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*Why We Need*

# Church Schools

By

CHARLES W. MEYERS

**THIRD EDITION**

**Revised and Enlarged**

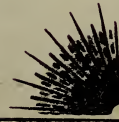
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# Why We Need Church Schools

By CHAS. W. MEYERS

It is the purpose of this paper to show the absolute necessity of parochial and private schools. To do this, we shall arrange the argument in a series of five propositions, each of which shall be clearly stated, and then proved by the testimony of the highest Catholic and Protestant authorities.

This discussion is made imperative by the fact that there is a general and persistent effort just now, to abolish all private and Church schools, and substitute the Public School in their stead. Several powerful anti-Catholic and atheistic organizations are back of this movement, and already their aggressive activities have extended over a dozen states. Although this movement is professedly patriotic, and claims that it was instituted to counteract the so-called enemies of the Public School, yet it is primarily and essentially an anti-Catholic movement. The intense bigotry connected with this agitation is clearly apparent, in the following declaration published in the "New Age," May, 1922, pp. 281-2:

"The Towner-Sterling Bill must pass! There must be compulsory education in the public schools up to, and including, the eighth grade! No one, not heartily in favor of the public school system in the United States, shall have anything to do with the administration of, or instruction in, our public schools! Finally, no one, male or female, who cannot be shown to be a product of the public school, shall be eligible to any office of trust or profit in the United States, or in any state!"

This is bigotry with a vim, and exhibits in its true character, the real animus which lies back of this whole crusade against Church and private schools. To give this anti-parochial school bill the color of constitutional impartiality, its authors innocently (?) styled it the "Compulsory Education Bill," distinguishing only between "public" and "private" schools, in order to conceal the real anti-Catholic spirit that prompted the whole movement. The distinguished editor of Brann's Iconclast struck the heart of the matter when he said:

"The fact that every leader and every organization back of the fight to do away with the parochial schools is anti-Catholic proves conclusively that enmity toward Catholicism is the real motive back of this agitation.

"Were there no prejudice against Catholics, if the anti-Catholic crusade did not exist, no movement to do away with private schools would ever have been inaugurated in any state in the union.

"The citizen who lines up with the opponents of the parochial school need not fool himself by posing as a friend of the public school. He is lining up on the side of bigotry, and might as well recognize that fact first as last.

"The anti-parochial school fight is merely a phase of the anti-Catholic crusade."—Brann's Iconclast, August, 1922.

Now how shall we counteract this cruel crusade against our Church Schools? Manifestly, by showing that the Church School is absolutely indispensable to the highest welfare of both Church and State. This we propose to do now in the five following propositions:

## We Stand for Church and Private Schools—

**Because Our State Schools Omit Moral and Religious Culture.** All true educators, both Catholic and Protestant, know that no system of education is complete that leaves out moral and religious training; and no Catholic has ever criticised the public schools on this point more severely than many leading Protestant scholars have done. Here are a number of statements selected from hundreds:

Prof. C. H. Henderson, one of the leading educators of our country, declared:

"Judged by their fruits, the public schools of America have not been successful, because they have failed to lay their foundations in the most profound region of the human spirit—its religion."

Rev. Dr. David H. Greer (Episcopal) said before the General Episcopal Convention:

"The Episcopal Church is not satisfied with the present system of public schools, because religion is not taught in them." (Washington, D. C., October 2, 1898.)

So far have our public schools failed in this matter of religious instruction, and so deplorable have been the results, that Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis of Brooklyn, New York, felt obliged to say:

"Our public school system may be held responsible for 16,000 murders annually and for a crop of 10,000,000 morally illiterate boys and girls, because denominational jealousies prohibit the Ten Commandments and fundamental ethics from being taught in our public schools."

This is a rather severe judgment to pass on our public schools; and some men, like Rev. Dr. Truett, of Dallas, Texas, have denied the truth of it; but Dr. Hillis's statement is supported by many other able writers. Mr. C. T. Wettstein, in an article entitled, "Does Education Without Religion Create Criminals," says:

"Dr. Hillis does not stand alone in this opinion. There are many prominent men in our country (and in Europe) whose opinions agree exactly with that of Dr. Hillis, that education without religion creates criminals and immorality."

