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Brief History of Religion

FROM THE

CREATION TO THE PRESENT DAY

NEW YORK

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TO THE PRESENT TIME
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A Brief History of Religion.

FROM ADAM TO MOSES.

In the beginning God created heaven and earth. He said, "Let them be made," and they were made. He made the light and the darkness; He made the heaven and the earth, with the dry land and the sea; He made the sun, the moon, and the stars; He made the plants, the trees, and the animals. And last of all God created man to His own image and likeness. The name of the first man was Adam, and the name of the first woman was Eve. They were just and holy, and were friends of God. They were placed in a Paradise of happiness, and they and their descendants were never to die.

To test their obedience God commanded them not to eat of a certain tree lest they should die. But the tempter said to them: "You shall not die the death. For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened; and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Adam and Eve believed the tempter, and broke the command of God. For this sin of disobedience they were deprived of all right to Heaven which they might have gained had they obeyed God, and all their descendants with them. They were driven from the Garden of Paradise, and were banished from God. But at the same moment God promised them a Redeemer, who should make an atonement for them, and give them another chance to enter Heaven (Gen. iii. 15).

Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and

Eve. And when they offered sacrifice to God, He accepted Abel's sacrifice, but Cain's He rejected. And Cain being jealous of his brother, killed him, and as a punishment was cursed by God, and became a vagabond on the earth.

The next child of Adam and Eve was Seth. After many hundred years his descendants became very wicked, so that God resolved to destroy them in a flood. But God had mercy on Noe and His family, and saved them from destruction.

The descendants of Noe became very numerous and spread abroad all over the earth. In their wickedness they began to build a tower to scale the heights of Heaven, but God so confounded their language that they had to leave off building, and the place was called "Babel," or confusion. The descendants of Noe also became very wicked, and left the true faith which God had given to Adam, and which Noe had handed down to them. Instead of worshipping the true God of whom Noe and his sons had taught them, they began to worship idols: the sun and moon, the stars and other objects of nature. This degeneration from the truth brought with it, as it always has, all kinds of vices, which prevailed again amongst mankind.

God, however, provided that the true faith should not die out entirely, and so He chose Abraham [B.C. 1920], and revealed Himself to him. He promised him that if he would be faithful, and keep the laws of nature and worship Him, that He would make of him a great people like the sand on the sea-shore for multitude; that from among his descendants should come forth the long-promised Redeemer. In order to test his faith, God told him to take his only son Isaac and offer him up as a sacrifice to Him. Abraham was ready to do all that God required, not doubting but that God would do what was perfectly just in the matter. And when God saw that Abraham

was faithful to Him, He sent an angel who saved the life of Isaac. Ever since this event, Abraham has been called the "Father of the faithful" by his descendants.

The patriarch Jacob was the son of Isaac and lived with his family in the land of Chanaan, the country into which God had called Abraham. He had twelve sons, who became the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. One of them, Joseph, was chosen by God to be a figure of Jesus Christ. He was hated by his brethren, and was sold away as a slave into the land of Egypt. There he at last, by the providence of God, was appointed, next to the king, the supreme ruler of the country. By his wisdom and foresight he saved the people of Egypt and the surrounding countries from starvation in a great famine, whence he obtained the title "Saviour of the world."

His father, and all the other children of Jacob, when they knew that Joseph was ruler over the land, went there to live. When Joseph was dying he spoke the remarkable prophecy regarding the Redeemer: "The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda till He come that is to be sent; and He shall be the expectation of the nations" (Gen. xlix. 10). And, indeed, when Christ came who was sent by God, Herod the king was seated on the throne of the kings of Juda, and in a very few years the kingdom came to an end.

FROM MOSES TO CHRIST.

After the death of Joseph the Israelites grew to be a great people, so that the Egyptians, fearing that they might rule the land, subjected them to the most cruel slavery. After four hundred and eighty years God revealed Himself to Moses, a Hebrew, and making him His messenger, sent him to lead the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, back again to the land of Cha-

naan whence their fathers had gone out. As long as the king of Egypt would not let them go, so long did Moses, by the command of God, trouble the land with ten great and awful plagues. Finally, when in one night the first-born died, and all the first-born of cattle as well, Pharaoh called for Moses in the middle of the night and told him to leave at once. The Israelites had saved their children from the destroying angel by sprinkling the doors of their houses with the blood of the lamb which they had killed that day in honor of their departure, which God had told them was at hand.

As soon as the people were gone, the king was sorry that he had let them go. In great haste then he summoned his troops and started off in pursuit. He surrounded them at the shore of the Red Sea. When they were in despair, God miraculously opened the waters of the sea, and the Israelites went through the sea with the waters on either side of them like walls. The army of Pharaoh attempting to follow them, were, at the prayer of Moses, overwhelmed and drowned.

Now began the work of founding the great nation from whom was to come forth the Redeemer. After fifty days' travel the people came to a mountain called Sinai. At this place God called Moses to Him up on the mountain, and he was forty days there making ready, under the direct inspiration of God Himself, the law which was to make of them a people fitted to be blessed with the name of the "Chosen People."

In consequence of their sins, however, which they committed in spite of all the wonders which God had worked in their sight, they were compelled to wander in the wilderness for forty years, until all those who had come out of Egypt were dead. God visibly protected them in their wanderings, and worked every day miracles which should have made them believe His words. Their clothing never grew old upon their backs during the forty years

of their wanderings; they were fed with manna, or bread which fell from heaven fresh for their use every night; and at last, after Moses died, they went across the river Jordan, as their fathers had crossed the Red Sea forty years before.

This was the land of which they had heard so much, in which they were to dwell when they had conquered it from the wicked and corrupt people who at this time inhabited it.

Four hundred years they lived under the government of the judges and the high-priests. During this time they were constantly falling into vice and idolatry by the mixed marriages which they made with the abominable pagans, whom they had not destroyed as God had told them. At the end of this time the people were desirous to have a king to rule over them, like their neighbors. So God, by the hand of His prophet Samuel, anointed a man named Saul to be their king.

This was in the year 1095 B.C. For some years Saul was a good man; but being disobedient, he was deprived of the kingdom, and at last perished miserably by his own hand. The next king was David, the "man after God's own heart," as he was called. He was noted for his great physical strength; when he was a mere lad he had killed the giant Goliath, the champion of the Philistines. He was a war-loving monarch and extended his kingdom far in all directions. He was also a great prophet, and wrote many of the psalms which have been used in the worship of God through the centuries by both Jews and Christians. The most remarkable of these psalms are those which tell of the Redeemer, who was to be born of his family, and of whose kingdom there was to be no end. For this reason Christ is called the Son of David.

King Solomon the Wise was the next king after his father on the throne. He built a magnificent temple to

God, and dedicated it in Jerusalem with great pomp and splendor about the year 1000 B.C. In the sanctuary was the ark of the covenant, which contained the two tables of stone which Moses had brought down from Mount Sinai when God gave the law to the people. No one was allowed to go within these sacred precincts except the high-priest, and he only once in the year. This was the only place where sacrifice could be offered to God in all the land, and every man over twelve years was obliged to go there at least once in a year, to offer sacrifice by the hands of the priests for his sins and the sins of his family.

Solomon did not persevere in his wisdom or his goodness, but intermarried with the pagan women and worshipped their false gods.

After his death the kingdom was divided. The two tribes of Juda and Benjamin remained faithful to the kingly line of the house of David, and their kings ruled always in Jerusalem. The other ten tribes made Samaria their capital, and were from that time known as the Kingdom of Israel. The Kingdom of Israel was destroyed and the ten tribes lost for ever, as a punishment for their sins, by the Assyrian captivity. In the year 718 B.C. the people of the Kingdom of Israel were carried off into the country about Nineveh, and never returned. So also the Kingdom of Juda was many times severely punished by God for its unfaithfulness. In the year 588 B.C. the King of Babylon destroyed the temple and carried away all the sacred vessels and ornaments, with the people, into captivity.

