequent denial of its advocates to the contrary notwithstanding. It is *essentially* intolerant for it claims infallibility.* According to its standards the Church has the right to *extirpate*

* "Her intolerance follows necessarily from her claim of infallibility. She alone has the right to be intolerant."—*Shepherd of the Valley*.

heresy. This right it has always claimed and always exercised, and no Romish body has ever even protested against it.

If compulsion in religious matters is not at all times, and in all places employed, it is from considerations of policy. Romanism "*tolerates where it must, and coerces where it can.*"*

One article in the Penal Code of Portugal, recommended to the Queen by her Ministers, and now or very recently before the Cortes for their final sanction, runs thus :

"He who fails in respect to the religion of the kingdom, the Roman Catholic Apostolic, shall be condemned to imprisonment from one to three years, and a fine proportioned to his income, in every one of the following cases, viz. : 1. Injuring the said religion publicly in any dogma, act or object of it, by deeds or words, or publications in any form. 2. Attempting by the same means to propagate doctrines contrary to the Catholic dogmas defined by the Church. 3. Attempting by any means to make proselytes or conversions to a different religion or sect condemned by the Church. 4. Celebrating public acts of a worship not that of the said Catholic religion."

What forbids the belief that if Roman Catholics held the entire controlling power in these United States, a similar law would here be enacted?

Does Archbishop Hughes, or any other man, repel the intimation as gratuitous? What disposition will he make of facts such as the following?

The Pope of Rome ordered a medal struck in commemoration of the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, which some have had the audacity to term a *political* transaction only, and not chargeable to the Pope, (for now an attempt is being generally made to *falsify history itself*;) upon one side of which is this inscription, "*Gregorius XIII., Pontifex Maximus,*" on the other, "*Ugonottorum Strages, 1572,*" "*The Slaughter of the Huguenots, 1572.*"

An old volume of the Rhemish Testament contains the following *note* upon the parable of the tares, Matt. 13 : 29 :

"The good must tolerate the evil when it is so strong that it cannot be redressed without danger and disturbance to the whole church, and commit the matter to God's judgment in the latter day. Otherwise, where evil men, be they heretics, or other malefactors, may be punished or suppressed without disturbance and hazard of the good, they may, and ought, by public authority, either spiritual or temporal, *to be chastised or executed.*"

Alphonso de Castro, (before referred to as "the true representative of

* It is a miserable shift for Romanists to answer the charges of persecution, as they generally do, by declaring that Protestants have done the same. That is true. But does it justify the principle? Protestants have now almost universally renounced the principle, at least in theory (which Rome has never done); but if they had not—if every Protestant people on earth now persecuted for matters of faith, would that prove it right?

the Church of Rome,") says: "The last punishment of the body for heretics is death, with which we will prove, by God's assistance, heretics ought to be punished." He adds, "it is abundantly plain that it is not a modern invention, but that it is the ancient opinion of wise *Christians, that heretics should be burned with fire.*" *

I quote again from a standard school book of the Romanists, called "A synopsis of Moral Theology, as prepared for Romish Seminaries, and Students of Theology."

"*Question.* Are heretics rightly punished with death?"

"*Answer.* St. Thomas answers yes. Because forgers of money, and other disturbers of the State, are justly punished with death; therefore, also heretics, who are forgers of the faith, &c."

And if it were asked, "Is this still the doctrine of Rome"? it were sufficient to reply, that her claim to infallibility forbids the possibility of change. She may vary her *policy* according to time and place, but to change her principles, she cannot.

But let the approved organs of that body answer the question.

The *Catholic Herald*, of Philadelphia, speaks of the Jesuitical denial of Romish intolerance as "that cowardly system of misrepresentation and concealment, which led English Catholics to attempt to throw dust in the eyes of cotemporary heretics by disavowing the practices of their brethren in better days, and other lands."

The *Freeman's Journal*, of New-York, the organ of the Archbishop, approvingly republished the following extracts in an article taken from a British Catholic paper:

"A Catholic temporal government would be guided in its treatment of Protestants and other recusants, *solely by the rules of expediency.*" Again, "Religious liberty in the sense of a liberty possessed by every man to choose his own religion is one of the most wicked delusions ever foisted upon this age by the father of all deceit. The very word liberty, except in the sense of a permission to do certain definite acts, ought to be banished from the domain of religion.