Here are some of the other prominent Protestants who hold the same opinion:

Rev. Dr. E. T. Wolf, professor at Gettysburg Theological Seminary, said before the Evangelical Alliance, as reported in the Philadelphia Press, December 4, 1901:

"Moral training has for the most part been cast out of our public schools. Every faculty, except the highest and noblest, is exercised and invigorated; but the crowning faculty—that which is designed to animate and govern all others—is contemptuously ignored; and, unless its education can be secured, our young men and women will be graduated from our schools as MORAL IMBECILES. This country is facing a grave social problem."

Mr. Alfred G. Talley, Chief Assistant District Attorney of New York City, in speaking of juvenile criminals, said:

"We are turning out a nation of pagans from our public schools. If the public who read the newspaper accounts of holdups, burglaries and murders knew the ages of the prisoners held for them they would be startled. The proportion of them that are acts of boys and girls between fourteen and nineteen is alarming."

Dr. James S. Martin, Pittsburgh, Pa., Supt. National Reform Association, made this startling statement only a few months ago:

"We have sown to the winds of secularism in public education and are now reaping hell's whirlwind of anarchy and crime. The crimes and anarchy rampant in the land is but a standing demonstration of the failure of our public school system, which finds no place for the word of God in the training of the young citizen."

Many non-Catholic scholars also show their decided appreciation of the Catholic attitude toward this question.

The late President Harper, of Chicago University, says: "It is difficult to foretell the outcome of another fifty years of our educational system, which trains the mind only, but for the most part leaves the moral side untouched. The Roman Catholics meet this difficulty, while our Protestant churches utterly ignore it."

The Brooklyn Eagle (New York) tells us that "our whole machinery of education, from the kindergarten up to the university, is perilously weak at this point. We have multitudes of youth who have no intelligent sense of the

difference between right and wrong. The great Roman Catholic church is unquestionably right in her contention that the whole system, as it now exists, is morally a negation."

New York Times, March 1, 1910, says: "The movement of the Roman Catholics to secure a system of education which shall not ignore religion is a movement in the right direction. Their self-sacrificing effort in maintaining their parochial schools for this purpose ought to cause us Protestants to blush, when it is compared with our indifference in this matter."

Because Catholics have criticized the defectiveness of the public school work, many Protestants hastily conclude that Catholics are hostile to the whole matter of state education. This is not true.

The true attitude of the church toward the public school is very clearly stated by the Rt. Rev. John F. Noll, D.D., in "Our Sunday Visitor":

"The Catholic church is in no sense inimical to the public school. On the contrary, she wishes it well and shows her approval of it by copying its curriculum as far as it goes. The parish school is not an unfriendly rival of the public school, but it aims at supplementing the three Rs and accessory branches by teaching a fourth R—Religion and the moral virtues. The public school aims at preparing the child for this life; the parochial school for this life and the life to come. The public school occupies itself with secular lore only; the parochial school with the secular and spiritual. The public school emphasizes loyalty to country; the parochial school to God and country. The religious school enjoins respect for law and authority not merely as a civic, but also as a conscientious duty."

Another one of the clearest statements of the true Catholic attitude toward public schools is the following, published by The Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia:

"We strive to get the people to understand our true educational ideas—namely, that we do not desire to control the public schools, nor to hinder education, nor to force Catholicity upon unwilling minds; but that we desire universal education, and would have it free where possible, and would make it compulsory where necessary. And while we have no fault to find with those ~~outside our faith~~ who wish their children to attend the public schools, for ourselves we prefer a school where religion is taught."

But while Catholics do not oppose the public school because it is public, yet they are obliged to refrain from sending their children to the public school, simply because it does not teach religion and morals. For this fidelity to the law of God, Catholics have been grossly misunderstood and misrepresented. What has been the Church's faithful devotion to God has been falsely interpreted as her stubborn and intolerant antagonism to the public school. Fair-minded Protestants, however, have appreciated and deplored this false judgment.

Hon. Amasa Thornton, of New York, said in the North American Review, 1898:

"The Catholic Church has insisted that it is her duty to educate her children in such a way as to fix religious truths in their young minds. For this she has been assailed by the non-Catholic population. For this, Catholics have been charged with being enemies of the people and of the flag. But any careful observer can see that the only people as a class who are teaching their children in the way that will secure for the future the best civilization are the Catholics."