In the year 536 B.C. King Cyrus took Babylon and set the Jews free to return to the land of their fathers, where they began at once to rebuild the temple. When the old men complained that this second temple could not compare in glory with the first, the prophet Aggeus foretold that the glory of this latter should be greater

than that of the former house, because "the Desired of all nations" should enter it (Agg. ii. 8-10).

This captivity did away with the hateful vice of idolatry among the Jews, and henceforth they worshipped the one true God, in the manner prescribed by Moses many centuries before. The books of Holy Scripture were now collected and most carefully read and interpreted, and the people began to keep the law with the greatest precision. Some of them were found willing to suffer martyrdom rather than worship idols in the time of the King of Syria, Antiochus. The seven brothers known as the Machabees, and their heroic mother, are a glorious example of constancy in time of trial, preferring as they did the most horrible of deaths to disobedience to the law of God.

We now come to take our stand at the end of the Mosaic law, and at the establishment of the law of Christ. The whole world groaned under the burden of wickedness which the ungodly race of men had inflicted on it. With the exception of the Jews the whole world were idolaters. Nevertheless there still survived a tradition that a great teacher was one day to come, and bring back the days of purity which all men agreed had once existed. Many believed that this teacher would come out of Judea. Among the Jews themselves there had sprung up certain sects called the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and owing to their influence a great corruption in morals had taken place. It is true that they honored God with their lips, but their conduct was according to the sinful desires of their heart. Such was the state of the world, and the only hope for it lay in the speedy advent of some great reformer who should fearlessly rebuke the vices of the sons of Adam, and give to them a religion which they might follow for ever with confidence and love.

HISTORY OF CHRIST.

It was beyond the power of any man, however good and holy he might be, to remedy the evil of the world at this time. No one but God Himself could do it, and, in accordance with His promise to our first parents in the Garden of Eden, He was about to send His Divine Son into the world, that the world by Him might be saved. The whole world was at peace; Augustus was the emperor of the Roman nation, and Herod King of Judea when Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin in a stable of Bethlehem. He was of the royal family and house of David. His birth was announced by angels to the shepherds at Bethlehem; and three kings, led by a star, came from the East to worship Him. Herod the king was angry when it was told to him that "the King of the Jews" was born, and he endeavored to put Him to death, slaying in the attempt several thousand infants. He hoped by this means to include the Child of Mary; but God preserved Him, and when the slaughter took place they were safely hidden away in the land of Egypt. After some years they returned, and came and dwelt at Nazareth, an obscure little village of Galilee. Here He was subject to His parents as if He were not the Creator of the universe. At the age of twelve years He went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Pasch, or the Passover, a feast which the Jews celebrated in memory of their deliverance from the land of Egypt.

At the age of thirty years He went to the River Jordan, where John the Baptist was baptizing, and was there baptized by him. When He came up out of the water the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven was heard saying "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. iii. 17).

After His baptism our Lord was led away by the Spirit into the desert, and there, after a fast of forty days, underwent a most mysterious trial. Coming forth in the strength of His victory, He was prepared to begin His work of the Redemption. He began to gather together disciples in order to found the Church, by which His doctrine should in later times be spread over the world. So He went about teaching and preaching, and the first members of His Church were taken from every walk of life. He proved the truth of His doctrine by many and astounding miracles, so that no one could reasonably deny the truth of it.

Those who heard Him were filled with wonder and amazement, and many believed Him to be the Messiah. He chose out of His followers twelve men, whom He knew to be fit for the great work of spreading the Gospel, and appointed them His Apostles, or messengers. They were to be the witnesses of His doctrine and works, that, after He left the earth and went away to Heaven, they might preach what they had seen and heard of Him to all nations. These are the names of the twelve Apostles: Simon, who is also called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the elder, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew; James the less, the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus his brother, sometimes called Jude; Simon the Chanaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed Him. He chose also seventy-two disciples who preached His doctrine during His own ministry.

He prophesied to His Apostles concerning the foundation of His Church. The Church was to be to them in His stead after He had left the earth, and they were to "hear the Church" and obey its decisions as the voice of God. He promised by the aid of the Holy Ghost, whom He would send to them, never to allow the Church to fall into any error in those things which it is necessary

for men to do and to believe in order to save their souls (Luke x. 16). He appointed Peter to be the visible head of his Church on earth, called him *the rock* on which he said he would build his church, against which the gates of hell should never prevail, and promised him the keys of the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. xvi. 18-19, Luke xxii. 32, John xxi. 15-17). He told them distinctly that he left the earth and went to the Father in order that he might send the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, who would remain with them all days unto the consummation of the world. This Spirit of Truth was to be the living soul of the Church animating all its members. The twelve Apostles, the seventy-two disciples, and the others who adhered to Jesus, formed the beginning of that society of all the faithful which we call the Church of Christ.

The Redeemer of mankind gave to the people of His own race such proofs of His Divine mission as never had been given to any people before. He made the blind to see and the lame to walk; He restored the sick to health, and raised the dead to life. He fed five thousand with a few loaves and fishes. He fearlessly rebuked the prevailing vices of the men who occupied places of high official trust, and thereby brought upon Himself their undying hatred. These men were determined to ruin His work and to put Him to death. Shortly before his Passion He had raised to life Lazarus, His friend, who had been dead long enough to become corrupt in the grave. The people, hearing of this miracle, were filled with enthusiasm; and when Jesus went into Jerusalem, a few days after, they went forth to meet Him with palm branches in their hands. They spread down their garments in the way as He passed, and cried aloud: "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest" (Matt. xxi. 9). This scene and the feelings of the people made his enemies

still more angry, and from that day they sought to put Him to death.

These things happened at the end of His ministry, when He was thirty-three years of age. The Feast of the Passover was at hand, and Jesus sent two of His disciples to prepare the room for the feast where He was to institute the worship of the New Law. It is a principle of religion that sacrifice should be the essential part of its worship of the God in whom it trusts. From the days of Adam to the time of Christ the worshippers of the true God had not departed from the tradition which had been handed down from that memorable day, when Adam and Eve received the command to offer sacrifice to God, for their sins and for the sins of their children. The prophet Malachi had foretold that the days should come when in every place there should be sacrifice, and a clean offering. The sacrifices of the Old Law had been those of blood, and their administration was always attended with a great deal of washing and purifying consequent upon the slaughter of an animal.

But now had come the true Lamb who was to be put to a cruel death, and henceforth the sacrifice which was to be offered in the New Law was to be an unbloody one. And so they were gathered together in the room which had been made ready. As they were eating, the Divine Master took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and said: "Take ye, and eat: This is My Body which shall be delivered for you." Then He took a cup of wine and gave it to them, saying: "This is My Blood which shall be shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. Do this for a commemoration of me." That is to say: "Offer this sacrifice as you have seen Me do it. By so doing you make a real and true sacrifice of My Body and Blood, the same sacrifice that to-morrow I shall offer on the altar of the Cross. And this you shall do until I come again to judge the world." This,

then, is the sacrifice which Jesus Christ instituted, and which has been offered in His Church from that day to this, and shall be offered until He shall come again. After He had done this He gave some beautiful lessons on the charity which they ought to have for one another; of the unity which should prevail amongst them, and the holiness of life which each should make his own, if he wished to be known as a true disciple of Him. He told them that He was about to leave them, and that He would not leave them alone, but would send them a Comforter, the Holy Spirit of truth, who should abide with them for ever, and who would teach them all things.

