

*Rev. D. W. Hathornham
with the respectful request
of the Society.*

Romanism :

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF

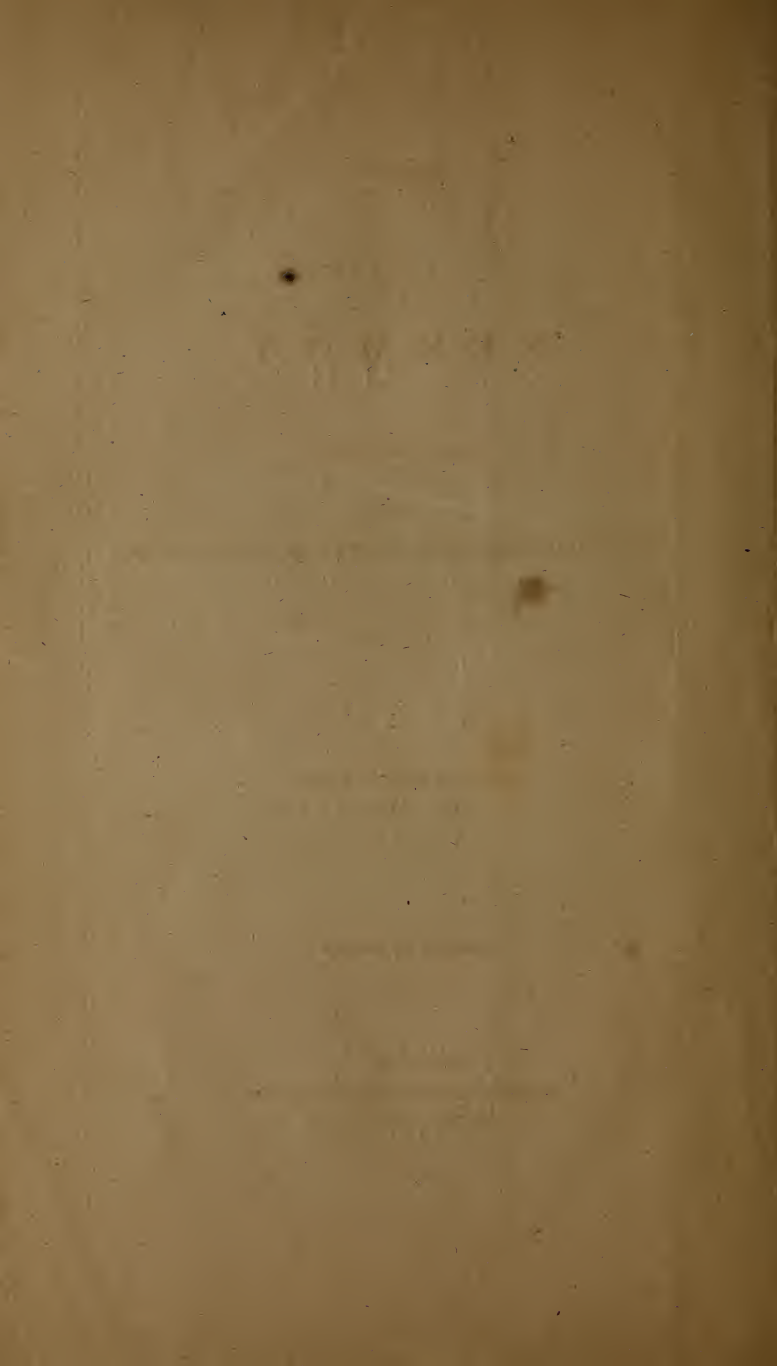
THE THIRD RELIGIOUS SOCIETY IN DORCHESTER,

JULY 16 AND 30.

BY RICHARD PIKE,
MINISTER OF THE SOCIETY.

Published by Request.