We stand for Church and Private Schools, in the Second Place—

2 Because It Is Impracticable for the Public Schools to Teach Religion and Morals.

The foolish assertion that has so often been made, that Catholics took the Bible out of the public schools, is perfectly absurd. The truth is, this was done by Protestants long ago. The first kind of public schools we had in the United States were the "common schools" of New England, instituted and operated by the theocracy of the "Pilgrim

Fathers." This began soon after the "Landing of the Pilgrims." These schools were thoroughly **religious** but intensely **Calvinistic**. So vigorous and intolerant was their Calvinism that by the year 1827 the distinguished non-Catholic, Horace Mann, became so disgusted with it that he began to create a strong public sentiment against the teaching of religion in the "common schools." In this same year he went so far as to secure the passage of a bill through the Massachusetts Legislature making it "unlawful to teach anything in the common schools intended to presulyte the children to the faith of any particular sect." In this way, Mann attempted to sweep away the very foundation of Puritanism, which he cordially hated. This was the **first step** toward the elimination of religious teaching from the public schools of the United States, and it was done by a **Protestant!**

This was followed up by other Protestants until 1840, when all the public schools in the United States were **secularized**. And it was not opposition to **religion** that caused this elimination of religious teaching from the public schools, but merely the practical difficulty of providing suitable religious instruction for children of **different denominations**. Catholics met the difficulty by establishing schools of their own. Most of the Protestant churches accepted the non-religious school and attempted to provide for the religious instruction of their children in the home, the Sunday school and the Church. But the home, the Sunday school and Church have failed adequately to do the work expected of them, so Protestants are now quite generally trying to put religion back into the public school.

The rapid multiplication of contending denominations has produced a complicated situation, which, it must be admitted, is not an easy one to adjust, to the satisfaction to all parties. And who are these parties? They are the people belonging to all the different religious bodies of the country. The children connected with these different churches constitute the students of the public schools, and this fact makes it impossible to introduce into the schools any **uniform** course of **religious instruction**. What would suit one, would not suit another; hence, it is **impracticable**, in such a complicated situation, for the state schools to include religious training in their curricula.

Now, how shall we solve this difficulty? There seems to be but one possible solution, and that is, that each church shall have the right to have its own church schools, in which to instruct its own children.

This is the Catholic idea, and it is also the idea of many Protestant Christians. Even those who do not definitely favor parochial schools, still believe that religious instruction should, in some way, form a part of every system of education; and the very fact that Jews, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and indeed, all church-going people, believe in **some method** of religious culture in education, is clear proof that the **principle** behind the parochial school idea is endorsed by churchmen of all creeds. But seeing the **insuperable difficulty** of having religious instruction in the public school, many prominent Protestants have finally come to a **definite endorsement** of the parochial school.

Rev. Dr. E. P. Morgan of New York says:

"Our country contains many various religious bodies, and hence the Bible cannot be used in our public schools. Why then, should we not all have parish schools? The Catholic Church is right in holding that children and youth should have religious instruction in connection with their whole course of learning, and therefore, they provide parish schools. All of our churches ought to do the same."

Many different efforts have been made to introduce the Bible and religion into the public schools, but they have all been failures, simply because of the presence of numerous religious sects and factions who hold widely different and contradictory views about religion.

One of the sanest discussions of this question appeared some months ago in the **Akron (O.) Times**. The Editor judiciously observes:

"With all respect to the sincerity and good intentions of the individuals and organizations carrying on a campaign for placing the Bible in the public schools, we feel that the movement is one of mistaken zeal. We are inclined to think, as many fair-minded citizens must think, that efforts to force the Bible into the curriculum of the public schools are inconsistent with the religious freedom guaranteed by the Constitution, and calculated to work for harm instead of good.

"If there were but one Bible and one religion—but one interpretation of the Bible—the problem would not be a problem at all. But there are numerous versions of the Scriptures, and each version is variously interpreted. Manifestly, there can be no unanimity in the matter, and any attempt to make an official designation as to what is the 'real' Bible, or what interpretation of the 'real' Bible is correct, simply amounts to a partnership between Church and State. The public schools are supported by taxation which falls in equal proportion upon all citizens regardless of their religious beliefs or unbeliefs. Nothing could be less American than the taxation of one sect for the propagation of a doctrine in conflict with its own creed."

