

Church & State (Gen.)

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# Church and Politics

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Associate Editor of AMERICA

"The Catholic civil allegiance divided? Why, look across the sea, to where all Europe is in arms. Every Catholic is fighting loyally, giving his very life for his own country. And though some of these countries have merited little gratitude from any Catholic, still the very priests are in the trenches, each a defender of his native land."

CARDINAL O'CONNELL.

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# Church and Politics

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## The Church and Politics

IT is a common accusation made in our day that the Church is engaged in politics. Her very service to mankind, her spiritual ministry, her ritual itself and her Sacraments are transformed by the imagination of unscrupulous men into methods of cunning intended solely to assure for her a temporal and political ascendancy. Leaving aside such extreme assertions in which Socialist writers and many anti-Catholic journals freely indulge, we may reasonably be called upon to answer the question: "What is the attitude of the Church toward politics?"

That the Church, in the first place, can never entertain political ambition is certain. She clearly, and without hesitation, acknowledges the sovereignty of the State in temporal matters, reserving to herself the spiritual sovereignty in things of the soul. To all the accusations against her she has but one answer to make, the answer of Christ when accused in precisely the same manner: "My kingdom is not of this world." That very kingdom of which He then spoke, in as far as it exists here upon earth, is the Catholic Church herself. She alone dates back directly to Him, and the mission confided to her is nothing else than the continuation of His own. It is a spiritual mission. In his Encyclical *Immortale Dei*, on the Christian Constitution of States, Pope Leo XIII wrote:

The Almighty has apportioned the charge of the human race between two powers, the ecclesiastical and the civil, the one being set over Divine, and the other over human things. Each in its kind is supreme, each has fixed limits within which

it is contained, limits that are defined by the nature and special object of the province of each, so that there is, we may say, for each a fixed orbit, within which the action of each is brought into play by its own right.

What is contained within each of these two provinces the Holy See defines no less accurately in the same Encyclical:

Whatever in things human is of sacred character, whatever belongs, either of its own nature or by reason of the end to which it is referred, to the salvation of souls, or to the worship of God, is subject to the power and judgment of the Church. Whatever is to be ranged under the civil and *political* order is rightly subject to civil authority.

The Church, therefore, according to the institution of her Divine Founder and the declaration of her Sovereign Pontiffs, is not concerned with purely civil and political matters, so long as there is no violation of the laws of God and no infringement of her own sacred rights.

Questions, however, arise which are neither spiritual nor purely civil. It is necessary here that State and Church should cooperate harmoniously, taking due account of the relative excellence and nobility of the respective ends of Church and State. Thus for the Church matrimony is a sacrament, for many States a purely civil contract. The State may rightly make all *due* temporal provision; but the Church must no less clearly maintain her own spiritual jurisdiction; for its exercise her clergy and hierarchy are responsible to Almighty God. Education, in the same manner, may properly be insisted upon by the State to the extent required for good citizenship; but the Church must not in any way be hampered in the spiritual and moral training of her children, to fit them to become faithful citizens both of the State and of that spiritual Kingdom whose invisible head is Christ.

It is her solemn duty to insist upon this right as it is the sacred duty of the State to aid and not to hinder her in its fulfilment.

The fact, therefore, that both powers, the secular and the spiritual, have authority over the same citizen can not of itself cause the slightest conflict, since all authority in State and Church is alike derived from God, who has perfectly coordinated them to work in harmony with one another. "For the powers that are, are ordained of God," as St. Paul writes. The Church on her part has always sought to restrict to the utmost her demands. It but remains for the State equally to respect her rights in order that the two powers may work together as soul and body; the one securing the earthly, the other the spiritual welfare of the citizen. This, we know, can perfectly be realized among a Catholic people only, yet it is the ultimate perfection of governments. So individual, domestic and public rights will alike be safeguarded and hedged about by natural and positive laws, Divine and human.