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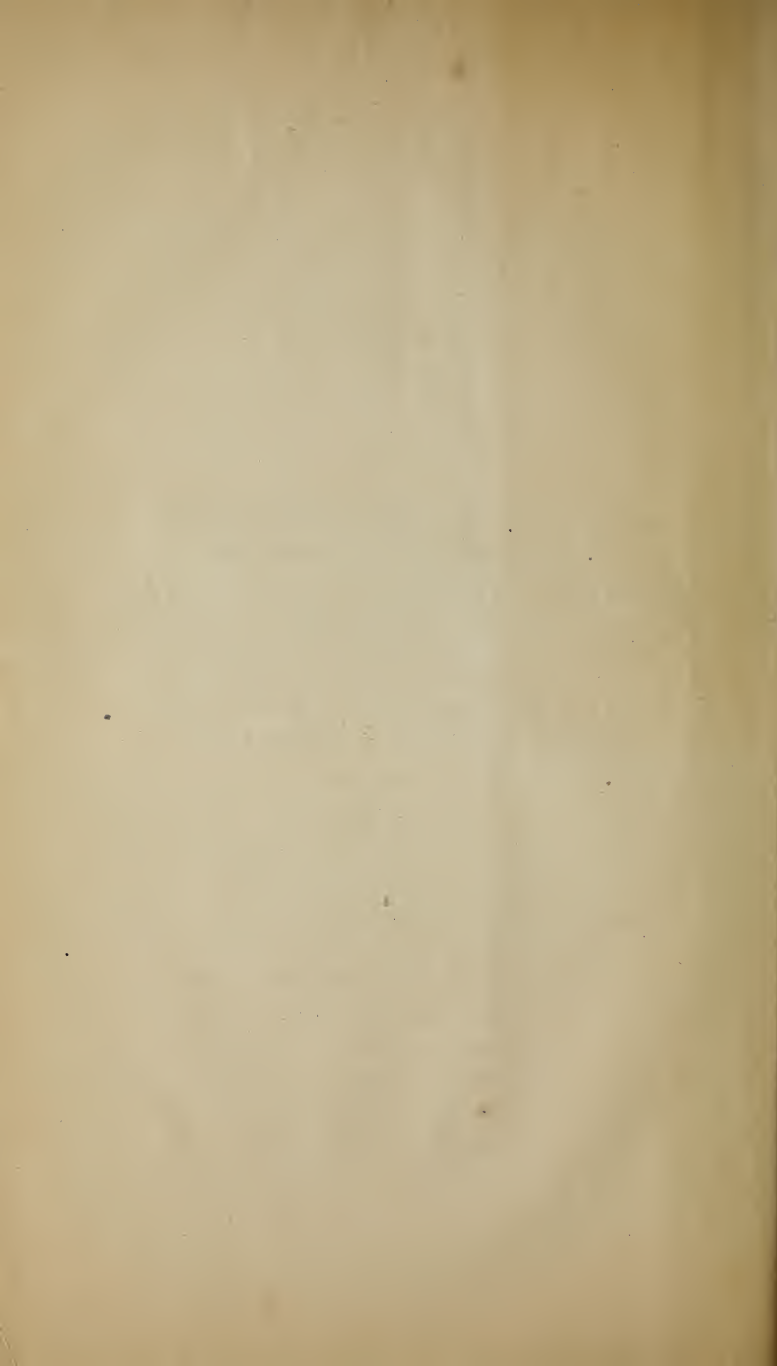
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CAPAM

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THE following Discourse was prepared without any view whatever to its publication. The local circumstances by which it was occasioned, giving to it a local rather than a general interest, may seem perhaps to be a reason why it should not have passed out of the hands of the author. It has been given to the press, at the solicitation of many who heard it, with the hope that it may be some contribution to the cause which it is believed to advocate.



S E R M O N .

JER. li. 51: "WE ARE CONFOUNDED, BECAUSE WE HAVE HEARD REPROACH:
SHAME HATH COVERED OUR FACES; FOR STRANGERS HAVE COME INTO THE
SANCTUARIES OF THE LORD'S HOUSE."

THE text undoubtedly expresses the feelings of many persons with regard to the spread of Romanism in this country. It cannot be disguised, that that religion is making great strides among us, and that it is establishing itself all over the land; that its churches are springing up in all our considerable towns and cities, its ecclesiastics are multiplying, and its literary and theological schools are increasing. Neither must it be disguised, that, according to its own calculation, the time is not far distant, when it will hold the balance of power, to say the least, in the state. Here we have presented to view an actual state of things, and the apprehension of a state of things, which, as Protestants, we cannot contemplate without concern. It is not to be expected or to be desired that we should. Indeed, as Protestants, we should be unworthy of our history and our privileges, did we not look with some-

thing of a jealous and a suspicious eye upon what Romanism has already accomplished, and what it is steadily aiming at, and deliberately advancing towards, in this western world. It becomes us here, in New England at least, to be jealous of Romanism, and to adopt all Christian measures in our power to protect ourselves against its encroachments. We are Protestants. Our institutions are Protestant institutions; Protestant in their spirit, in the enterprise of which they are the efficient cause, in the quality and type of character which they have served to develop and form. Our schools are Protestant schools; our churches are Protestant churches; our interests are Protestant interests. Because they are, and have been from the beginning, Protestant, they have made our civilization what it is at this day. And we do not need, we do not desire, any change in this respect. Least of all do we wish to substitute Romanism for our Protestantism, or give to it in any way the control of our affairs; knowing what it is, what its spirit is, what its history has been, what has been its influence on individual and national character.