The wide-awake Editor of "**Truth and Light**" has also clinched the argument on this question in the following pungent paragraphs:

"To read the Bible in public schools, without comment, as some Protestants advocate, would do more harm than good. Children are naturally inquisitive. They could not be forbidden to ask questions without arousing their suspicions. Teachers would either be compelled to explain certain texts or confess ignorance. If the latter, they would lose the respect of their pupils. If they tried to answer, their exegesis would be equivalent to teaching religion at the expense of the State. The State has no right to tax the citizen and then use his money for the purpose of discrediting his religious convictions."

"The great men who established our government foresaw the possibility of such a conflict, and provided for complete separation of Church and State.

"They also wisely decided that public schools, supported by general taxation, should be and forever remain free from sectarian control and religious prejudice. But they freely granted to every church the right to support, at its own expense, parochial schools, in which the religion of its choice would be taught.

"This is the only possible solution."

Again, We Stand for Church Schools—

3 Because Church Schools Save the State Many Millions of Dollars in School Expenses.

The Catholic Church, in order to give her children religious instruction, has found it necessary to establish her parish schools and has been willing to submit to the injustice of paying her proportion of the school taxes, and then in addition to this, supporting her own schools, at her own expense. In this way, she pays taxes from which her children get no benefit whatever. In other words, she pays her proportion toward the education of Protestant children, and then educates her own children at her own expense. This seems like a pretty plain case of "taxation without representation."

Ex-President Taft is quoted as having given utterance to the following in 1892, in Cincinnati, in behalf of the Catholics of that city:

"These Catholics, paying their proportion of the taxes, are constrained every year, on conscientious grounds, to yield to others their right to one-third of the school money, about \$200,000 a year. That is to say, these people are punished every year for believing as they do, to the extent of \$200,000; and to that extent those of us who send our children to these common schools become beneficiaries of Catholic money. What a shame for non-Catholics to have their children educated with money robbed from Catholics!"

Even the bigots themselves, who originated and are fostering this cruel crusade against the parochial schools, are forced to admit that Catholics suffer the injustice of paying a double school tax. The rabid "New Age" (May, 1920; p. 213), says:

"As matters now stand, Catholics virtually pay two school taxes; (1) a compulsory tax to the State for the support of the public school system, and (2) a voluntary tax, or contribution, for the support of their parochial schools. It is a hardship, but it is up to them to take a common-sense view of the matter and pay only one tax, that to the State, and altogether abandon the parochial schools as unnecessary."

Here we have a most marvelous piece of cold-blooded inpuence. A careful student of the situation in Oregon tells us that—

"In Oregon alone, it is estimated that there are 14,000 children in the elementary private schools who will be compelled to attend the public schools by the proposed legislation, and, allotting thirty-five children to each class room, it will require four hundred new class rooms for the additional pupils. With the average cost of \$15,000 a room, the total outlay would be \$6,000,000 for new school buildings. The average cost of the maintenance and operation of the elementary schools of Portland is \$72.35 a pupil, or about \$70 a pupil for the State at large. Fourteen thousand new pupils would cost the taxpayers \$980,000 per annum. In addition the annual interest on the \$6,000,000 which would be required for new buildings would be \$300,000. The depreciation is fixed at about one and one-half per cent, or \$90,000, and thus the annual increase in overhead charges would be \$1,370,000, with \$6,000,000 invested in new buildings.

"The estimated cost of Catholic school buildings in Oregon, which would be closed if the constitutional amendment becomes operative, is \$1,000,000. There are approximately one hundred buildings in which Catholic schools are conducted in the State."

In a recent issue of the *Sunday Visitor*, Monsignor John F. Noll, D.D., gives us the following enlightening facts about New York and Chicago:

"When school opened in New York City in September, 1922, it was discovered that there were still 116,000 children who must be put on 'part time.' At the beginning of the year there were 148,000 such children. Just think how the situation would be aggravated if the more than 100,000 children of the parochial schools of the city were compelled to knock at the doors of the public schools for admission. At the recent meeting of the Board of Education of New York City, a \$64,000,000 building program was approved, which it will take four years to execute. The Board authorized the building of sixty-two new elementary school buildings, besides many additions, the purchase of eighty-four elementary school sites, the erection of eight high school buildings, and the purchase of ten high school sites. All these structures, when completed, would accommodate 111,430 pupils, a total just about equivalent to the number of children attending the Catholic schools of New York City. Therefore, if the Catholic schools were closed, \$64,000,000 more would be needed, and the city would have to engage and pay 2,500 additional teachers, at an expense of \$7,000,000 annually. The school budget for New York City, as it is for the year 1923, is \$95,805,130.