After this He led them out into the garden of Gethsemani; there in the night, alone, His chosen ones heavy with sleep, He underwent an agony of suffering for the sins of the world. His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. "My Father," He prayed, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt. xxvi. 39). In the meantime, Judas, one of the twelve, was about to betray Him to the chief-priests. The price of his treachery had been paid to him, and so for thirty pieces of silver the traitor led them to the garden. Here Jesus again showed His divinity by miracles, healing the ear of the servant which Peter in his zeal cut off. But the time was gone by when men would listen to anything but their own passions; they had said that He must die, and the thing must be speedily accomplished. So they bound Him and led Him away, and all His disciples forsook Him and fled. He was delivered up to the Roman governor, who, being a coward and in fear of the mob if he did not give them their will, condemned Him to be crucified. And so, crowned with thorns, they led Him out to crucify Him.

On that sorrowful "Way of the Cross," as the Church calls it, He met His Mother. She saw Him to

whom she had given birth in the stable at Bethlehem now, like a despised criminal, going forth without the city to be the Ransom for the sins of the world. Filled with faith, she offered Him up to that same God who had found her worthy to be the mother of the Redeemer. The place of execution was called Calvary, or "the place of a skull," because there was a tradition that the skull of Adam had been buried there.

He was thrown down on the ground, and nailed by His hands and feet to a huge wooden cross which He had carried, until, falling three times, the guards had a little pity on Him, and made a man by the name of Simon carry it to the end of the journey. The cross was then raised up and planted in the ground, and the soldiers who had crucified Him sat down to watch Him, and to throw dice for His garment, of which they had stripped Him. They gave Him wine to dull the pain, but He would not receive it, for He was determined to suffer to the last extremity every torture which they in their malice could inflict upon Him. In the midst of all His sufferings He displayed the greatest patience, never saying a word except of mercy and prayer for forgiveness of His enemies. He pardoned also the thief who begged for it, and He provided for His blessed Mother by bidding St. John, who was there, to be a son to her, as she would be a mother to him. By this act He showed that His Mother was to be in time to come the great Mother of the Church, which He came into the world to found. At the time that these things were going on there was darkness over the land for three hours, so that the priests in the temple could not go on with the sacrifices until the true Paschal Lamb was slain. At the end of three hours He bowed His head and gave up His soul to His Father. At this moment there was a great earthquake, and the veil of the temple, which screened the Most Holy Place from the eyes of common people, was

rent in two from top to bottom. At the same time the dead saints of the Jews appeared to many in the city of Jerusalem.

The soul of Jesus went to the place where the souls of the just were awaiting the coming of the Redeemer, who should take them thence and carry them with Him to Heaven.

In order to be sure that He was dead, one of the soldiers there took a spear and plunged it into His side, and there came out a deluge of blood and water, which sight was the occasion of the conversion of the soldier to the faith.

And now came His friends to take down the body, and to prepare it for burial. They washed it, and anointed it, according to the custom of the country, and then, wrapping it up in a long white linen cloth, placed it in a sepulchre which was given for the purpose by a man named Joseph, from Arimathea. The Jews, remembering that He had said that He would rise from the dead the third day, set a guard, lest, as they said, "the disciples might come and steal the body and then say that He was risen." Christ rose from the dead very early on the morning of the first day of the week. For forty days He remained on the earth instructing and teaching His apostles. He gave them the power to forgive sins, and commanded them to remain together and await the coming of His Holy Spirit. He again gave to Peter the supreme headship, constituting him His Vicar, and finally, having given them orders to preach the Gospel to the whole world, He left them and went up into Heaven, with the assurance that He would so come in like manner as they had seen Him go away.

THE AGE OF PERSECUTION.

Ten days after the ascension of our Lord He sent to them, as He had promised, the Holy Spirit who was to guide them, and be the means of their sanctification and that of their hearers. He gave to them the power of speaking in the various languages of the people whom they should be called upon to teach. When this was known the people came together, and St. Peter preached such a powerful sermon that three thousand of them were converted to the new doctrine. At the same time they received the gift of working miracles, and five thousand of the people came asking to be baptized after St. Peter had cured a lame man who was lying helpless at the gate of the temple.

These things aroused the anger of the chief priests, and they determined to put an end to them at once. They found that this was easier to say than to do, and so they took the advice of one of their number, Gamaliel, and let them alone for awhile. But this would not do, the people were fast becoming filled with new doctrine, and they determined to stir up the people on the first opportunity. This came very soon. They had been forbidden to preach in the name of Jesus, and had been beaten for so doing. This only made them the more active in their endeavors to spread the Gospel. There was one of them named Stephen, a deacon in the Church, who by the means of a sermon that he preached stirred up the wrath of the rulers; they took him out of the city and stoned him to death, and then took the most stringent measures to prevent, if they could, any further preaching in the Name of Jesus Christ.

But there was no earthly power that could stop them, for they had their command from God, and they were ready at all times to prove it by their works and by the

blamelessness of their lives. One of the witnesses who had been present at the death of Stephen was a young man by the name of Saul. But Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus, converted him, and made him the great Apostle of the Gentiles. He joined the other apostles in their missionary work, and, now known as Paul, by his preaching and his epistles added new power to the Church of Christ. He planted the Church in various parts of the world, and lived to see the Christian communities he founded grow until they became well established churches.

The history of the Church of God in the early ages is a history written in blood. There were ten great and cruel persecutions of the Christian Church by the Roman emperors. The first was under Nero, and the last, under Diocletian, came to an end in the year 317. During these years the Church gained countless converts in every part of the world, and the numbers of martyrs who shed their blood for the Faith will never be known on this side of the grave. During this time the city of Jerusalem had been entirely destroyed, and the Jews had been driven out of it into all countries of the world, as Christ had foretold. The sacred vessels of the temple were carried to Rome and melted down, or thrown into the river that runs through the city. We have remaining to the present day enough of the writings of this period to let us know what was the state of affairs in the Church at these times. The unity of the Church is the most striking thing which we notice. The headship of Peter's successor is acknowledged by all as a necessary thing in the Church. We find that the seven Sacraments, the daily Sacrifice, and all the other things in our holy religion which are dear to us to-day, were cherished by those saints and martyrs as sacred. The Prince of the Apostles and the Apostle of the Gentiles were crowned with martyrdom on the same day at Rome, in the year 67, on the 29th of June. All the Popes but one received the mar-

tyr's crown until the end of the last persecution. The reason of these persecutions was on account of the teaching of the Christian religion, which openly condemned the false religions of the empire, and taught that only by the Name of Jesus could eternal life be attained. The fact that Christianity endured these attacks on its life, and grew and prospered under them, ought to be a standing proof of its divinity; for how could any merely human institution flourish in the midst of such terrible opposition as was seen in these centuries of warfare? "The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church," is the saying of one of the writers of these times. Indeed it often happened, as in the case of St. Peter and St. Paul, that the executioner himself would declare that he was a Christian, and be put to death on the spot, receiving the baptism of blood.

FROM THE CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE TO THE RISE OF PROTESTANTISM.

In the year 312 Almighty God worked a miracle to free the Church from her bondage under the Roman emperors. It was a dark and gloomy time for the Christians. Diocletian had lately boasted that the name of Christian was blotted out. There was war in the empire—civil war. One day Constantine, the Emperor of the West, seeing that the forces of his enemy were far greater than his own, prayed to the true God for assistance. Suddenly there appeared in the sky a cross with these words over it: "In this Sign thou shalt conquer." The emperor made this his standard and carried it into the battle, and his troops were victorious. As an act of thanksgiving Constantine ordered that the Christian religion was henceforth to be protected and defended in the empire.