But the question for us to consider now is, not what we need or what we desire. Romanism is here. It has a legal and a permanently established existence in our republic; and every year it is strengthening itself on our shores, increasing in numerical force and in power and influence. It is no inconsiderable element in our civilization. It is the religion of no inconsiderable por-

tion of our population. Strangers, it is true, they are for the most part, who confess to this religion,—strangers who have come among us with the hope and expectation of improving their condition; who have sought here, and have found, an asylum from the oppression and the poverty whose burden was upon them in the old world. But not alone for their own good, whether in the enjoyment of rights denied to them in their native land, or in the pursuits open to them, are they here. We need them. Their labor has been, and still is, an indispensable element in the material prosperity which distinguishes our times. In all departments of industry requiring merely physical strength, they are found; and are doing the work which would not be done without them. But, great as is the advantage to us, greater is it to them of course, or they would not be here. Not to serve us, not to minister to our prosperity, not to contribute to our comfort, but to benefit themselves, to better their condition, did they leave the homes of their childhood, and the graves of their fathers, to dwell among us. However indispensable they may be to us in the offices they fill and the labor they perform, and however great a calamity it would be to us if they should at once be stricken out of existence, we are under no special obligations to them,—we ask no favors of them. For every service they render us, we make them ample return. For every benefit they confer upon us, we confer upon them others quite as great,

to say the least. For every burden they lighten on our shoulders, we lighten others upon their shoulders, quite as heavy to bear. In this regard, the account is squared between us and them.

But their religion, their church-system, Romanism, — we do not like that, and, as Protestants, we cannot like it. We consider it dangerous to our republican institutions, as well as inconsistent with them. But what can we do? They are here, and their religion is here, and their ecclesiastics are here; and we cannot help ourselves. They are here, are in our families, in our places of business, sustaining towards us relations of great intimacy and responsibility; and they have their religion here with them, upholding it with their means, and faithfully and zealously adhering to it alike in good report and evil report; and there is nothing that we can do or say which will alienate them from it. But, notwithstanding all this, we cannot, as Protestants, regard their religion with favor; we cannot but feel that it will be an evil day for our country, should that day ever come, when it shall get the ascendancy in it. No, we cannot regard Romanism with favor, and we should not disguise the fact. We should not hesitate in the least to say that we regard it a false and dangerous system of religion. It cannot be denied, that it has proved a curse, and not a blessing, wherever it has prevailed. In whatever nation in Europe it has had full sway, with whatever people it has had its most perfect work, the course of

history, so to speak, has been backward rather than forward. There has been stagnation rather than vigor, degradation rather than elevation or advancement; the sun of every such nation or people has gone back many "degrees on the dial-plate." Such, at least, would be the judgment and the calculation from any Protestant point of observation.

The civilization of Romanism, wherever it has prevailed, has been radically defective, both in amount and in quality, if we understand by civilization, when applied to individuals, the development of the whole man, head, heart, and hands; and, when applied to a people, that form of government and that system of laws which foster industry, and stimulate enterprise, and encourage learning, and promote virtue and religion, — thus producing a state of society in which man finds a sphere of action and of interest and of duty best adapted to his wants and his capabilities, as an intellectual, social, and spiritual being. In this regard, Romanism must necessarily fall under the condemnation of all Protestant Christendom. Judged by its works, it must fall; it must be pronounced, not only unworthy of confidence, but destitute of those qualities of character which give to it any claim whatever on our respect. If, in any period of its history, its course has been different from this, it has only been for a short time and for a particular purpose, and only to a certain extent. If, as it is claimed, during the thousand years of its undisputed sway

throughout Christendom, it “emancipated the European serf in his body, it left him bound in his spirit. In loosing him from the feudal chain, it fastened only the deeper on his soul the ecclesiastical chain.” Whether the great power wielded by this system of religion in any period of its history, or in any part of the world, was of heaven or of earth, blight and barrenness there have ever been under it. The great mass of the people over whom it has been exercised have never attained to any thing like a consciousness of mental freedom, or acquired any thing like a generous use of faculties God had given them. It is not to be denied that its policy ever has been to keep its subjects in a state of spiritual servitude, to interdict the spirit of inquiry to them, and suppress all freedom of thought among them; that its culture or training for the human mind has been a system of enervating restraints upon it, rather than the adaptation of means to its condition to develop and strengthen its powers.