"*None but an Atheist can uphold the principles of religious liberty.* Short of Atheism, the theory of religious liberty is the most palpable of untruths."

"Shall I, therefore, fall in with this abominable delusion and foster the notion of my fellow-countrymen, that they have a right to deny the truth of God, in the hope that I may throw dust in their eyes, and get them to tolerate my creed as one of the many forms of theological opinion prevalent in these latter days?"

"Shall I hold out hopes to him, (the Protestant,) that I will not meddle with his creed if he will not meddle with mine? Shall I lead him to

* See oration of Dr. Jno. Cumming, p. 40.

think that religion is a matter for private opinion, and tempt him to forget that he *has no more right to his religious views than he has to my purse, or my house, or my life-blood? No!* Catholicism is the most intolerant of creeds. It is intolerance itself—for it is truth itself. We might as rationally maintain that a sane man has a right to believe that two and two do not make four as this theory of religious liberty. Its impiety is only equalled by its absurdity.”

The *Shepherd of the Valley*, a Catholic periodical published at St. Louis, says, “Heresy and unbelief are crimes, that’s the whole of the matter; and where the Catholic religion is an essential part of the public laws of the land, *they are punished as other crimes.*”

It again says:*

“The Catholic who says that the Church is not intolerant, belies the sacred spouse of Christ. The Christian who professes to be tolerant himself, is dishonest, ill-instructed, or both!” And again, “We say that the temporal punishment of heresy is a mere question of expediency.—— Where we to abstain from persecuting them (the Protestants) they are well aware *that it is merely because we cannot do so; or think that, by doing so, we should injure the cause that we wish to serve.*” And again: “If the Catholics ever gain—which they surely will do, though at a distant day,—an immense numerical majority,—*religious freedom in this country is at an end. So say our enemies, so we believe.*”

Attempts have been made by some more jesuitical than the editor of this western paper, to propagate the belief, that he speaks not thus with the approval of the “Church.” But he was not to be so considered, and procured the following card, which was recently published:

“The *Shepherd of the Valley* is published with my approbation, and I recommend it to the support of this diocese. †PETER RICHARD,
“7th July, 1853.” “Archbishop of St. Louis.”

He then dealt this merited reproof upon his timid brethren, who persist in concealing the real features of Romanism.

“We told,” says he, “the truth, and nothing but the truth, and it is not fair to sacrifice us to the prejudices of ill-instructed and timid Catholics, or of *heretics, whose delicate nerves a bold statement of Catholic doctrine may happen to shock.*”

I have been thus careful to fortify my position that Romanism is essentially opposed to free principles, because the contrary is so frequently denied, † and because it is essential to a just view of this papal animosity to our common schools. I repeat it, the Pope and his officials hate and oppose our schools, because they are the great enlighteners of the people, and be-

* See the editorial, April 10, 1852.

† Witness Bishop Hughes’ speech at the “*New-England Dinner*,” in New-York.

cause they directly foster the spirit of free inquiry and the largest liberty of opinion upon all matters, whether civil or religious.

Yes! Rome well knows that there are but two ways by which she can gain the ascendancy over the people of this country. The one is by brute force, and the *other by pulling down our schoolhouses.*

The latter, which seems, just now at least, the more feasible, is that to which she first resorts.

And now, having considered the nature of the opposition referred to, and discovered its real cause, there remains one other question of a very grave character, which is,

III. WHAT ARE THE SPECIAL DUTIES WHICH THE EXISTING STATE OF THINGS DEVOLVES UPON US.—At such a time as this, every citizen ought to inquire, “On what ground shall I stand in the coming controversy? What position shall I assume? What is my *duty*, as a responsible part of the commonwealth, touching the interests of the common-school system?”

There is one thing, I am sure, in which we shall all agree; that is, that any *just* cause of complaint on the part of those aggrieved, as to the management of the schools ought to be removed. It is more than probable that the Roman Catholics, in some instances, have had reason to complain.