Two points have thus far been made clear. The first is that the Church cannot entertain political ambitions. The second, that she must safeguard the spiritual rights of her children. The crucial question, therefore, is that which regards her action in matters which are not only political but likewise touch upon spiritual interests. Here, too, her attitude has been perfectly defined. She will not interfere except in so far as the moral and religious interests of souls may require such a course. Then it becomes her sacred duty to do so within the limits of her possibility. The power which she thus exercises is not, however, political, but spiritual. Victor Cathrein, S.J., in his "Moralphilosophie," thus briefly explains the important point at issue:

The Church can never for earthly ends ordain or prescribe anything in temporal matters. But she has the right to provide that her subjects be not seduced to commit sin or suffer detriment to their spiritual welfare through the ordinations of secular authority. It would be very wrong to call this indirect power over temporal matters a secular power. It is and remains a spiritual power, because it extends to temporal matters only in so far as spiritual interests are concerned. Its formal object is spiritual.

Should any political party, or should the State itself, propose what is unjust and sinful, it is evident that the voice of the Church must be heeded. The Church must always protest against crime, the great enemy of the State. Of two things, however, both Catholics and non-Catholics may rest assured. The first is that the Church will never interfere with any man's economic or political views unless those views are spiritually pernicious or sinful. But against sin she is obliged to cry out. The second is that loyalty to the Church will never stand in the way of any genuinely patriotic interest. A true Catholic must of necessity be a true patriot. If any should be inclined to doubt this fact let them look to the great modern battlefields of Europe and see the priests and religious forgetful of all past injustice, persecution and banishment, returning in undiminished numbers to the flags of their native lands, offering freely their service and their lives, and generously pouring forth their blood for the countries that had rejected them. Whatever, therefore, is beautiful, whatever is good, whatever is just, whatever is ennobling in the patriotism of any land will always be blessed and promoted by the Sovereign Pontiff, whose kingdom is not of this world, but whose voice is raised against sin and injustice wherever they lift their head, in private life or public.



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The Church therefore can have no desire to enter the field of politics. Such an action would be in open contradiction of all her high ideals and her Divine mission. But neither may Catholic voters for this reason permit her to be shorn of her just rights by political intriguers without exerting themselves to the utmost in her defense. Their duty to God and country demands no less of them. "Certainly," said Pope Pius X in his letter regarding the Sillonist movement in France, "it is not the Church which has descended into the political arena ; it has been dragged there to be mutilated and despoiled. Is it not the duty of every Catholic then to use the political weapons which he has at hand to defend it, and to force politicians to remain in their own domain and only occupy themselves with the Church so far as to render to it its due?" Catholics who would fail to defend violated justice even in the case of their own church would be unworthy of their manhood and their rights of citizenship.

## A Political Nightmare

**T**HE question of the union between Church and State has long been a storm-center of far more than ordinary disturbance. Few comprehend the right meaning of this term. Fewer still understand its practical application. Even intelligent and educated men, who are amused, if not positively angered, at the ludicrous panics to which this question has given rise, are often themselves misled by interpretations palpably false. It is necessary, therefore, to begin by setting aside the wrong notions which have gathered about this idea in the popular mind and which have led to the conclusion, probably often heard by the reader, "I am opposed to Catholicism because it favors the union of Church and State."

To avoid at the outset all possible misapprehension, it may be well to premise that this union, as understood by the Holy See, is not an issue agitated or promoted on the part of Catholics, whether clerical or lay, in the United States. The confusion which exists regarding this subject is entirely due to error or must be attributed to that ceaseless propaganda of calumny maliciously carried on against the Catholic Church. Putting aside this first misconception we are in a position to consider impartially the false ideas connected in the minds of many sincere and well-meaning men with the present subject.

The most complete and ideal union of Church and State, such as is possible in a thoroughly Catholic country, would not imply, as is commonly supposed, any

elements prejudicial to democracy. There is no preference expressed by the Church for one form of government over another. Empire, monarchy, or republic, all meet with her approval in so far as they keep in view that common good for which social authority is constituted. In his letter, *Au Milieu des Sollicitudes*, Pope Leo XIII thus defined the attitude of the Church:

In this order of speculative ideas, Catholics, like all other citizens, are free to prefer one form of government to another, precisely because no one of these social forms is, in itself, opposed to the principles of sound reason or to the maxims of Christian doctrine. What amply justifies the wisdom of the Church is that in her relations with political powers she abstracts from the forms of government, which differentiate nations, and treats with them concerning religious interests. To undertake their instruction is her supreme duty in their regard.