The gates of hell had not prevailed against the Church:

she had conquered, but only to begin another kind of warfare. Now were to come those days foretold of by our Lord, when "a man's enemies shall be those of his own household." Satan, finding that he could not injure the Church from without, begins now a more subtle attack from within. There sprung up almost immediately numerous heresies. As in the time of the Apostles so now and in subsequent ages, the rulers of the Church, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, held what are called General Councils under the presidency of the Pope or his legates, the first of which was that of Nice, in Bithynia, which in 325 condemned Arius and his followers for denying the divinity of Christ. This age was also that of the great teachers called the Fathers of the Church, such as St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, in the East; and in the West, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine. In the See of Peter were many great Pontiffs, such as St. Leo the Great, and later, St. Gregory the Great.

One of the wonders of God's grace in this age was the life of the Hermits, devout men and women who lived in solitude and communed alone with God, distinguished among whom were St. Paul the Hermit and St. Anthony. This preceded the monastic life, the patriarch of which in the West is St. Benedict, who lived in the sixth century, and whose spiritual children, gathered in monasteries, saved religion and civilization amid the torrents of the barbarous invasion of the wild tribes from Asia and the north of Europe, and then gave these ancestors of the races of modern Europe the doctrine and Church of Christ and painfully trained them to the ways of civilized life.

Meanwhile St. Patrick had converted Ireland. France and England and Germany, and later on Slavonia and Scandinavia, accepted the Gospel of Christ and bowed to His yoke. But these brief sentences mean ages of

heroic suffering and labor, and even martyrdom, on the part of many thousands of Catholic missionaries.

In the seventh century Mohammedanism arose, a fanatical sect founded upon the lying visions of Mohammed, the world's greatest deceiver. In the East it gradually gained ground, and finally nearly destroyed Christianity in those countries. The West was saved from it by the Crusades, or the wars of the cross, inspired by the Popes and preached by such servants of God as Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard.

In these centuries (called the middle ages) arose the great universities of learning in all Europe.

FROM THE RISE OF PROTESTANTISM TO THE PRESENT TIME.

But the rulers of the nations in a great many cases were not half so well converted to the faith as their subjects, and there were many great and long disputes with the Church as to her authority. In spite of the great missionaries whom God raised up to teach them, like St. Francis of Assisi, St. Dominic, St. Vincent Ferrer, and St. John Capistran, heresy found enough of fostering among the rulers to keep it alive; so that when the sixteenth century dawned the world was ready for the great desertion. Great plagues had laid waste the population, the clergy were decimated, and the people were not instructed, either from lack of priests or from their neglect of duty.

In Germany the rebellion against the Christian Church was led by Luther, an apostate monk. In England it was begun by an adulterous king, served by a greedy aristocracy and a time-serving episcopate; but the English people themselves never wanted the false religion, and resented it and fought against it; but by mingled

cunning and violence it was finally fastened upon them. Half of Germany and Switzerland, all of Ireland and Poland, most of the Netherlands and all of Southern Europe, rejected the new religion and remained Catholic.

Protestantism became the name of the new faith. Luther and Calvin, on the Continent of Europe, and the kings and queens of England, were its founders and leaders; and by the favor of princes who enriched themselves on the Church's property, it obtained control of most of the nations of Northern Europe. The fundamental doctrine was that the Bible is to be interpreted by each one for himself. As might be expected, this led to disputes, disunion, contention, and finally to most cruel religious wars, not only between Catholics and Protestants, but among Protestants themselves. The present divisions of Christendom are due to the same cause; and to it may be attributed the calamitous fact that paganism still holds captive the bulk of the human race, and that doubt and infidelity so widely prevail.

To thoroughly reform the Church and to meet and expose the errors of the new sects, the Pope assembled the General Council of Trent, in the middle of the sixteenth century. Its success was marvellous. The progress of error was stayed, the entire Church was filled with new life. Saints appeared in every nation; new religious orders, especially the Jesuits, founded by St. Ignatius Loyola, sprang to the aid of truth and virtue; the older ones took on a new youth, and the recently discovered parts of the world, in America and Asia, gave to the Church of Christ new races of Christians in place of those lost to the faith in Europe. The maxims of a devout Christian life and the ways of divine love were taught by St. Francis de Sales with an attractiveness hardly ever equalled. In the city of Rome itself religion flourished in an amazing degree, led on by such glorious servants of Christ as St. Philip Neri.

In the domain of charity the Catholic religion won the

greatest victories. St. Vincent de Paul, one of the holiest and greatest of men, by founding the Sisters of Charity—the first of hundreds of other such orders—has filled the world with the sweet fragrance of the love of Christ for suffering and fallen humanity.

During the last two centuries Europe has undergone many political and social convulsions. The Church has suffered much both in the person of her chief ruler, the Pope, and in her clergy and people. But the religion of Christ comes out of all these perils holding his standard of truth and virtue high above the tumult. And everywhere Catholics feel that the present era of liberty and intelligence is full of promise for their holy religion.

THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT.

At the end of the eighteenth century the outlook was exceedingly gloomy. The royal house of France had been overthrown, and Napoleon had, by his sagacity and strength of character, seized the reins of government. The principles of the Revolution were in all men's minds, and it was believed by many that in them lay the only chance for men.

A few years before this thirteen colonies of the Kingdom of England had thrown off the unjust yoke which that country had been trying with ill-success to impose upon them. These colonies united themselves together under certain articles of union, and formed the nation which is now called the United States of America. One of the clauses in the Constitution forbids the interference of the government in matters of religion. The oppressed Catholics of all countries soon fled to our country, and there found a place where they could worship God in peace and quietness.

THE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

Adapted from the V. Rev. I. T. Hecker.

What relation does Catholicity hold to the discovery of America and the settlement of this country? The discovery of the western continent was eminently a religious enterprise. Columbus had in vain sought aid for his great undertaking from his native city, Genoa; from Portugal, England, Venice, and the court of Spain; and it was after these fruitless applications that Juan Perez, the Prior of La Rabida, took up his cause and pleaded it with so much earnestness and ability in a letter to Queen Isabella that she at once sent for Columbus and offered to pledge her jewels to obtain funds for the expedition. The motive which animated Columbus, in common with the Franciscan prior and Isabella the Catholic, was the burning desire to carry the blessings of the Christian faith to the inhabitants of a continent, and it was the inspiration of this idea which brought a new world to light.

This inspiration has never died out; and if the Spanish and French missionaries did not accompany the first discoverers, they followed speedily in their track, and the work of the conversion of the aborigines was earnestly begun. In a short time they traversed the whole northern continent from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to California, and from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson's Bay. Sometimes missionaries were slain, but the fearless soldiers of the cross continued unceasingly their work of converting the natives and bringing them into the fold of Christ. The pages of history which narrate the self-sacrificing labors of the missionaries to the Indians are among the brightest in the annals of the Church.