As citizens they have rights as well as we. Wisely or unwisely we have opened our doors to them, and received them into the great American family. Our constitution, moreover, guaranties to them, as well as ourselves, perfect religious freedom; securing them against all kinds of oppression, for conscience' sake, or for their religious opinions. And as regards the schools, there is no doubt but that, in some cases, sentiments extremely obnoxious to the Catholics have been taught in our schoolbooks. Their children have read and heard read, and thus been taught, against the wishes of their parents, religious opinions directly contrary to the Catholic faith.

I am led to believe, however, that this is not now the case to any considerable extent.

In some instances, great offence has been given, by the children of Catholics being compelled to read the Bible. Recently, in the State of New-York, such a child was severely punished, and then expelled from the school, for refusing to read and commit to memory portions of the Protestant Bible.

I think the decision of the State Superintendent in the case, that the teacher had no right to compel the child to read the Bible against the express instructions of its Catholic father, and consequently no right to chastise and expel the pupil, a just decision. If one doubt it, I hope he will carefully peruse and examine the document in which that decision is rendered. And let him also inquire as to *his* sense of justice, if he lived in a district where Catholic influence predominated, and the trustees should order the corrupted Catholic version of the Bible to be read in the school, and compel his children

to listen to it, perhaps read it, or else leave the school. What is right in the one case would be right in the other.

I say, then, it is admitted by all that every *real* occasion of uneasiness or complaint, on the part of the papists, should be removed.*

But what if the Roman ecclesiastics are still unsatisfied, and petition the public authorities (as they certainly will) for their proportion of the public funds to sustain schools under their entire supervision and control? What is duty in such a case? Beyond all question it is duty to *oppose it from first to last*.

Let me submit to you a few considerations in support of this position :

1. To grant this request *were to adopt the principle of special legislation for particular religious sects*.

With us the State is the patron of general Christianity; or, as the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania rendered it, "Christianity without the spiritual authority of European countries." But it is the supporter of no one phase or form of Christianity. A fundamental principle in the American system of government, with respect to matters of religion, is, *protection for all, provision for none*.†

But to grant to any sect a share of the public funds to support their schools, were to specially provide for that sect. In this light neither Catholics, nor Baptists, nor Presbyterians, nor Methodists, nor any other denomination, if they establish schools of their own, can justly claim a part of the school fund. The Episcopal and O. S. Presbyterian Churches have strongly advocated parochial schools; and, by some of the latter denomination, at least, (I am happy in being able to say by comparatively few,) it is urged that a share of the State fund should be given in their support.

But whatever may be said of parochial schools, any movement for the purpose of diverting the money raised for general education, for their special benefit, would be not only unjustifiable, but attended with most disastrous consequences.

The schools in question are established to secure denominational interests. With securing such interests the State cannot legitimately have anything to do. The very moment it lends special aid to advance the interests of a religious sect, it as widely departs from its true province, as if it disfranchised and specially oppressed that sect. Woe betide the day when genuine piety declines, and when the children of the land are not sedulously and thoroughly instructed in the principles of religion! But teaching religion *is not the business of the State, but of the Churches and Christian*

* In some instances, at least, matters might be adjusted by a friendly compromise; perhaps allowing Catholic children to read the Romish version of the Bible, or absent themselves during the reading of the common English version.

† There may have been in this and other States some slight and occasional deviations from this principle, but that does not affect the position. The principle remains the same, and should be sacredly maintained.

families. Else why not call upon the State to support our ministers and Sunday-schools!

Now I maintain that Roman Catholic schools are being established mainly, if not exclusively, to propagate the dogmas of the Roman Catholic church. In evidence, the language of the *Freeman's Journal*, already quoted, is adduced: "This subject (of the schools) contains in it *the whole question of the progress and triumphs of the Catholic church of the next generation in this country.*"

It ought to be known that these schools are *intensely sectarian* in their character. Religious instruction (using the word "religious" in its broad acceptation) forms the predominating element in their *curriculum*. The patrons of one of these schools in this city was recently heard to complain that the children did not learn as in the public school; for they were "*half of the time on their knees.*"

It is expressly avowed that in their schools religious instruction is largely communicated. In visiting one of these schools, I inquired of the teacher, "do you teach *religion* here as well as letters." "Surely," she replied, "with us there can be no education without religion." "But, madam," said I, "do you teach any particular form or forms of religion?" (A question which I need not have asked from the pictures and images, &c., in the room.) "Yes, we teach the Catholic religion. We teach the children the catechism, and (so many) times in the week the priest comes and gives special religious instruction."