So again in his Encyclical *Sapientiæ Christianæ*, "On the Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens," the same Pontiff writes:

The Church, the guardian always of her own rights and most observant of that of others, holds that it is not her province to decide what is the best amongst many diverse forms of government and the civil institutions of Christian States. Amid the various kinds of State-rule she does not disapprove of any, provided the respect due to religion and the observance of good morals be upheld.

From this it may already be evident that union between Church and State is not rooted, as is commonly believed, in the desire of the Church to dominate the State. It is this constant suspicion which causes men to give an evil construction to every defense of the Church's inherent rights, on the part of Catholics. The doctrine of the union between the Catholic Church and civil society as the ideal condition of Christian civilization is interpreted

by them as a universal ambition for political power in which the Catholics of every country are presumed to share. In the letter already quoted, *Au Milieu des Sollicitudes*, Pope Leo writes :

It is maintained that the vigor of action which Catholics are taught to display in their defense of the Faith has for a secret motive much less the safeguarding of their religious interests than the ambition of securing to the Church *political domination over the State*. Truly this is the revival of a very ancient calumny, as its invention must be ascribed to the first enemies of Christianity. Was it not first formulated against the adorable person of the Redeemer?

Nothing could be further from the mind of the Church and more abhorrent to her than stirring up insurrection and revolution, or even lessening by a grain in the balance the loyalty due the State. Yet this is precisely the crime of which she is accused, in spite of her constant insistence upon obedience to all lawfully constituted authority and her unvarying lesson of rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. From a thousand forums of public thought over the face of the earth, our own country not excepted, there still rises that cry which nineteen centuries ago was first heard in the court of Pilate : "We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar." And for those who would see that justice is done us, without favor or partiality, there comes the bitter warning : "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend!" So again and again, century after century, the sentence of Pilate is passed. Christ is crucified anew in His members. What happened of old in the court of the Roman Governor has taken place today in Portugal and Mexico, and will be repeated tomorrow elsewhere. If Christ was condemned to death on this specious charge, it was inevitable that His

followers would fare no better. "Dangerous citizens, factionists, enemies of the Empire and the Emperors" were the names given, we are told, to the early Christians by their pagan contemporaries, the Roman "Guardians of Liberty."

All this is true; but it is likewise our greatest consolation and our glory. Let the enemies of Christ inscribe it at the head of their chapter of accusations against us: "The Catholics of the twentieth century are one with their brethren of the first." We are one with them in persecution as in faith.

The fact that the Church condemns the untenable proposition, "The Church must be separated from the State, and the State from the Church," does not imply even the slightest desire on her part, as is popularly supposed, of interfering in secular matters from political motives. Her right at any time or place is concerned with the moral and religious interests that may be involved in the issue. It is only because of the welfare of souls, as the ultimate reason, that she can and must speak out, counsel and command. Where souls are in danger there is question no longer of purely political or economic issues. Spiritual principles are at stake. In these she is the ultimate authority. For this purpose Christ has instituted her. "It was not to Cæsar," as Pope Leo XIII so conclusively says, "but to Peter that Jesus Christ entrusted the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." Union between the Church and State, where such is possible, merely simplifies and ensures the more perfect fulfilment of the task Christ conferred upon her. Her attitude of non-interference in purely civic matters, on the other hand, is clearly expressed in the Encyclical of the same Pontiff, on the "Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens":

It is plainly evident that the governing powers are wholly free to carry out the business of the State; and this not only not against the wish of the Church, but manifestly with her cooperation, inasmuch as she strongly urges to the practice of piety, which implies right feeling toward God, and by that very fact inspires a right-mindedness toward the rulers of the State.

It is not the purpose of the present chapter to describe in detail the true nature of the union between Church and State. One thing alone has been made clear, that the accusations directed against Catholics because of the principles supposed to be involved in this union are entirely unfounded, in fact and in theory. They are all summed up in the charges on which Christ was condemned to death: for "saying that He is Christ, the King." That kingship, as He fully but vainly explained, is spiritual and not earthly. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God the things that are God's." Such was the doctrine of Christ, and such is the doctrine of His Church for individuals and for society alike. That the things of God may be more completely given to God is the only reason why she has ever called upon the State for assistance. She in turn urges that the things of Cæsar should be given to Cæsar. This is the only principle involved in the union of Church and State, the principle laid down by Christ.