"In Chicago, according to Superintendent Mortensen, 40,000 children are on 'part time' attendance during this school term. The Board of Education authorized \$22,000,000 for the construction of eight new buildings and fifteen additions to structures now in use. 'But,' said Mr. Mortensen, 'if attendance increases at the past rate, the part time problem will not be solved.' The superintendent gave the further information that 30,000 children are attending portable schools. If regular school buildings are to be erected for these, he said, \$20,000,000 more will be needed. Again, consider the panic which would ensue, if 100,000 parochial school children were to be turned over to the city for public school education. It would require \$50,000,000 additional for buildings and \$7,000,000 annually for extra teachers."

But the most complete, comprehensive, nation-wide statement on this subject is presented in the following account given by the *National Catholic Welfare News Service*. It is an elaborate array of facts and figures that is worthy of careful study:

"The total number of children in private schools of all types in 1918, the last year for which data is available in the United States Bureau of Education,



was practically 2,000,000. At the average per capita cost of schooling in public schools this would mean an additional cost to the public school authorities of \$81,500,000, if these children were all attending public schools.

"The actual number now in such schools is much larger, for in 1920 there were enrolled in Catholic elementary and secondary schools, according to the Directory of Catholic Colleges and Schools, compiled by Rev. Dr. James H. Ryan, 1,925,511 pupils. At the average cost of \$40.76 per child, given by the United States Bureau of Education as an outlay for current expenses in the public schools, this represents a saving of \$78,483,827 to the public school authorities. At the average cost of buildings and equipment per child enrolled in public schools, it represents a saving of \$215,600,000. The cost of providing buildings and equipment for the Catholic children now attending parochial schools, if required to attend public schools, would be \$278,368,798.

"In round figures, then, the additional financial burden which the bigots would place upon the shoulders of the people would amount to nearly \$400,000,000 for school buildings and equipment alone. On top of this, more than \$150,000,000 annually would be required over and above the present cost of public education."

These astonishing figures should certainly open our eyes to the fact that, even from a financial standpoint alone, our church and private schools are simply indispensable. But while this is a weighty consideration, there are other reasons, for these schools, which are still more important. This brings us now to our fourth proposition.

#### We Stand for Church and Private Schools—

#### 4 Because the State Has Neither the Moral nor the Constitutional Right to the Exclusive Control of Schools and Education.

It is a generally accepted ethical principle that it is the right and the duty of every responsible parent to control the education of his children, provided such education is not vicious and hurtful to society; and any violation of this principle, either by an individual or an institution, is essentially unjust, and therefore immoral.

Dr. Nicholas Murray, the distinguished president of Columbia University, a Protestant scholar of high rank, has this to say on the relation of Parents and the State in the education of children:

"Education is primarily and fundamentally a parental and family privilege and duty. The parents of a child are responsible before God and man for its upbringing and its preparation for an honorable and useful life. It is an essential part of their civil liberty to train their children in such wise and in such form of religious faith as they may prefer and choose.

"In our American theory, the State steps in, not to monopolize education or to attempt to cast all children in a common mold, or forcibly to deprive them of all religious training and instruction, but merely to prevent damage to itself. It offers a free opportunity to every child to receive elementary education, and usually much more than that, in tax-supported schools. But it is in no sense the business of the State, in our American political philosophy, to attempt to monopolize education or to prevent the freest choice by parents of the teachers and schools of their children.

"This measure is exceedingly dangerous, in that it strikes directly at the authority and dignity of the family, at religious training of every sort (since tax-supported schools may under no circumstances offer such training), and at that complete education which is the only training worth having."