The raising of the red men to the height of the Chris-

tian faith was but one of the fruits of the discovery of the new continent; another was to offer an asylum to all who in other lands were persecuted and oppressed on account of their religious convictions. Among the first to seek this relief from oppression on the virgin soil of the New World were the English Catholic colonists under Lord Baltimore. To their honor it is to be said that, both by the original design of the proprietary, Lord Baltimore, and by the legislative enactments of the freemen of the province, there reigned while their rule lasted in Maryland a perfect equality among all Christian denominations, and to all were secured the same rights and privileges, civil and religious. This act on the part of the colonists of Maryland was in harmony with the dictates of right reason and the authentic teachings of faith; for all attempts to bring by coercion men who differ in their religious convictions to uniformity in the profession of religious belief, if successful, would logically put an end to all rational religion. Compulsion never gave birth to faith, which is "not by any means a blind assent of the mind" (Vatican Council, "De Fide," chap. iii.), but essentially an intelligent and voluntary act. Convinced of this, as Catholics, the idea of religious tolerance flowed naturally and consistently in the minds of the first settlers on the shores of the Potomac. It was a noble act on their part to proclaim that within the province and jurisdiction of Maryland no Christian man should be molested in worshipping God according to the dictates of his conscience, and whoever supposes that the Syllabus teaches anything to the contrary seriously mistakes its meaning. Honor, then, to the pilgrim fathers of St. Mary! who, when the other settlements had a state-supported church and were intolerant to all others, asked for themselves no favor, but offered equal rights to all; thus excluding the secular authority of the state from interfering in matters of religion—a principle for which the Popes, in their struggles

with the secular powers for the rights of the Church, have always contended, and for which they still have to contend.

Let, then, those Catholic Anglo-Americans have their due share of praise for the religious toleration of which they were the first to give an example—an example, furthermore, which had a formative influence in shaping the Republic and its free institutions. For the principle of the incompetency of the state to enact laws controlling matters purely religious is the keystone of the arch of American liberties, and Catholics of all climes can point to it with special delight. This noble course of the Catholics of Maryland, however, was little appreciated, and they were hindered in their progress and trampled upon when those to whom they had so generously offered a refuge from persecution had attained to power in the province; nevertheless, they kept their faith, and were by far the largest part of the body of the Catholic Church up to the time when the great tide of immigration set in towards the shores of the United States, and their descendants still form a prominent and influential portion of the Catholic community.

The next original element was that furnished by France. The soil of the United States was at an early period watered by the blood of the French missionaries to the Indian tribes. In 1775 an accession to the Church came through the expulsion by the Puritans of Massachusetts of a colony of French Catholics from Acadia, on the Bay of Fundy. In spite of the solemn engagements of the capitulation, that they should not be disturbed, they were driven from their peaceful homes, and about seven thousand were scattered among the British colonies. These are the Acadians whose sad tale has been told by Longfellow in the beautiful poem of "Evangeline." The influence exerted by the flower of the French army and nobility who entered the service of the infant Republic at a time when, but for their aid, its cause would likely

have been lost, in removing prejudices from the minds of colonists against the Catholic religion, and compelling them to show at least a decent respect for the religious convictions of their Catholic allies, is not lightly to be estimated. Then the storm of the French Revolution drove to the shores of the United States, between the years 1791 and 1799, a body of apostolic clergymen whose labors reanimated the zeal of Catholics, caused conversions to the faith, organized new parishes, founded seminaries and colleges, and created bishoprics. It would be difficult to estimate the influence which these French missionaries exercised throughout the country by their exemplary lives, their learning, their virtues, and their qualities as men. Among them was a Maréchal, a Cheverus, a Bruté, a Flaget, and a Dubois. Twenty-three French priests came at that period to aid the young Church in the United States; six were made bishops, and of these Maréchal became the third Archbishop of Baltimore. Cheverus was the first Bishop of Boston, and was recalled to France and made Archbishop of Bordeaux and Cardinal.

To these are to be added several thousand Catholics, among whom were some hundred colored people, who came from San Domingo and other West Indian islands in 1793 to escape the effects of the French Revolution and the negro insurrection. These French Catholics added faith, piety, wealth to the infant Church, and their posterity, constant to their religion, rank among the distinguished citizens of the Republic. Their number was also considerably increased by the territories acquired or admitted to the Union, which were mostly inhabited by French Catholics. Louisiana was acquired in 1803, and had at that time about thirty-two thousand inhabitants, nearly all of whom were Catholics. Besides these were other settlements, peopled by the descendants mostly of French Canadians, at St. Louis, Detroit, Vincennes, which

have grown since into places of importance, and still retain the deep imprint of the French race.

Moreover, the immigration of the French from Canada to the United States has been slowly on the increase, and in recent years has grown rapidly in volume. The presence of this Canadian element is a marked feature in all the dioceses bordering on Canada, which contain a considerable number of parishes composed entirely of French Canadians. Thus it will be seen that the Catholic French element was an active and important one, both in regard to character and numbers, in the formation of the Catholic Church in the New World.

The Catholics from Ireland will not be found so numerous as those from England and France among the early settlers of North America. The Irish settlers, however considerable their aggregate number may have been, were not concentrated in any one locality like the Spanish, French, or English. A number of Catholic Irishmen, however, or their descendants, one of whom was Charles Carroll, the signer of the Declaration of Independence, took an active part in the struggle for independence. The first commodore, the father of the American navy, was John Barry, born in Ireland, a faithful Catholic, a true American, and an able seaman. But before the great exodus Ireland had given to America prelates distinguished for their faith, virtue, learning, eloquence, and apostolic zeal—prelates such as Bishop England, Archbishops Kenrick and Hughes. No man did more in his day than Bishop England to make the Catholic Church respected. Love for the free institutions of his adopted country was with him a vital principle, and often prompted his eloquence. Bishop England as a pulpit orator was unrivalled, and may be called the Chrysostom of the American Church. The first bishop and archbishop of the Church in the United States, John Carroll, and the first in North America to be invested with the dignity of the

cardinalate, the Archbishop of New York, John McCloskey, were Irishmen by descent.

But the famine of 1846-47 gave the impetus to a mighty stream of immigration which did not cease in volume until it supplied millions of faithful children to the young Church in America and rapidly extended her borders.

There will not be found in the Catholic Church in the United States a people, as a class, more devoted, sincere, and better instructed in their religion than the Germans. The number of their churches, schools, seminaries, hospitals, orphan asylums will compare advantageously, from an intellectual no less than a material point of view, with those of any other portion of the Catholic population. None are better supplied with priests for their people and teachers for their children than the Germans. The religious orders flourish among them, and are represented by the Benedictines, with several abbots; the Capuchins, and other branches of the order of St. Francis; the Jesuits, Redemptorists, and other religious congregations both of men and of women, especially such as are devoted to teaching.

Conversions to the Catholic faith during the early part of the century were few and isolated instances; but within the last forty-five years they have become more numerous. Speaking on this subject, a French writer who visited, twenty-six or more years ago, the United States, says: "It is difficult to apply a statistical table to the study of the question of conversions. The different Protestant sects furnish very unequal contingents to the little army of souls daily returning to the true faith; and it is a curious fact that the two sects which furnish the most are the Episcopalians, who in their forms and traditions approach nearest to the Catholic Church, and the Unitarians, who go to the very opposite extreme, and appear to push their philosophical and rationalistic principles almost beyond the pale of Christianity. These two sects

generally comprise the most enlightened and intellectual people of North America."

This observation is exact and has a profound reason for its basis. The human mind is uneasy until it has reached unity and grasps universal truth. And this is arrived at by two diverse but equally legitimate ways. Those who are born in sectarianism, as soon as they allow their reason to act on their faith learn that they have but fragments of Christian truth; and by tracing these to their logical connection with other truths contained in divine revelation they gain by degrees the knowledge of the whole body of revealed truth. Having reached this stage of preparation, there breaks upon their mental vision the divine character and mission of the Catholic Church. This once seen, to enter her fold becomes a test both of their intellectual consistency and of the sincerity of their faith in Christianity. This is the road which leads Episcopalians and others who still retain firmly one or more of the revealed truths of Christianity to the Catholic Church. The second class fall back upon the essential truths of natural reason. This basis recovered, the rejection of sectarianism logically follows, for the denial of any one truth of divine revelation involves of necessity a contradiction of human reason. Indignant at this, they ask rightly for a religion which is consonant with the dictates of reason and finds its foundation in the human breast. Americans who have repudiated Protestantism on the grounds of reason—and they are not a few—have made the discovery that the exposition of Christianity by the Catholic Church agrees with the dictates of reason, and that it takes in its scope all the faculties of human nature. This is the Unitarian road, which is destined, in our opinion, to become the great American highway to the Catholic Church.