And this is true of *all* Catholic schools. Indeed, it is to gain this *very end* that the children are being withdrawn from the public schools. The Catholic schools are under the special direction and instructions of *the priests*, as distinct from the teachers.

In New-York city, the Roman Catholics have 23 schools, with some 10,000 scholars, and 143 teachers, and 60 *priests*, who have them specially in charge. The catechism is not only here taught, but the forms and ceremonies of the Romish Church are practised, that the children may know how to go through them correctly. At each recitation, as I have been informed, they first bow and cross themselves before the crucifix, and the Virgin Mary, with the infant Jesus in her arms, and then turn to the teacher and recite. I have examined the text-books used in those schools. And to show you how far and *what kind* of so-called *religious* instruction there obtains, I will give you a few extracts which I have made from some of them. In one of the reading books called "Duty of a Christian toward God," you will find the following, "We sin by irreverence in profaning churches, the relics of the saints, the images, the holy water, and other such things." "The use of images is exceedingly beneficial." "It is good and useful to invoke them (the saints) that we may obtain from God those graces of which we stand in need." "A true child of Mary will say every day some prayers in her honor." And this *in a common reading-book!*

Another text-book there used is called the "Doctrinal and Scriptural Catechism," of 416 pages, 12mo. It contains 22 pages on what it calls *baptism*; and here are a few snatches from this part of the book:—"What is baptism?" Ans. "It is a sacrament which regenerates us in Jesus Christ, by giving us the spiritual life of grace, and which makes us the children of God and of the church." "Does baptism efface all sin?" Ans. "Yes: in children it effaces original sin; and, in adults, besides original sin, it effaces all the actual sin which they may have committed before being baptised." "Does baptism remit all the penalties due to sin?" Ans. "With regard to actual sin, it remits all the temporal and eternal punishments." "What punishment does original sin deserve?" Ans. "It deserves eternal punishment; hence, any one who dies without baptism shall undergo eternal pains." "Is baptism necessary for salvation?" Ans. "Yes, it is so necessary for the salvation of men that even children cannot be saved without receiving it." And, as if *this* were not enough, it is asked, "What is the devil's party?" And, after answering, asks again, "Of whom is this party composed?" Ans. "Of all the wicked, pagans, infidels, Jews, *heretics*, and *all bad Christians!*"

From a small catechism used in the Catholic schools of *this* city, I make the following extracts:

"Can the church err in what she teaches?" Ans. "No, she cannot err in matters of faith." "What do you mean by purgatory?" Ans. "A middle state of souls suffering for a time on account of their sins." "Are all the souls in purgatory helped by our prayers?" Ans. "Yes, they are." "Why does the church command us to fast?" Ans. "That by fasting we may satisfy God for our sins." "Say the three evangelical counsels." Ans. "1. Voluntary Poverty. 2. Perpetual chastity. 3. Entire obedience."

In this little book are found the ten commandments laid down in the Bible, and also *six other commandments put forth as of equal authority, added by the "Church!"*

Then here is one of the things they are taught to "say" in these schools, "Say the Hail Mary?" Ans. "Hail Mary! full of grace, our Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus: Holy Mary! mother of God! pray for us sinners, now, and in the hour of death. Amen."

And here is a part of the "Confiteor, or General Confession," which they are taught "to go through":

"I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael, the archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly, in thought, word, and deed, *through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.* Therefore I beseech blessed Mary, ever Virgin; blessed Michael, the archangel; blessed John the Baptist; the holy apostles; Peter and Paul, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me."

Now, it is schools where *such* instruction is given, nay more, where such so-called religious instruction forms a large part, if not *the largest part* of the exercises, that the people of these United States are called upon to feed from the public crib. Yes! the mitred prelates of this stupendous hierarchy have the arrogance to claim this as *their just due!*

And they are for waging a war of utter extinction upon our school system, because it is refused! Why, they might as well ask outright that the State support the *priests* of the "Church," as the *schools* of the "Church." Indeed, it *is* virtually asking it now; for there is no school without its priest or priests.