In addition to this, it is, and it ever has been, a bigoted, a persecuting, and a superstitious religion. There is no crime in the calendar of infamy of which it has not been guilty. There is no sin against humanity which it has not committed. There is no blasphemy against God which it has not sanctioned. It is a power which has never scrupled to break its faith solemnly plighted, whenever its interests seem to require it; which has no conscience; which spurns the control of public opinion; and which obtrudes

its head among the nations of Christendom, "dripping with the cruelties of millions of murders, and haggard with the debaucheries of a thousand years; always ambitious, always sanguinary, and always false." And what, in this connection, is deserving of particular notice, it is the boast of Romanism that it never changes; that it is the same from age to age, and from generation to generation. The same means it employs, the same measures it adopts, to accomplish its purposes good or bad in one age, it may employ and adopt in another age, if the circumstances seem to require or to justify it. As a church, it is one and undivided. It has one supreme head, to whom all its ecclesiastics of whatever order or degree, and in whatever part of the world, are subordinate and amenable; and his authority is infallible.

There is no view of Romanism, no side which it can present to our contemplation, no single period of its history, which, all things considered, will allow us to desire its spread in this country, or to be indifferent to it. Take it all in all,—in its history, in its aims, in its discipline, in its enterprises of whatever kind, and in its instrumentalities of whatever kind; as a church, as a system of religion,—it is a monstrous agency of wrong and oppression, of spiritual tyranny and social demoralization; as sure to prove itself such in all future time, whenever it shall have the opportunity, as it has proved itself such in all past time, whenever it has had the power.

But this, it may be said, is all individual assertion, mere declamation. It is just such assertion and declamation, it may be answered, as history abundantly sustains and confirms. It is assertion founded on the facts of history. Thus has it been, without doubt or contradiction, with Spain, that most Catholic nation; and with the Spaniards, that most Catholic people. Thus has it been in Italy. Thus has it been in Mexico. Thus has it been in the Catholic South American States. Never did any nation so surrender itself to Romanism as the Spanish nation; and never did the councils of Romanism so prevail in the government of any nation as they have in that. There, for three hundred years, Romanism has had every thing its own way. There it established the Inquisition, and worked it without let or hindrance to the full capacity of its power, to produce conversion to its creed and conformity in faith, first upon the Jews, then upon the Moors, then upon the suspected within its own pale; and it accomplished what it undertook. And what was the consequence? That direful instrumentality, which it so unscrupulously used as the embodiment of its true spirit, seemed to settle down "like an incubus upon the heart of the nation, diffusing everywhere unknown fears and suspicions, crushing all intellectual as well as moral freedom." It was an engine used "equally against books and men;" against whatever, either in civil or religious matters, fell under its suspicion. It put an end to

freedom of thought, to the spirit of inquiry, to the love of philosophy and letters, which, for a succession of generations, made Spain the foremost nation of Europe. The consequence of such a system of things was just what it must ever be. "The Spanish nation became bigoted to the last degree; those that were not so, became cringing and hypocritical. 'The iron entered her soul.' The once-enterprising and high-spirited Spain retired within herself, and built up a wall of separation from the whole European world. The Romish church was triumphant, but it was over the Spanish nation. Spain stood beneath her ecclesiastical masters; obedient, but bereft of courage, capacity, and intelligence, to act her part in the European world, — 'a nation of heroes transformed into a nation of hens;' commerce and the arts decayed; the State betrayed by her own princes and nobles; and the Spanish hidalgo as much changed from the hidalgos that conquered Grenada, as the gospel of her priesthood was changed for the gospel of Christ and his apostles."* Could we suppose that nation, "like blind Samson, to awaken to the sense of its wrongs, like him it would utter its natural wailings in strains not unlike those which the great poet has put into his mouth: —

'I, dark in light, exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors and without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;

* North British Review.

Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half,
 O, dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon;
 Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
 Without all hope of day."

It is but too evident that Spain has fallen, ingloriously fallen. Once the proudest and the foremost nation of Europe; now almost the least in consideration, and almost the meanest of them all. Once sovereign of Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands; now they severally disdain her control. Once sovereign of the gold and silver countries of the western world; now her sceptre over them is for ever broken. "Once sovereign of a chain of colonies unequalled in the world, she has lost them all but Cuba and a few others; and those even she holds by the precarious tenure of American conscience." "The precarious tenure of American conscience." The language is a quotation.