## Union of Church and State

IT has been shown in what the union of Church and State does not consist. It is equally important to make clear the true meaning of this union according to the mind of the Church in order to answer the objections urged against Catholics and invariably based upon a false understanding of this question. The union spoken of here is the ideal union only.

For a civilization largely non-Catholic and even non-Christian the true conception of the ideal union between Church and State has become almost unintelligible. Catholics themselves have often been imbued with current notions concerning its scope and nature. It is looked upon as a condition violently imposed from without. Yet in reality it is something as obvious and natural in a truly Catholic country as it is unthought of and impossible today in lands like England or the United States. It is not a contract of patches and compromises, such as men now have in mind; but a mutually helpful and desirable cooperation of the spiritual and temporal power that can be compared only to the intimate relation existing between soul and body.

The intrinsic reason for the perfect union of Church and State in a "civil society of Catholics" arises from the fact that the same men are at the same time citizens of the State and members of God's visible Kingdom upon earth, the Catholic Church. Under such conditions they do not, *as citizens*, forfeit either their civic rights or the full, free and reasonable exercise of them. But *as subjects of Christ's Kingdom*, they must obviously likewise

bear in mind the spiritual interests of the Church, the salvation and sanctification of souls. These, however, are not things foreign either to their own good or to the welfare of the State. Consequently there is no violence done to the most complete personal freedom in this union of a Catholic State and the Catholic Church. Rulers and subjects, by their voluntary acceptance of Catholicism, openly acknowledge, as a first truth of their holy Faith, that the last and supreme end of man is eternal life. To give this, and to give it to us more abundantly, Christ came into this world. To it the temporal interests must, therefore, be subordinated, whether in man's private, domestic or civic capacity. Such precisely was the meaning of Our Divine Lord when He taught that but one thing is necessary, the attainment of eternal life. The individual, therefore, in thus subordinating his temporal to his eternal interests makes no enforced surrender of any personal liberties, since both interests are equally his own.

The duties enjoined are incumbent on the same person, and between them there exists neither contradiction nor confusion; for some of these duties have relation to the prosperity of the State, others refer to the general good of the Church, and both have as their object to train men to perfection.—*Encyclical on the Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens.*

“Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Such is the commandment and the promise of Our Lord. A civil society which regulates its civic actions and institutions in conformity with the teachings of Christ, authentically interpreted by the one Divinely commissioned authority upon earth, will have little need to fear for its temporal order and happiness. The splendid



argument of St. Augustine, quoted by Pope Leo XIII, is in place here :

Let those who proclaim that the teaching of Christ is hurtful to the State, produce such armies as the maxims of Jesus have enjoined soldiers to bring into being, such governors of provinces, such husbands and wives, such parents and children, such masters and servants, such kings, such judges, and such payers and collectors of revenue, as the Christian teachers instruct them to become, and then let them dare say that such teaching is hurtful to the State. Nay, rather let us ask, can they hesitate to own that such discipline if duly acted upon, is the very mainstay of the commonwealth? *Epist.* 138.

True Christianity, therefore, as St. Augustine implies, must be interfused through our domestic, economic, social and civil life. It cannot be dispensed with even in our international relations without prejudice to the common welfare. Apostrophizing the Catholic Church, St. Augustine exclaims :

Thou joinest together, not in society only, but in a sort of brotherhood, citizen with citizen, nation with nation, and the whole race of men, by reminding them of their common parentage.

The dream of international peace, of the universal brotherhood of man, of the golden millennium upon earth, so far as this is possible, can be realized only in the entirely voluntary return of the world to his solicitous care who is the Father of Christendom, the Vicar of the Prince of Peace, the one universal Pastor to whom alone Christ committed His lambs and His sheep, that there might be one Fold and one Shepherd: "Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep."