Nor is that a valid plea on the part of the Catholics, "We are taxed to raise the school fund." So are *all* property holders taxed; those who send children to private schools, and those who have no children to send to any school. The State educates the children for the *public good*. And it pays well to *any* man if he patronize the schools or if he do not.

What would one's property be worth, if transferred to Central Africa, where the children are not educated? What would it be worth *here* if the schemes of Rome prevail? No! that is their own concern, not our's, if they draw off from, and will not patronize the State schools. It is of their own choice. If they reply, "We cannot preserve our children from erroneous sentiments while attending public schools," we in turn reply, "That is simply because your system is sham and pretention. If it cannot live *in the light*, where alone it ought to flourish, let it wither and die! The schools were not formed to persecute you who are Catholics, but to save the country from crime, misery, and disorganization; and if you cannot retain your children in the "Church," while attending them, then let them become Protestants, the sooner the better. At any rate, let your sectarian schools, established for *sectarian purposes, provide for themselves.*"

It were not a greater piece of insolence if they refused to travel on the high ways, and when they had built Catholic roads, lest they should be defiled by walking with "heretics," they should gravely turn around and assert that the State ought to pay for paving and cleaning them. "At least, pay back towards it, what we are taxed for keeping up the public roads!" We should be very liable to reply, "No! the streets are a public necessity; walk in the public thoroughfares, or else stay at home; or, if not, then build your own sectarian roads and pay for them! The public funds must go for public ends!"

And just here lies a second objection to granting the request of these adroit and wily prelates.

2. *It would directly tend to perpetuate among us national distinctions, in feeling, and sentiment, and action.* We are made up of strange, and, as yet, unaffiliated elements. All the ends of the earth terminate in these

United States. All the tribes of the earth are here represented. Now what we need is some powerful and rapid process of amalgamation. The story of the formation of Corinthian brass, by the melting together of all the different metals at the burning of Corinth, ought to find an illustration in the fusion of all these classes and varieties of man. Indeed, it would seem obvious that this is almost a condition of success in the great experiment of American republicanism.

Now, the *common school*, more nearly than anything else, meets this very necessity. It is framed for the masses. Jews, Greeks, Pagans, Europeans, Africans, Asiatics and Americans, all here meet; and meet *in childhood and youth*; just when in the formation period. Then if ever, and by these schools, if by any means, are they trained for a common destiny. Here they become *Americanized*. Here the future actors on the stage are brought together, and made acquainted with each other. They see each other face to face, and grow up side by side. Thus are prejudices and bitter animosities worn away, or softened down, so as not to produce irritation. Thus are the children of all other nations run into the new mould of our institutions, with our own children, and thus is there formed one consolidated body politic. But if the Pope of Rome is determined to prevent this; if he will stoutly oppose this fusion of the masses, that they may not take the mould of our free principles; if he determines to wall up and hedge around this foreign element in our midst, that he may keep it foreign still; if he will forbid the children of his subjects to become Americans, and "pen them up as his own property, and keep them so, and train them up to the speech of Ashdod among us"; if he will insist that monks and nuns and priests and friars shall have their exclusive training that they may be brought up to look upon all except papists as so many rebels and "*heretics*," or as styled in the Catechism "*of the devil's party*," and worthy only of being dreaded and shunned and persecuted and slain, as have been already tens of thousands by the bloody hand of Papal intolerance, then I say, *for heaven's sake, let us not give the Pope of Rome a "bonus" for doing it!* If he will do it, (and he surely will, if it be within his power,) let him do it without asking our aid. To say the *least*, it is one step beyond good manners to be asked to help in putting the knife to one's throat!

It *does* appear that the most we can do in the matter is, to *allow* such schools to exist among us; schools where the most soul-destroying doctrines imaginable are daily taught; and, what is more, sentiments and opinions instilled into the mind more hostile to the principles of American liberty than those of the Autocrat of Russia himself. What an insult to be coolly asked to aid by law in supplying funds for such schools!

The last, and of itself a *sufficient* objection, to acceding to this papal request, is this:

3. *It would result in the total ruin of our system of popular education.*

No sooner were this demand met, than other religious sects or denominations would present a similar request. A few such denominations, drawing out their proportion, would virtually devolve the support of any public schools that should be kept in operation, upon such denominations as saw fit to not receive their share of the fund; and hence would soon become a burden which they would refuse to bear.