And why has Spain thus fallen? Mainly, because, it may be answered, she has been in the power and under the control of Romanism for the last three hundred years; of Romanism in its most perfect form or development, that of Jesuitism; and without any hindrance at all to its freest working. Here may cause and effect be plainly seen and connectedly followed out. Now, no Protestant nation desires or can afford to have the history of the Spanish nation re-enacted or reproduced upon itself. There are too many precious interests of humanity at stake in every such nation even to think of such a thing. No more can

a Protestant nation afford to have the history of Italy re-enacted or reproduced upon itself, in which Romanism glories so much, on account of having “developed there the fine arts, and the tastes which they cultivate, and consecrated them to the holy interests of worship;” forgetting all the time that she has done nothing at all for the intellectual and moral development of the Italian people, nor that of any other Catholic nation; for the same causes produce essentially the same effects the world over.

But it is not my purpose or my desire to discuss Romanism; only to state in a general way — which is all that can be done in a discourse like this — what it is, what its spirit is, what its works are, and what its policy has ever been. Of course there have been and still are good men in that church, wise and Christian men; men who have been an honor to humanity, and benefactors to the world. The names of Pascal, Fenelon, Alfred the Great, Sir Thomas More, are among the most honored names of Christendom; and thus will they continue to be, so long as Christian excellence and true worth shall be held in reverence. And let us not forget in this connection, that Lord Baltimore, the first proprietary of the Colony of Maryland, was a firm adherent to that church, to whom “the honor belongs,” according to the historian Bancroft, “of being the first in the history of the Christian world to seek for religious security and peace by the practice of justice, and not by the exercise of

power; to plan the establishment of popular institutions with the enjoyment of liberty of conscience; to advance the career of civilization by recognizing the rightful equality of all Christian sects." He deserves to be ranked among the most wise and benevolent lawgivers of all ages. Neither let us forget Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, whose name and whose fame shall be as lasting as the nations whose liberties his patriotic enthusiasm ventured so much to achieve. These were all wise and good men; and their Christian excellences were wrought out and perfected under the nurture of Romanism. Let Romanism have the honor of their fair fame, and that of any others such as they within her fold, to the full extent to which she is entitled to it. There is an element of Christianity, without any doubt, in Romanism, bad as it is as a system or a church; and this seems to have had a more perfect work with them than it apparently has with the great majority of the members of that communion; certainly than it has with the great majority of its ecclesiastics and devotees. These, as a class, have earned for themselves, by their works, the reputation of being a vicious and an unprincipled set of men. It can scarcely be otherwise with them, in view of what their intellectual and moral training is known to be,—a training which abrogates conscience, perverts the judgment, and enthalls the will,—a training whose dictates are but too successful attempts "to make the worse appear the better reason."

But notwithstanding Romanism is what it is, — a church or a system of religion so devoid, to our Protestant judgment, of a Christian character or a Christian spirit, albeit it may possess some element of Christianity, — yet for the members of that communion in this country, for those especially who have been brought up within its fold and nurtured upon its bosom, there is no other religion than this, no other Christianity than this. As a general remark, those who are born and bred Catholics cannot be made Protestants. Kindness cannot draw them into the Protestant communion, and persecution cannot drive them into it. This or no religion for them; and I have no hesitation in saying, this rather than no religion for them and such as they, considering who they are and what their training has been. For as religion, — the best they know, and, as a general thing, can comprehend, — it can and it does exercise a controlling and a restraining influence over them. They stand in awe before its dread authority. They can be made to tremble in view of the power which they have been taught to believe resides in it. They fear its maledictions as the power of heaven and the curse of God. Being what they are, — for the most part an ignorant and superstitious people, unaccustomed to the restraining and elevating influences of any thing like a true moral culture, — they cannot understand or appreciate the authority of a religion whose chief instrumentalities are not force and fear.