The same thought is also emphasized by the Most Reverend Archbishop O'Connell, of Boston, in a paper communicated by His Eminence to the Catholic Educational Association, from which we quote the following:

"This right of parental possession is a natural right with its foundation in the very fact of birth; and that right involves the right of the parent to feed, clothe, and to educate the child physically, intellectually, and morally. These rights involve corresponding duties, and these the parent may neither evade nor ignore. Any State invasion of these rights or government interference with these duties is a violation of liberties that are God-given and which are by us inherited from those who gave America national independence.

"This does not mean, however, that the State has no competence as an educator and no legitimate functions in the field of education. The very purpose of its existence, the protection of private rights and the promotion of peace and happiness in society, suggests the right and the duty of the State to interest itself actively, under certain well-defined circumstances, in the training of its citizens. While always expected to foster and facilitate the work of private educational agencies, and to supplement the educational efforts of the citizens, there are times when the State must act, if its children are to be worthy citizens and competent voters."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Further than this the State cannot go without trespassing upon the rights of its subjects. It may encourage and promote education, but this does not necessitate a monopoly. It may provide schooling for children who would otherwise grow up in ignorance, but this is a supplementary right, not a primary and underived one. It may use constraint to bring such children to its schools, but when parents otherwise furnish proper education it cannot compel them to send children to the educational institutions it has established, nor can it exercise exclusively the function of education. And all this, because education is a parental not a political right, and the State exists to promote the welfare and to protect the rights of its citizens, not to antagonize or injure them. Different teaching than this comes only from those who know and care little of human rights, and less of the legitimate functions of a constitutional democracy."

This whole matter is admirably summed up in the following clear statements, made by Rev. Dr. Edwin V. O'Hara, of Portland, Ore.:

"The primacy of the home among social institutions is a fundamental principle of all religions. That the child belongs to the family is a teaching of religion and common sense; that it belongs to the State is an aberration of State paternalism. The acid test of any social measure is its effect on the home, and judged by this standard the proposed invasion of parental rights stands self-condemned.

"We proclaim the following principles: That the family is a more ancient and a more fundamental social institution than the State; that to parents belong primarily the right and the obligation of educating their own children; that only when parents fail to do their duty by their offspring has the State a right to interfere; that these rights of parents are primitive and inalienable and may not be violated by the State without injustice; that the rights of parents to educate their children and to choose the instructors for their own offspring is the most sacred and inamissable of human rights, and the exercise by the State of its police power to drag children from the homes of parents who are capable of and willing to perform their full duty in the education of their children, would be an indelible stain on the fair name of a free country, and an importation of tyrannous principles heretofore foreign to American traditions."

Just here we beg to note that even the most rabid enemies of the parochial schools, in their saner moments, admit the truth of this contention. The bitter and erratic "New Age," which has repeatedly asserted that all "Catholics should be disfranchised," forgot its bigotry once, and made the following sensible admission:

"If any church contends that religion should be a part of school training, then the only honest position such a church can take is to establish its own parochial schools." ("New Age," Oct. 1920; p. 460.)

If this be true, why in the world, then, is there such a persistent and damnable crusade against the parochial schools?

But this "national" idea of education is also **un-American**. We use this term here in a purely historic sense, to show that this "national" idea is contrary to all the traditional ideals of American history. It has no precedent in the history of our country.

The absurd claim has been made that "public education, supported and supervised by the State, was the original educational program," as adopted in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1642-47.

These schools were neither national nor secular. They had no national character at all, and were strictly sectarian, and they were

finally abandoned because they were instituted and controlled by a self-constituted Calvinistic Theocracy which was absolutely antagonistic to civil and religious liberty—a veritable union of Church and State which no liberty-loving American could tolerate. Roger Williams, the poor witches, the poor Quakers and the poor Papists might tell us some wonderful stories about the memorable experiences they had among these model educators. That such schools, in which Calvinism was stuffed by legal force into the heads of unwilling pupils, should be pointed out as the norm and pattern of our American school system, is perfectly preposterous! They were the most intolerant sectarian schools that were ever instituted in America.