That a perfect obedience to the Divine will can only be fruitful of a nation's highest good, even from a temporal point of view, all must admit, and history bears

witness to the fact. It is no exaggeration to say that all we most highly prize today is in a manner to be accredited to the union of the Catholic State with the Catholic Church in an age when barbarism was still contending with civilization. In his Encyclical, *Immortale Dei*, Pope Leo XIII writes :

There was once a time when States were governed by the principles of the Gospel teaching. Then it was that the power and Divine virtue of Christian wisdom had diffused itself throughout the laws, institutions and morals of the people; permeating all ranks and relations of society. Then, too, the religion instituted by Jesus Christ, established firmly in befitting dignity, flourished everywhere by the favor of princes and the legitimate protection of magistrates; and Church and State were happily united in concord and friendly interchange of good offices.

The blessings which in such an order accrued to the State surpass all estimation. They can never, as the Pontiff says, be blotted out, or even obscured, by the craft of any enemies of the Church of Christ:

Christian Europe has subdued barbarous nations, and changed them from a savage to a civilized condition, from superstition to true worship. It victoriously rolled back the tide of Mohammedan conquest; retained the headship of civilization; stood forth in the front rank as the leader and teacher of all, in every branch of national culture; bestowed on the world the gift of true and many-sided liberty; and most wisely founded everywhere numerous institutions for the solace of human suffering.

It was under the auspices of religion that these great undertakings were set on foot, and by its aid that they were accomplished. They would have been impossible for the State alone. Neither could the Church have achieved entire success without assistance from the civil power. The evidence of the confusion which since then

has followed owing to the loss of this supreme ideal, the perfect union of the Catholic Church and the Catholic State, is only too apparent. We behold it in the universality of economic disorder which, even amid the changing industrial conditions of today, the Church could have prevented by acting in cooperation with a Catholic State. We see it in the darkness of rationalistic error and ignorance that has fallen upon the nations deprived of all true knowledge of a Divine Christ, of an eternal sanction, of a redemption from sin that must be applied to their souls. We witness it in the flames of war that now envelop the earth in an almost universal conflagration, because the plea for peace from the Throne of Peter is no longer heard or heeded. It is doubtless true that no union of Church and State could ever entirely hold in check the passions of men; but it could abate their violence, could convince them of error and sin, could, in fine, as of old it did, lead them back from disorder and violence to repentance and love.

Such was, in its ideal at least, the perfect union of Church and State as it existed during certain periods of the Middle Ages, when the Church was free and unhampered. We have said nothing of those partial unions in more recent days, which have often proved helpful to the State and its citizens; but at times, too, were used to make the Church the vassal of the State. The former has not tyrannized over the State at any period; but the latter has often tyrannized over the Church, has arrogated to itself her power, and has even used her name for its own political ends.

The description here given of the ideal union between Church and State makes clear how far is this issue from the politics into which it has been dragged.

## Social Movements and Politics

“CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY” is a term employed in two important Papal documents to designate the Catholic social movement. It is made to alternate with another current expression, “Christian Popular Action.” The former title, adopted by Catholics in various countries, was attacked by “many excellent men” who considered it ambiguous and open to misconception. The chief danger apparently lay in confounding it with political agitation. In his Encyclical now known under the name of “Christian Democracy,” Pope Leo XIII sought to dispel these fears and allay the dissensions caused by the word. He himself did not hesitate to adopt it after giving its orthodox explanation. Later we find it recurring again in the famous Encyclical of Pope Pius X on “Christian Popular Action.”

One of the main questions necessarily touched upon in this connection is the relation of Christian Democracy, or Catholic social action, to the political movements of any country. The accusation that the Church is seeking for political power was never, perhaps, more seriously and persistently made than at the present hour. It will be well, therefore, to quote at some length the answers of Pope Leo XIII and his successor, Pope Pius X, upon this question. They afford us the final and authentic documentary evidence to show that Christian Democracy, or Catholic popular action, can in nowise be identified with politics and may never even be perverted to serve political ends.