These things being so, to full as great an extent as I have represented them to be, the question arises, — and it is one of great practical moment, — What is our true attitude as Protestants, and as a people who have an abiding interest in the Protestant institutions of this country, with regard to Romanism? Considering that we are in the ascendancy here, and have power in our hands; considering, too, that the duty of self-preservation is always paramount and binding, what ought we to do or attempt to do with it? Shall we undertake to drive it out as an unclean thing? Shall we resort to petty vexations and annoyances, with the expectation that thus it may be made to seek safety and quiet in flight? Either course would be most impolitic, as it would be altogether unchristian. Either course would be persecution, and persecution is never a Christian course of procedure, — alas that it sometimes has been a Protestant one! — and persecution, in any form whatever, is what no Christian or high-minded people can ever engage in or countenance or justify. Besides that it is wrong, it possesses a fearful power of reaction.

I recently saw what purported to be — whether it is so or not I do not know — the platform of an organization of recent origin in this country against the Catholics. One of the statements of the purposes of that organization was this: “War to the hilt upon Romanism.” How much, I am led to ask, does this mean? What is “war to the hilt upon Romanism”?

Is it war in every way and in any way, and by whatever means? Is it a war of extermination, — a war carried on by firing houses and blowing up churches, or by any such methods? If any such purpose as this is entertained or contemplated, it cannot be too severely denounced. The least that can be said with regard to any such method of warfare is, that it is most unwise. It is a kind of warfare in which two may engage as well as one, — a warfare in which there may be “blows to take as well as blows to give.” It would be arraying ourselves in hostile conflict against a very considerable body of men in all our large towns and cities, — and that a not very scrupulous one, — and telling them what weapons they can most effectually use. But, even if it were not the most unwise course that could be taken, it is contrary to the spirit and teachings of the New Testament.

I shared in the general indignation of this community at the wanton outrage on the Catholic church in this village a short time since. That was a most wanton and most unjustifiable, as well as a most indiscreet, act. I feel it to be a reproach upon the Protestantism of this village, — a reproach in which we all share, — and which places us in a false and a most unfortunate position with regard to Romanism. Those ruins proclaim our shame; and we may not be surprised — unless there is indemnification or the discovery of the perpetrators of the foul deed — if they should remain for a long time in their present state,

as a reproach upon us. Those ruins, I say, proclaim our shame ; for, whether the destruction of that church was a Protestant act or not, it will pass for a Protestant act, until it shall be fully proved to have been otherwise. Guilty or not guilty, our Protestantism must bear the opprobrium, so long as there is doubt or uncertainty, however it might be under other circumstances, — our Protestantism, the Protestantism of our village. Certainly that ruin is an unsightly object now ; and — supposing it should remain just as it is for a year or any number of years, testifying to every stranger and every passer-by against us and against our Protestantism — certainly this is not to be desired. Romanism understands very well — as everybody knows — how to turn such acts to good account in subserving her interests ; and she seems to take some pride in preserving the memorials and witnesses of the persecution under which she is suffering in this country. It may be that she will take measures “ to keep the ruins in good repair ” here, as she has done elsewhere, for this very purpose. Why was the wanton act committed ? Why did such unwise counsels prevail ? What is gained by it, and what is likely to be gained by it ? This disgrace to our village, and reproach upon our religion.

Romanism is surely and permanently established in this country. It came here in a lawful manner, and it remains here under the sanction and protection of law. Thus far there is no accusation to be brought

against it. But, at the same time, as we do, and we must as Protestants, consider it a false and vicious system of religion or form of Christianity, whatever we can lawfully do to stay its progress, or limit its power as an element in our civilization,—that is, whatever we can do in conformity with the spirit and teachings of the New Testament to oppose it,—we not only have a right to do, but it is our duty to do. For example, it is our right and our duty—a right never to be yielded up, and a duty never to be disowned—to make just as much of our Protestantism as we possibly can in opposition to it; to establish our Protestant churches and schools wherever there is an opening for them; to put the open Bible into the hands of all who will receive it, or is willing to read it; to send forth our missionaries all over the land, with the messages of a free salvation to all who will repent of their sins before God, and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; a salvation which no church or ecclesiastic can give or take away, but which is the unpurchased gift of God to all men everywhere, who will in humility and faith open their hearts to receive it. This is a legitimate way, a Christian, an evangelical way of opposing Romanism in this country; and I believe an effectual way,—a way which will surely result in no inconsiderable amount of good.