There is scarcely an American family, distinguished either by its ancestry, or by its social position, or by its

wealth, which to-day has not one or more representatives among the converts to the Catholic Church. In some parts of the country there are congregations almost altogether made up of converts. Converts will be found among the bishops and clergy, and a large share also belong to the different learned professions or hold positions of similar respectability. To the foregoing source of Catholic increase is to be added the accession of Florida by purchase in 1819, containing a population of about 18,000; also the acquisition of Texas in 1845, and California and New Mexico in 1848, having about 160,000 inhabitants. These people were for the most part of Spanish-American blood, and nearly all Catholics. Finally, if we add 153,000 colored people and 80,000 Indians, we have all the original elements which the power of the Catholic faith has blended together in one, forming the organization and strength of the Catholic Church in the Republic of the United States.

The connection between the Republic and the Catholic Church, if satisfactorily treated, requires that the fundamental principles of the Republic should be clearly stated, and their relation with Protestantism first be disposed of. This is what we now attempt.

The Republic of the United States is the result of the gathered political wisdom and experience of past ages, shaped by a recognition of man's natural rights and a trust in his innate capacity for self-government beyond what had found expression in the prevailing political systems of Europe. The fundamental articles of the American political creed and the formative principles of the Republic are embodied in the Declaration of Independence, whence they passed gradually into the constitutions of the several States and into the Constitution of the United States, and have step by step worked their way more or less perfectly into the general and special laws of the country. These articles consist principally in the declaration

“that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

These declarations can be looked upon only by superficial thinkers as “glittering generalities,” whereas some are divine and fundamental, and all are practical verities, having a ground both in reason and revelation. They are divine, inasmuch as they declare the rights of the Creator in his creature; they are fundamental, for without the enjoyment of the natural rights which they proclaim man is not a man, but a slave or a chattel; they are practical, for man is, or ought to be, under his Creator, the master of his own destiny and free from any dominion not founded in divine right. The Creator invested man with these rights in order that he might fulfil the duties inseparably attached to them. For these rights put man in the possession of himself, and leave him free to reach the end for which his Creator called him into existence. He, therefore, who denies or violates these rights offends God, acts the tyrant, and is an enemy of mankind. And if there be any superior merit in the republican polity of the United States, it consists chiefly in this: that while it adds nothing and can add nothing to man's natural rights, it expresses more clearly, guards more securely, and protects more effectually these rights; so that man, under its popular institutions, enjoys greater liberty in working out his true destiny.

Since Christianity claims to be God's revelation of the great end for which He created man, it follows that those rights without which he cannot reach that end must find their sanction, expressed or implied, in all true interpretations of its doctrines.

Universal suffrage is the most efficient school to

awaken general intelligence, to teach a people their rights, and to arouse in their bosoms the sense of their manhood. For what is a vote? It is the recognition of man's intelligence and liberty and responsibility, the qualities which constitute his manhood. What is a vote? It is the admission that man, as man, is, or ought to be, considered a factor in a tolerably perfect political society; that he has the right to shape, and in bounden duty ought to shape so far as his ability extends, the course of the destiny of his country. A vote is a practical means by which every man can exercise his right and fulfil his duty by making his voice heard in the councils of the nation. It is the practical application of the truth that "all men are born equal"—that is, "all men have an equal right to life," to "liberty," and to the "pursuit of happiness," and, armed with a ballot, a man has the power of maintaining and protecting these rights. Every vote rightly understood means at least all that has been here stated.

There exists a necessary bond and correlation between the truths contained in the Declaration of Independence and the revealed truths of Christianity, since the truths of the natural order serve as indispensable supports to the body of revealed truths of faith. Deny to man reason, and religion can have no more meaning to men than to a brute or a machine. Deny the certitude of reason, and there would be no foundation for certitude in supernatural faith. Deny the innate freedom of the will, and the basis for all morality would be undermined, and the fountain-head of personal, political, and religious liberty would be dried up. Deny to man the gifts of reason and free-will, and the natural rights of man which flow from these gifts are the wild fancies of a dreamer, and a republic founded upon them becomes the baseless fabric of a vision.

The following declarations will throw more light on the value of human nature, and of the bearing of the truths of reason upon the supernatural truths of faith, and

make our road still easier. Reason is the organ of truth, and acts upon the truth which lies within its domain with infallible certitude. The action of reason precedes faith, and can admit the claims of no authority which does not appeal with entire trust to its jurisdiction for its verification, and can accept of none that does not accord and blend with its dictates. Man is by nature in possession of his free-will; therefore freedom is a birthright, and he holds it in trust from his Creator and is responsible for its right use. Human nature, as it now exists, is essentially good, and man naturally seeks and desires his Creator as the source of his happiness. Man has lost none of his original faculties and has forfeited none of his natural rights by Adam's fall, and therefore is by nature in possession of his natural rights, and it is rightly said: "Among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." "God has created all men equal" in regard to these rights, and therefore no one man has the natural right to govern another man; and all political authority in individuals is justly said to be derived from the consent of the collective people who are governed.

The people, under God, associated in a body politic, are the source of the sovereign political power in the civil state. The light of reason is the light of God in the soul, and the natural rights of man are conferred by God directly upon man; and therefore a religion which does not affirm the value of human reason and defend the natural rights of man is baseless, and by no manner of means revealed by his Creator, but is a delusion or an imposition and worthy of no respect. With the light of these statements, the truths of which are in conformity with her authoritative teaching, the connection of the Catholic Church with the American Republic can easily be understood, and at the same time the light which they shed lays bare to the view of all men the real motives which actuate Catholics in their devotion to popular rights, and

places above all suspicion the sincerity of their love for popular institutions.

The American people in the Declaration of Independence avowed unequivocally their belief in the value of human nature, made a solemn act of loyalty to human reason, grounded their popular government on a solid foundation, and opened the door which leads directly to the truth: those truths which it asserted were not the fruits of philosophical speculations, but evident truths of human reason; and the rights which it affirmed were not the declamations of political dreamers, but rights inseparable from man's rational nature. Nor were these truths and these rights proclaimed to the world for the first time on the 4th of July, 1776, by the Continental Congress of the colonies; for they are as old as human nature, and will be found among the traditions of all races of civilized men. They are not lifeless abstractions but living truths, concreted more or less in all political governments, in their institutions and laws. Freedom is no tender sapling, but a hardy tree and of slow growth, whose roots are grounded in and entwined around the very elements of human nature, and under the shelter of its stout branches man has reached, through many struggles, his existing state of manhood.

The War of Independence was a struggle for man's sacred rights and liberties, and in support of these rights and liberties the colonists, as British subjects, cited the Magna Charta outlined by Cardinal Langton and his compeers, and won by them from King John in the meadow of Runnymede. Upon these inherent and acknowledged rights of man, and upon the conclusion which they derived from them that no taxation without representation ought to be permitted, as a practical maxim of government and safeguard of these rights which they had received as a legacy from our common Catholic ancestors, the war for independence began, was fought, was won;

the Republic was erected, and stands unchanged and immovable. Had the farseeing Count de Maistre been as well acquainted with the history of the American colonies as he was with the history of his own country or that of England, he would not have hazarded the statement, advanced in his *Considerations on France*, that he "did not believe that the United States would last" or that "the city of Washington would accomplish the object for which it was projected." All the conditions which he considered as essential to form a nation, and the vital principles necessary to produce a constitution, were existing and gave birth to the Republic. The Republic came forth from these into existence as naturally as the flower expands from the bud. The illustrious count's unbelief was in contradiction to his own political doctrines no less than to the truths of his Catholic faith. He whose intellectual vision is open to the light of first principles and their main bearings, and who is not altogether a stranger to true history, knows full well that the Catholic Church has battled her whole lifetime for those rights of man and that liberty which confer the greatest glory on the American Republic.