It would be a crime, says Pope Leo XIII, to distort this name of Christian Democracy to politics, for although democracy,

both in its philological and philosophical significations, implies popular government, yet in its present application it is so to be employed that, removing from it all political significance, it is to mean nothing else than a benevolent and Christian movement in behalf of the people. For the laws of nature and of the Gospel, which by right are superior to all human contingencies, are necessarily independent of all modifications of civil government, while at the same time they are in concord with everything that is not repugnant to morality and justice. They are, therefore, and they must remain absolutely free from all political parties, and have nothing to do with the various changes of administration which may occur in a nation; so that Catholics may and ought to be citizens according to the constitution of any State, guided as they are by those laws which command them to love God above all things, and their neighbor as themselves.—*Encyclical on Christian Democracy.*

Such we are told has always been the discipline of the Church. To the same effect Pope Pius X wrote in his *Motu Proprio* on "Christian Popular Action," dealing with the same subject:

Christian Democracy ought never to mix in politics, and ought never to be made use of for party purposes, or political objects; that is not its province; but it should be a beneficent activity in favor of the people, founded on the natural laws, and the precepts of the Gospel.

Since this, as we have seen, is a vital question and a point upon which we are constantly attacked at the present day, it will not be superfluous to quote another document which has the sanction and expresses the doctrine of the Holy See. We refer to the instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Ecclesiastical Affairs on "Christian Popular Action or Christian Democratic Action in Italy." It bears the signature of Cardinal Rampolla. We read:

Christian democratic institutions, whatever be their character,

should be looked upon as manifestations of Christian popular action, based on the natural law and on the precepts of the Gospel. They must, therefore, not be regarded as means for the attainment of political ends, or for changing any form of government.

Catholics as citizens have the duty of sharing in the political life of their city and their country; but Christian Democracy itself, the Catholic social movement of any country, must never be confused with politics. Much less, may it ever be implicated in seditions and revolutions, or in "the preference and preparation," as Pope Leo wrote, "of one form of government rather than another," for "it is not lawful to give a political meaning to Christian Democracy."

These clear statements, which are directive for all Catholic popular action, should be sufficient to silence the enemies of the Church who accuse her of political aspirations or intrigues. They show how in the one work which brings the Church into close contact not only with the spiritual but likewise with the social life of the people, no taint of suspicion should be cast upon the purity of her motives.

But Christian Democracy, it is urged, has turned aside from its positive work for the welfare of the masses in order to combat Socialism. This is true. It has done so persistently and in every country. Christian Democracy, as both Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius X strongly insist, is the very opposite of Social Democracy or Socialism. "Christian Democracy," wrote Pope Pius, "ought to be understood in the sense already determined by authority, which is far removed from that of Social Democracy and is based on the principles of the Catholic Faith and morality, especially on that of never

attacking in any way the inviolable right of private property." The reason for this opposition is not, therefore, political, as Socialists would make men believe, but purely moral and religious. The actual political Socialist movement is a menace to religion, to religious education, to justice and morality. It is on these grounds, and on no other, that the great body of Catholic working men is opposed to it, and that Christian Democracy cannot avoid answering the challenge of Social Democracy. The one teaches that man's supreme good must be sought in the life to come, but for this very reason it would secure for even the poorest here below the enjoyment of the earthly rights and privileges which are implied in his sublime destiny. The other, on the contrary, would turn away his mind from the things of eternity to absorb them in the things of time, hazarding the loss of both.

To guard, however, against the final misconception that Catholics, as individuals, are hampered in the exercise of full political liberty, so long as this does not interfere with the laws of God or the precepts of the Church, it may be well to quote the directions given on this subject by Pope Pius X:

It is certain, he says, that the present constitution of States offers to all without distinction the power of influencing public opinion, and Catholics, while recognizing the obligations imposed by the law of God and the precepts of the Church, may with safe conscience enjoy this liberty, and prove themselves capable, as much, and even more than others, of cooperating in the material and civil well-being of the people, thus acquiring that authority and respect which may make it even possible for them to defend and promote a higher good, namely, that of the soul. These civil rights are many and various, going so far as directly to share in the political life of the country by repre-

senting the people in the legislature.—*Encyclical on Christian Social Action.*

The Pope therefore desires that Catholics, like other citizens, should “prudently and seriously” prepare themselves for their electoral duties wherever such are incumbent upon them, in order that so they may contribute their own share to the common good and aid to lift up civic and national morality to the high plane of Gospel principles.