No. We will not take the ground that there is no conflict between Protestantism and Romanism in this country, but the contrary ground; and we will not

say that there is not a warfare in which as Protestants we cannot lawfully and rightfully engage with Romanism: on the contrary, we take the ground that there is a warfare in which we must and should be continually engaged with Romanism. But what are the weapons of our warfare? What are the weapons which it most becomes us, as Protestants, to use? I answer, they "are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." These weapons are,—the Word of God faithfully preached and listened to and studied; well-filled and well-sustained churches; well-attended and well-instructed Sunday-schools; a Christian zeal in disseminating the gospel; a Christian concern for the salvation of souls, manifested in efforts to gather into the fold of Christ the outcast and neglected, of whatever name or condition; and, in addition to all this (or rather in connection with all this), well-supported and well-guarded public schools,—public schools in which the Bible is daily read, and its holy lessons are daily inculcated. Let us proclaim to the world, that we are thus engaged in a warfare with Romanism, and that such are our weapons, and that with such weapons we expect to fight a good fight. And let us mean just what we say: let us faithfully and conscien-

tiously use the weapons thus providentially furnished us, — weapons which we can use with so much effectiveness, and which it so becomes us to use. Indeed, if with such weapons we cannot stand before Romanism, and protect ourselves and our institutions against it, in its religious relations and bearings, we ought to fall. One good primary school, accessible to Catholic children, will do more towards undermining that religion, and weakening its power, and destroying its influence, than burning all the churches and convents in the land. The young of that church in our schools get ideas, and breathe an atmosphere there, which, as they grow up, often work wonderful changes in their views and sentiments. This, Romanism seems to be perfectly well aware of, as facts significantly show. And, if the power to do it but resided in that church, there is no doubt but that our public school system would be essentially modified, if not entirely done away with.

But there are other considerations connected with this subject to which attention should be given. We should not conceal the fact, that we cannot, as Protestants, regard Romanism with any kind of favor. We consider it an unchristian and unsanctified system. But besides what it is in its religious bearings and aspects, it is “a power which owns subjection to a lawless foreign potentate.” As such we ought, it seems to me, to be very careful how we admit it to the ballot-box. In view of the fact that it owns such

allegiance, we have a right to say upon what conditions it shall be here. Protestantism has priority of possession in this country. Protestantism laid the foundations of this republic, and shaped the institutions of this land; and it belongs to Protestantism to say upon what conditions so considerable a power as that of Romanism — a power which is subject to foreign dictation, and which has under its keeping and subject to its control the destinies of so many thousands of human beings in this land — shall enjoy the privileges which have here been wrought out at so great a cost. If Protestantism should declare, — as she now has the numerical strength to do, if she only had the moral courage, — that that which is a foreign authority in this land, that which owns a foreign allegiance and is subject to foreign control (and that, too, in matters relating to its whole policy in this country), shall remain as such, and be protected as such, but shall not be admitted to all the rights and immunities of native-born citizenship, — would she be doing more than she has a perfect right to do; more than self-protection would justify her in doing; more than the sacred interests committed to her guardianship would require her to do? The interests of education and religion and freedom, — how precious in themselves! how jealously to be watched over and protected! If Protestantism should say to Romanism, “You shall not be molested in the enjoyment of your religion here; you

shall not be disturbed in the possession of your churches; you shall have all the rights and all the protection which any other foreign power is entitled to in this land; but we cannot admit you to legislate for us; we cannot trust you with our ballot-box," — would she be doing aught that she has not a right to do? would she be doing aught that it is not her duty to do? I think not. And I cannot help thinking, moreover, that, in view of all the interests involved, Protestantism would be quite ready to take this stand, were it not for the miserable considerations which party politics are for ever springing upon the people to mislead their consciences and warp their judgments. It is evident enough to my mind, that the ballot-box in this country needs such a "fencing" as the communion-table in the Kirk of Scotland never gets in high sacramental seasons. All persons should be excluded from it who are the sworn and dutiful subjects of a foreign sovereign, although it be claimed that that sovereign is a spiritual one; since it is a fundamental principle of Romanism, that the authority of the pope is supreme and universal.

Romanism is a good deal in the habit of complaining, that her rights are not duly regarded in this country, — especially her rights of conscience, and that particularly in the use of the Bible in our common schools. But, in this matter, Romanism should be made to understand, that there are rights of conscience on our side as well as on her side. Our

conscience demands that the Bible should be in our schools, — should be there because it is the Word of God, and because its lessons and its spirit are adapted to the wants and the condition of the young. We placed it there deliberately, under a sense of religious obligation, and with the conviction, which experience had rendered deep and strong, that thus we were rendering the best service in our power, not only to our children, but also to our civil and religious institutions. In view of these considerations, it certainly savors not a little of arrogance for Romanism to come here, and demand, as she often has done, and still persists in doing, that we should change our policy in this regard, — conscientiously adopted, — out of respect to her rights of conscience. Considering the relative position, standing, and interests of the two parties, this is certainly not a little arrogant on the part of Romanism.