The result would be the setting up of little sectarian schools in every town and neighborhood; then the scramble for scholars for the purpose of getting the most school money; then intense denominational proselyting; then bitter sectarian animosities; then teachers of inferior qualifications, because a particular denomination had not sufficient patronage to bestow to secure the services of those competent; then the refusing by some persons to send to any school in the neighborhood, because the religion there taught was not after their liking, or because they believed in no religion; and last of all, the decline of the sectarian schools, and the increase of ignorance and its fearful results.

Then would the Roman pontiff exultingly cry, "Aha, aha, even so would I have it! The child, whose power I so much dreaded, has expired; and that, because to settle the dispute which I instigated, they have cloven asunder its form!"

Men, brethren, and fathers, *shall the life of the child be sacrificed!* Shall it be sacrificed at the behest of a *foreign despot?* Forbid it, Americans! God of Providence, *forbid it!* for in it are bound up the hopes of a great and mighty people, with whose interests are linked the destinies of a world! And let me say, in conclusion, fellow-citizens, that if our school system be preserved unimpaired, the people must be on their guard, and watch for its welfare with a jealous eye.

"The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." Except you take good heed the enemy will steal the march upon you. Be not deceived by fair pretences. There were those of old whose words were smoother than butter, while war was in their hearts. And it was a general of the Jesuits who well described the policy of Rome, in saying, "We will insinuate ourselves like lambs, and govern like wolves."

The Jesuits are famed for laying their plans deep. They have undermined more governments than one. They are sanguine in attempting to undermine ours.

Be on your guard, also, against being sold by your public party leaders. Here lies, after all, our chief danger. If men would but act out their honest convictions, no harm would ensue. But many live for the "five loaves and two small fishes." These are their seven principles. Their consciences are wonderfully accommodating when any measure will operate against their party or personal interest.

"I know I ought to advocate the measure, but I need the support of all classes," is the sentiment of hundreds of men who would be ashamed to avow it; and prominent political leaders there are, to whom the people look

with confidence, who would pledge themselves to measures which, at heart, they condemn, in order to secure the Catholic *vote*, always to be had by the highest bidder. Indeed the power of the Romish hierarchy, exerted as it is in different ways in our country, is this very day absolutely prodigious. It is even contended by many, that the American public press is *shackled* by Romanism, and that halls of legislation and courts of justice are in some instances overawed by its influence. Things have indeed come to a strange pass, if, in this "home of the free," men and *sons of the Puritans have virtually become slaves!*

But if there is danger from political men and party leaders, there is, under God, safety in the integrity of the *people*.

Though the few may swerve, the masses will stand true to their country's interests. They are yet true, and will remain true on this great subject of popular education. The recent struggle on this question, in one of our western cities,* affords a cheering confirmation of this view.

In the election of men to office, where the schools were concerned, party lines and political distinctions were justly forgotten, and true-hearted men hastened to the rescue. Notwithstanding every possible effort had been made by the bishop and priests to carry their ends, not a single anti-school man was elected either school director or visitor, not even in the wards where the Catholic population is most numerous. And such, I am persuaded, will be the result in our own and other States, when the question shall come at last to a fair and final issue.

Even the Catholics themselves, persuaded of the superiority of the public over their own schools, and of the selfish designs of their spiritual guides in opposing them, will rally to their defense, and the priests shall find the blows which they dealt upon these bulwarks of our land, rebounding upon their own heads.

Yes! the public schools must and will be sustained. To borrow the figure of another, this fountain, whose margins have ever been green and flourishing with the sweetest virtues of domestic life, and the holiest fervors of Christian zeal, and which has sent refreshing streams to a thirsty continent, shall neither be superseded nor obstructed in its operations.

It is Seneca, I believe, who says that the sources of rivers are sacred, and that altars ought to be built there. How much more sacred in our esteem ought these *moral* fountains of thought and opinion, of our *whole lives*, to be!

Palsied be the arm that attempts to obstruct those fountains, or poison their sweet waters! Let them flow on, still making glad our goodly heritage, till that great day, when time shall be no longer, and by the arch-angel's hand the pillars of the nation are cloven down forever!

* Cincinnati, Ohio.