## Political Bigotry in America

**A** PETTY host, filled with malice, has long been busy striving to overturn the pillars of our national Constitution and to shake its foundations. Small in spirit, cowardly in method, poor in all that goes to make a man, they have nevertheless often been potent for evil by their united efforts. For the liberty of our native land they would substitute the tyranny of bigotry; for fraternity, civic hatred; for justice, religious persecution. Though the Church which they assail is raised above their Lilliputian efforts, and the white radiance of its beauty can never be soiled by them, yet its members and institutions may be made to suffer from their fanaticism. Like Middleton's witches, they frequently bring about their immediate object: to "raise jars, jealousies, strifes and heart-burning disagreements, like a thick scurf o'er life." There are besides greater dangers than these to be apprehended. A glance at the past may be a warning for the future.

When the War of the Revolution had been fought, and Catholics and Protestants in common had cemented with their blood the foundations of the new Republic, it might reasonably have been hoped that bigotry would be forgotten and Catholic patriotism receive from all the just meed of recognition which the Father of his Country so unreservedly bestowed upon it. The same might have been looked for even more assuredly after the War of 1812. Yet a renewal of the spirit of intolerance was to be witnessed before a score of years had passed, and in 1831 an organized press-propaganda of slander was be-

gun against the Church, after the first severe outbreak of fanaticism had already taken place.

The bigotry incited by pulpit and press, and stimulated by public placards, found its complete expression in the destruction of the Ursuline Convent at Charlestown, Massachusetts, in 1834. Not only was the Blessed Sacrament dishonored, but everything within the building was destroyed before the torch was set to it. The engines that arrived at the scene of conflagration stood idly by and the firemen watched the drunken rabble dancing in glee about the burning pile and then retired. The magistrates did not move a finger. Such are some of the details given by John Gilmary Shea. "The mob," he writes, "did not even spare the graves of the dead. The coffins were torn open and the bodies exposed." A farcical trial, with the set purpose of acquitting the rioters, completed the incident. The charges made against the Sisters were disproved by a Protestant committee, but the harm had been done. Such was the first result of the campaign of slanderous accusations carried on against Catholic institutions. The churches in Boston were threatened and could rely for their protection only on the strong arm of Catholics themselves. The Pope was shot in effigy by the Washington Artillery.

The work of the father of lies now continued. The spirit of Benedict Arnold was abroad in the land. Men were to be found then, as now, willing to betray the peace and welfare of their country in order to satisfy their bigotry or promote their own private interests. Political associations having such purposes in view arose and passed away and were supplanted by new organizations with the same scope and nature. Each worked in turn upon the ignorance or prejudice of the men whom it

deceived. Unscrupulous politicians were not unwilling to use them as political tools.

The angel of darkness is a gentleman, Shakespeare tells us; he is a patriot, he can even be the purest of pure evangelicals. All these forms he must assume, singly or together, if he would succeed in deceiving a people who, though they desire fair-play, yet can readily enough be deluded for a time and betrayed into acts of injustice and tyranny against the victims of calumny. The Native American party arose in 1844, when the American Protestant Association, founded in 1831, had been repudiated as an organized falsehood by American Protestants.

It was the Bible which was now in danger at the hands of the "foreign Papists." They had preserved it to the world for all these centuries, they had guarded it as one of their greatest treasures, and were willing to lay down their lives for the least of the truths it contained. For this very reason they insisted so strongly upon the exclusive use of an approved Catholic version for the children of the Church. But reason obtains scant hearing from fanatic bigotry. It were easier to argue with poor, distraught and raving Lear, bidding the cataracts and hurricanes spout, and heaven's lightning singe his white head, than to convince blind prejudice. Worse than all is the wilful malice or base political intrigue that underlies such movements. The noble work accomplished by the Native American party during the first five months of its existence was thus summarized by the Rev. M. Fithian, a Protestant minister:

Two Catholic churches burned, one thrice fired and desecrated; a Catholic seminary and retreat consumed by the torches of an incendiary mob; two rectories and a most valuable

library destroyed; forty dwellings in ruins, about forty human lives sacrificed and sixty of our fellow citizens wounded; riot and rebellion and treason rampant; the laws boldly set at defiance, and peace and order prostrated by ruffian violence.