There are other acts and measures of Romanism, of which mention might be made, which are also quite as obnoxious to this charge of arrogance. Where her own interests or wishes are concerned, she has very little regard to our Protestant feelings or wishes or convenience. Whatever she can do lawfully, and her interests can be subserved thereby, — and sometimes, it would seem, her caprice indulged, — she will do, exhibiting the utmost indifference as to its effect upon us, or whether it is likely to annoy us or not. Our feelings, or our rights, she never seems to consi-

der, where she does not render herself amenable to the law. Indeed, I have sometimes thought, that, on the contrary, there was a wanton disposition on her part to vex and annoy us, in whatever way and to as great an extent as she could, and not render herself obnoxious to the penalties of the law. In the location of the church in this village, there certainly seemed to be something of this disposition. Not that we object to there being a church here: on the contrary, we desire that there should be one; we think it important that there should be one: but we claim, and justly and properly claim, that, in the location of that church, our feelings as Protestants and as citizens, as the descendants of a Protestant ancestry, as men having rights and privileges and interests here which Romanism never has had nor does not now have,—should have been consulted; and that due regard should have been had to the proprieties of good taste, and some interest should have been shown in the adornment of our village. It is true, in this instance, Romanism violated no law of the Commonwealth; but it cannot be denied, that she violated some of the laws of good neighborhood. She watched her opportunity, and, with something of feline cunning, she took advantage of Protestant unwariness, and with characteristic effrontery taunted our regrets. It is true, she did no more than she had a legal right to do; but if the exercise of that right proved a general offence,—and that for obvious

reasons, not from prejudice, not from Protestant antipathy, not from hostility to the thing undertaken, but upon altogether other grounds, — then it cannot be maintained that she acted wisely, or that she did not wantonly defy feelings which it was her duty to have conciliated. Upon the assumption that the gross outrage upon that church was a Protestant act, but probably not proceeding from religious feeling, — Protestant, however, inasmuch as it was not Catholic, — it cannot but be admitted that Romanism has been greatly sinned against in it. This should be admitted and distinctly avowed; and the act itself should be condemned. But, at the same time, here and in this very matter, it must not be disguised that Romanism has been also sinning. She has not been courteous. She has not had a proper regard to well-grounded and in no way unreasonable Protestant feeling. She has not seemed to care whether she became an annoyance or not, even in that in which there was a Protestant disposition to gratify all her reasonable wishes, and where she might, without detriment to herself, have pursued a course which would not have incurred disapprobation from any quarter. But does such a course of procedure on the part of Romanism, even if it be her uniform policy, justify a lawless and gross outrage upon her? The question is not a debatable one. That act was persecution; and persecution is never God's way, but always the devil's way; and it never fails to recoil in the end

on him who uses it, and overwhelm him with confusion.

In conclusion, my hearers, allow me to remark, that Protestantism in this country has great trusts committed into its keeping. As Protestants we have succeeded to a sacred inheritance, — an inheritance upon which depends the permanence of our civil and religious institutions, and in which are involved the great interests of civilization in this country, — an inheritance, too, which we are bound, by every consideration of duty and of humanity, to transmit, in all its strength and efficiency and beauty, to future generations. Are we faithful to our great trusts? Are we making our Protestantism a sacred and a glorious gift of God to ourselves and our children, — not a license for scepticism or indifference in matters of religion, but an incentive to fidelity, and to a truly apostolic zeal in making the religion of Christ the power of God unto salvation to our souls? We are inquiring, with not a little apparent solicitude, with regard to what measures we shall adopt to stay the progress of Romanism in this country, whose aspect is becoming every year more and more threatening, and whose arrogance more and more intolerable. But what are we doing for our Protestantism? is a question which it becomes us all to entertain. What are we making of that, and what is it to us? How are we treating our Protestantism? How are we using the privileges and opportunities which it has

conferred upon us? These are questions fraught with deep significance at the present time. Poor Protestants are we all, if our Protestantism amounts to no more than dislike of Romanism. Poor Protestants are we all, if we are not also Christians; Christians in faith, and in spirit, and in conduct; Christians who are obedient to the commandments, and subject to the authority, of Christ; and if we are not actuated by a Christian zeal in all the measures in which we are interested, in which are involved civil or religious considerations. May God in his wisdom teach and direct us all, and have us ever more under the guidance of his Holy Spirit!

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