That the pages of history testify to the close relationship existing between popular governments and the Catholic faith is shown by the fact that all republics since the Christian era have sprung into existence under the influence of the Catholic Church, were founded in the ages of faith and by a Catholic people. The republic of San Marino has existed in an entirely Catholic population in the heart of Italy one thousand years or more; and that of Andorra, on the borders of Spain and France, has stood the same number of years, and neither shows any signs of approaching dissolution. But these republics are small in numbers and in extent of territory? Grant it; yet they are large enough and have existed long enough to illustrate the principle that republicanism is

congenial with the Catholic religion and at home in a Catholic population. Then, again, we have the Italian republics in Catholic ages—those of Venice, Pisa, Genoa, Milan, Florence, Padua, Bologna. In fact, there were no less than two hundred republics spread over the fair land of Italy. The principal Italian cities may be regarded as model republics. Some were founded in the ninth, others in the tenth or eleventh century, and lasted several hundred years. Venice stood one thousand years and more. The Swiss republic was founded in mediæval times, and counts among its heroes and martyrs of political liberty William Tell, Arnold von Winkelried, and Andrew Hofer, all faithful sons of the Catholic Church. The republics in South America, though rather quarrelsome, are at least the growth of a population altogether Catholic. How else can we explain that the love of liberty and popular institutions should spring up spontaneously and exclusively on Catholic soil, unless it be that republicanism and the Catholic Church have one common root?

From this point of view it is a matter of no surprise that Catholics were the first to proclaim religious freedom among the original colonists, and were also among the first and stanchest patriots in the war for independence. None will be found among the signers of the Declaration of Independence whose position in society and wealth were equal to those of Charles Carroll, the intelligent, sincere, and fervent Catholic layman. The priest who became the first bishop and first archbishop in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the United States was the intimate friend of Benjamin Franklin, and, an associate with him, invited by Congress to engage the Canadians to be neutral if they were not ready to join their efforts for independence. Washington, with his characteristic impartiality, publicly acknowledged at the close of the war the patriotic part which Catholics as a class had taken in the great struggle for liberty. No one can

appreciate the depth of conviction and the strength of affection of Catholics for republican institutions unless he sees, as they do, the same order of truths which serve as the foundation of his religious belief underlying, as their support, the free institutions of his country. The doctrines of the Catholic Church alone give to popular rights, and governments founded thereupon, an intellectual basis, and furnish their vital principle. What a Catholic believes as a member of the Catholic Church he believes as a citizen of the Republic. His religion consecrates his political convictions, and this consecration imparts a two-fold strength to his patriotism.

What a Catholic believes as a citizen of the Republic he believes as a member of the Catholic Church; and as the natural supports and strengthens the supernatural, this accounts for the universally acknowledged fact that no Catholics are more sincere in their religious belief, more loyal to the authority of the Church, more generous in her support, than the Catholic republican citizens of the United States. Catholicity in religion sanctions republicanism in politics, and republicanism in politics favors Catholicity in religion.

Their relationship is so intimate and vital that no attack can be made against the Church which is not equally a blow against the Republic. The animus of the American Protective Association is hostility to the Catholic Church, and its principles are in direct contradiction to the American bill of rights, and its policy is a flagrant violation of that religious, civil, and political liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States.

The first amendment of the Constitution says that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Let it, then, be clearly understood that what we maintain is that the common aim of all legitimate political government is the security of man's natural rights; that

the American Republic is most distinctly founded on this common basis; that the Catholic interpretation of Christianity emphatically sanctions its declaration of these rights, and as the natural and supernatural spring from one and the same divine source, "and God cannot deny himself, nor one truth ever contradict another" (Vatican Council, "De Fide et Ratione"), it follows that the Republic and the Catholic Church can never in their normal action, if intelligence reigns, clash, but, by a necessary law of their existence, mutually aid, advance, and complete each other. A citizen of the American Republic who understands himself is all the more loyal to the Republic because he is a Catholic, and all the better Catholic because he is loyal to the Republic. For the doctrines of the Catholic Church alone furnish him with the principles which enable him to make a synthesis between republicanism and Christianity.

The increase of Catholics in the United States has been due almost altogether to immigration; and when immigration diminishes will not her progress cease? The number of immigrants may fall short of what it has been, but still, for good reasons, it will continue to be large; for the liberty which is enjoyed under popular institutions, and the material advantages which the country offers to settlers, especially in its cheap and fertile lands, are inducements that will suffice of themselves to attract large numbers to its shores. The millions of immigrants settled in the Republic as their home and their country act as an attractive force to their relatives, friends, and former countrymen. The desire to escape the almost insupportable burden of military service by forced conscriptions, occasioned by frequent wars and by the dangers from rival nationalities continually looming with threatening aspect on the political horizon, will drive large numbers in the prime and vigor of manhood to a country that has no standing army to speak of, and whose geographical

position renders it free from all threatening dangers to its peace. Last and not least of the causes bearing on this point are religious persecutions. These have sent large numbers, thanks especially to Prince Bismarck, to the land of religious toleration. For these and other causes, from Ireland, Germany, and other countries of Europe will flow a continuous stream of immigrants to the United States. And as three-fifths of Europe retain the Catholic faith (omitting to count the promise of a greater increase from its Catholic population for which there are special reasons), the Catholic Church in the United States may rely on having, relatively at least, her share in the future immigrants.

No vessel sails without backwater, and this is true of the bark of the Church. Her counter-current has been in the number of her children who have strayed from her fold on account of the insufficiency of priests, churches, and the means for their religious instruction; and, again, the increased death-rate of the children of foreign parentage, occasioned for the most part by reason of poverty. As to the first drawback, the number of priests, churches, schools, these are in the larger settled States approaching to the needs of the faithful. The vocations to the priesthood in the most settled dioceses, we are informed, do not suffice for their wants.

But it is not only in branches of industry that Catholics have become prominent; there will be found among the distinguished merchants, bankers, judges, legislators, inventors, officers of the regular army, professors in colleges, literary and scientific men, members of the Catholic Church, and in all these classes Catholics are gaining, proportionately, representatives of their faith.

This prosperity and elevation have also their effect upon the material advancement of the Church. The Catholic cathedrals, both as to size and style of architecture, are the most conspicuous structures in the largest

cities in the United States, such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, New Orleans, Buffalo, Newark, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Albany, Rochester, Columbus, Mobile, Portland. Preparations are being made for the construction of cathedrals, or cathedrals are actually being built, in other populous cities—in Brooklyn, St. Louis. That of New York has, as becomes the metropolis of the Union, no rival in size, in costliness of material, and in architectural character on the continent of America.

The Catholic Church in the Republic finds her strength in relying for her material support upon the piety of the faithful, and the spirit and generosity with which all classes of her children respond to this test of the sincerity of their faith is an example which has a meaning at this moment for the whole Christian world. Socially and politically Catholics are slowly taking the rank to which their education, virtue, wealth, and numbers entitle them among the prominent forces of the Republic, and the light which their religion throws upon its vital principles and its Constitution will make them conspicuous as intelligent and patriotic citizens.