To picture in detail the scenes of bigotry and fanaticism, of anarchy and treason which now followed with the appearance of the American Protective Association, founded in 1852, were a long and dismal task. In "Loyalty of Catholics," from which the above extract is quoted, a brief enumeration may be found. The "protective" act of the fanatics was an attack upon a convent of helpless and inoffensive nuns in Providence, R. I. Next followed outbreaks of civic hatred from press and platform in the cities of Boston, Baltimore, Wheeling, Pittsburgh, and many other places. The agitation reached a climax in the mob attack upon the Cathedral of Cincinnati, resulting in the loss of several lives. The patriotic work now continued with the bloody riots of St. Louis; with the tarring and feathering of a Jesuit priest at Ellsworth, Maine; with the attempted destruction of churches in Newark, N. J.; Williamsburg, N. Y. and Manchester, N. H., and with the successful burning or wrecking by gunpowder of Catholic churches in Bath, Maine; Dorchester, Mass.; and Sydney and Massillon, Ohio. The supreme triumph of the movement was the murder of a hundred poor Irish and Germans on "Bloody Monday" in Louisville, Ky. Here, surely, is an honorable record of achievements in the service of the powers of darkness, for a period extending only from 1852 to August 6, 1855, for the latter is the date of the massacre referred to of which Bishop Spalding wrote:

We have just passed through a reign of terror, surpassed only by the Philadelphia riots. Nearly a hundred poor Irish

and Germans have been butchered or burned and some twenty houses have been fired and burned to the ground. The city authorities, all Know-Nothings, looked calmly on, and they are now endeavoring to lay the blame on Catholics. (*"The Centenary of Catholicity in Kentucky," Hon. Ben. J. Webb; p. 484.*)

This last incident, indeed, was a refinement worthy of Nero himself. There is no need of continuing the sickening recital. Every rope and wheel and pulley of political intrigue was now set in motion to destroy the religious liberty guaranteed by the Constitution. Petty, spiteful Lilliputian efforts; but dangerous because of their very persistence.

We are only too well aware of the constant and insidious attempts which have since then been made to discredit the Church. The associations which have been founded and the papers which have been issued with the sole purpose of compassing the financial and political ruin of her children by every foul and treasonable means are sufficiently familiar. "We are endeavoring to tabulate and run to corner all Romanists running for office on State and Congressional tickets," thus runs the confidential message sent out from a paper whose editor professes to be a minister of the Gospel. "Let it be understood that no Catholic need apply on election day, or any other day," is the announcement made in another place. There is no need of multiplying instances. Yet under all these outrages Catholics have displayed nothing but the most scrupulous loyalty to their country, fighting and falling in the foremost ranks wherever there was a call for patriots and heroes. "Instead of offering the most remote insult, it is our duty to address public thanks to these our brethren," are the memorable words of Washington (Nov. 5, 1775).

Catholics ask for no favors, but they are bound, by their sacred duty of citizenship, to secure justice for the Church, as for every other rightfully established institution in these free States of ours. And they are bound to secure this justice even at the ballot-box. "Liberty and Justice for All," is the first principle of true Americanism, and the Catholic Church is not excluded.

Let our great "puissant," American Catholic Church then be alert in the defense of her rights. To bring about her ruin, our foes are ever wakeful, ever watchful, ever traitorously intent upon the subversion of the principle of true Americanism. Their weapons of calumny and slander may appear in the sight of honest men no better than children's toys, but it is well to recall the fable of the giant, who once fell asleep, so the story goes, and woke to find himself helplessly bound by a thousand cords securely fastened by a host of despicable little creatures. There is a lesson for us in the Gulliver of fiction.

For non-Catholics the facts are likewise sufficiently plain. They show that nothing is further from the mind of the Church than the thought of meddling with purely political issues. To repeat once more the words of Pope Pius X: "It is not the Church that has descended into the political arena; she has been dragged there to be mutilated and despoiled."

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