The future of the United States belongs, under God, to that religion which, by its conscious possession of truth and by the indwelling Spirit of divine love, shall succeed in bringing the American people to unity in their religious belief and action, as they are actually one in the political sense. It would be the utter despair of reason to suppose that truth cannot be known with certitude, and it is the virtual denial of God to question His readiness to fill the hearts of all men with His love. The thought that the existing wranglings in religion are to go on and increase for ever can only enter base minds and satisfy vulgar souls.

Admitting, then, all that has been said as true, it may be added that as the faith of the greater part of Catholics who come here from abroad rests on a traditional and

historical basis almost exclusively; conceding that this traditional faith will be firm enough to keep its hold upon the immigrants and retain them in the fold of the Church until death—granting all this, the question starts up forcibly here: But will not the Catholic faith, under the influence of republicanism, lose its hold in one or two, or at most in three, generations on their children?

It is too obvious to admit of denial that a people born and educated under the influence of popular institutions will tend to exalt reason, and emphasize the positive instincts of human nature, and be apt to look upon the intrinsic reason of things as the only criterion of truth. It is equally clear that the Catholic Church, if she is to keep within her fold those who have received her baptism, and to captivate an intelligent and energetic people like the Americans, will have to receive their challenge and be ready to answer satisfactorily the problems of reason; meet fully the demands of the needs of their spiritual nature; bless and sanctify the imagination and senses and all man's God-given instincts. And while answering the most energetic and sublime intelligence at the bar of reason, she will have to know how to retain her sweet and gentle hold on the tenderest affections of the child.

This task will not be an arduous one; for the authoritative teachings of the Catholic Church maintain the natural order as the basis of the supernatural, and, in the minds of many of the class of which we speak, Catholicity is still identified with Calvinism. Hence they do themselves the injustice to believe that in rejecting Calvinism they have also rejected Christianity altogether. They are not aware that the truths on which they based their rejection of Calvinism are affirmed by Catholicity. What they did in their repudiation of Calvinism—and Calvinism is nothing else but the logical basis of the dogmas of Protestantism—was only a repetition of the anathemas of the fathers of the Council of Trent, and

their action at bottom was founded mainly on the same reasons. They have abjured Protestantism, and never can be led to go back to what they know to be hostile to the genius of their country, contrary to the dictates of reason, and repugnant to their holiest affections. Its promised heaven has lost for them all attractions; its hell no longer excites any fear in their bosoms; and its ministers openly confess that, as a religious system, Protestantism fails to exercise any authority over the minds, or to exert any influence on the conduct, of the majority of the American people. It demands from them a crippling of their nature and a sacrifice of its rights which, once its thralldom has been broken, nothing can restore. These minds have impeached Protestantism on Catholic grounds, and when they have been led to see that, their prejudices against Christianity will be removed and they will be willing to complete their task.

They cannot rest content where they are, for the human mind was made by its Creator for truth, and in the absence of truth it ceases to live. When it refuses its assent to truth it is either because the truth has been travestied and made to appear as false, or because it is seen through a colored medium. For the intellect is powerless to reject the truth when seen as the truth. It is not in the search after truth, but in the tranquil possession of truth and appropriation of it by contemplation, that man finds the fullest and purest joy. Man craves to know the enigma of life, and until this is known his intelligence cannot be wholly content with the investigation of bugs, or baffled by a word which contains a sound and nothing more—the “unknowable.”

Moreover, the American mind in one aspect is unlike the European, in that infidelity, scepticism, materialism, and atheism cannot find a lodgment in it for any length of time. Their minds, like the native soil of their country, have something virginal, and furnish no nourishment for

these poisonous weeds, which, failing to take root, soon wither. There is a profound reason for this, and it will bear explanation. The reason may be found here: the denial of any one truth, carried out to its logical consequences, involves the denial of all truth. The so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century began by denying the supernatural origin of the divine institution of the Church, and by force of logical sequence proceeded to the denial of its divine authority, and thus by progression to the denial of all supernatural truth; thence the denial descended to philosophy, to politics, to the entire natural order of truth, and finally to the denial of Him from whom proceeds all truth, ending in its logical termination—atheism. The dominant intellectual tendency of Europe has, during these last three centuries, followed the law of negative sequence of error to its ultimate logical conclusion.

On the other hand, the affirmation of any one truth, logically followed out, leads to the knowledge and affirmation of all truth. The American Republic began afresh in the last century by the declaration of certain evident truths of reason. The law of its progression consists in tracing these truths out to their logical connection with all other truths, and finally coming to the knowledge of all truth, both in the natural and supernatural order, ending in the affirmation of universal truth and the union with the source of all truth—God. The dominant tendency of the American people is towards the law of the positive sequence of truth. The course of Europe was that of negation; the course of the United States was that of affirmation. The first was destructive; the second was constructive. The one was degrading; the other was elevating. That bred dissension; this created union. Europe, under the lead of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, turned its back on Catholicity and entered upon the downward road that ends in death; the

Republic of the United States, in affirming man's natural rights, started in the eighteenth century with its face to Catholicity, and is in the ascending way of life to God.

From this point of view the Declaration of American Independence has a higher meaning, and it may be said to be the turning-point in history from a negation to an affirmation of truth: interpreting democracy not as a downward but as an upward movement, and placing political society anew on the road to the fulfilment of its divine destiny.

Christianity, like republicanism, has in the last analysis nothing else to rely upon for its reception and success than reason and conscience and the innate powers of human nature, graciously aided as they always are; and let it once be shown that the Catholic interpretation of Christianity is consonant with the dictates of human reason, in accordance with man's normal feelings, favorable to the highest conceptions of man's dignity, and that it presents to his intelligence a destiny which awakens the uttermost action and devotion of all his powers, and you have opened the door to the American people for the reception of the complete evidence of the claims of the Catholic Church, and prepared the way for the universal acceptance of her divine character.

There is a general conviction abroad that the people's share in the government of a nation ought to be enlarged. It must be admitted that the American Republic has contributed not a little to form and support this conviction. But the principles of the Republic are not like those of an Utopia in the air; they are fixedly rooted in the ground of reason and revealed truth. If the framers of the Republic set aside certain privileges and institutions inherited from pagan, barbaric, or feudal times, it was not to break with the past, but because these things were unserviceable to a people with the spirit and in the circumstances of the colonists. Besides, they were no less

inharmonious with the more rational ideas of equity due to Christian influences; and by their omission the founders of the Republic providentially advanced political government, at least for a people situated as the American people were.

When the nature of the American Republic is better understood, and the exposition of Christianity is shaped in the light of its universal principles so as to suit the peculiarities of the American mind, the Catholic Church will not only keep her baptized American children in her fold, but will at the same time remove the prejudices existing in the minds of a large class of non-Catholics, and the dangers apprehended from the influence of republicanism will be turned into fresh evidences of the Church's divine character.

To sum up: He who does not see the hand of Divine Providence leading to the discovery of the western continent, and directing its settlement and subsequent events towards a more complete application to political society of the universal truths affirmed alike by human reason and Christianity, will fail to interpret *rightly* and *adequately* the history of the United States. It is also true that he who sees Heaven's hand in these events, and fails to see that Christ organized a body of men to guard and teach these universal truths to mankind, with the promise of his presence to the end of the world, will fail to interpret *rightly* and *adequately* the history of the Catholic Church, and is like a man who sees the light but has his back turned to the sun. But he who sees all this will not fail to see that the Republic and the Catholic Church, under the same divine guidance, are working together in the United States, forming the various races of men and nationalities into a homogeneous people, and by their united action giving a bright promise of a broader and higher development of man than has been heretofore accomplished.





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