The most complete refutation of this foolish claim that we have seen anywhere is given by the Georgia Catholic Laymen's Association in their splendid little pamphlet on "Catholics and Education" (p. 13). It is so thorough and forceful that we cannot refrain from quoting it at some length:

"There is no trace of the public school in our American foundations. It is not mentioned in our national Constitution. It was not mentioned in any of the constitutions of the original States. It did not exist in the Colonies. It did not exist in the States for more than fifty years after the formation of the Union. All of the foundations of our country were laid without the public school. All of the traditions of our country were formed without the public school. All of the builders of our country were educated without the public school. Not one who signed our Declaration of Independence, or who fought in our American Revolution, or who helped to frame our American Constitution, ever saw a public school. The United States had been going for a century before we had a President who was educated in the public school; and almost that long before we had a Senator, a Congressman, a State legislator, a Governor, a Judge, who was educated in the public school. There is no greater folly than to say the public school is a part of our American foundations; no greater fallacy than to say every citizen should be required to educate his children in the public school and no other.

"The State-school idea is not American. It did not originate in our country, but in Prussia, and although greatly modified in its adaptation, nothing can erase the Prussian stamp of its origin."

The same thought is expressed, in a little different form, by the prominent non-Catholic Editor of the "Liberty Magazine," Washington, D. C. This Protestant Editor condemns the "Towner-Sterling Bill" in the following caustic terms:

"The proposed law is an innovation upon all American laws and customs because private and religious schools have always been allowed and encouraged in the American republic and have been regarded as essential to the stability of good government and good citizenship due to their benign and spiritual influences."

\* \* \* \* \*

"It is un-American in that it violates both the spirit and the ideals of true Americanism as conceived by the founders of this great American republic who sought to grant both civil and religious liberty to every citizen without State interference so long as he conducted himself as a good citizen, respecting the same and equal rights of others."

\* \* \* \* \*

"It is Prussianism of the old type because before the great war the Prussian Kaiser compelled all children to attend the public schools in the grammar grades, and no denominational elementary schools were permitted in the German empire; but since the German republic has been established, private and sectarian schools are freely allowed to operate without governmental interference."

\* \* \* \* \*

"In fact, every one of the founders of the American republic and the framers of our Federal Constitution were educated entirely in private and sectarian schools. Our government was operated and maintained by citizens who received their entire education in private and parochial schools during the first fifty years of our national existence. The public school system never came into existence until the private and parochial schools were financially unable to give a liberal education to all who were clamoring for it. The public school system came into existence as an afterthought to educate the poorer classes that could not afford to send their children to the private and parochial schools."

Yes, the public school was an "afterthought" that did not come into our American life until near the middle of the last century; and this new "national" idea of putting all schools under the exclusive control of the Federal Government is so very recent that we cannot think of it as anything but an untried modern innovation.

And yet, its proponents have the hardihood to tell us that it had its origin in our "American foundation!"

Rev. Dr. James H. Ryan, in his able article on "Democracy and the School," has well said:

"The American attitude toward education has been to encourage private schools. It is only recently that certain propagandists have attempted to stampede the American people into a reversal of this traditional attitude toward private education by loudly proclaiming the State's right to educate every child in the State school, no matter what the parent thinks.

"This 'national' idea in education is a new one; so new that it has scarcely thrown off its academic swaddling clothes.

"Far from being an American ideal the 'national' school is about as un-American a thing as ever appeared on the stage of our national life.

"If this is not the philosophy of Prussianism, the word means nothing. The day when the American father surrenders his right over his child to the nation will mark the beginning of the end of American democracy. This is not prophecy. It is a plain statement of fact, based on the inevitable law of cause and effect."

This scheme for federalizing our schools is not even good modern Prussianism; it is the old cast-iron Prussianism of Bismarck, under whose iron rule all elementary private and religious schools were closed up, and all education was put under the exclusive control of the government. To call this "Americanism" is ridiculous in the extreme. When our Americans went over there and knocked this old Prussianism out of the German Government and made it democratic, the Germans themselves had sense enough to appreciate the favor and to throw off the old Bismarckian Prussianism and adopt American ideals. Hence, they have done away with the exclusive State control of schools, and are today allowing private and parochial schools to flourish, unhindered. These wise American educational reformers might actually learn a lesson or two about "Americanism" from these democratic Prussians! It is remarkable that the political trend of these American reformers and that of the modern Prussians are exactly in opposite directions. While the Prussians are progressing toward Americanism, these "reformers" are retrograding toward the old Bismarckian Prussianism. Just now, when the progressive Prussians are beginning to act like Americans, these "smart" Americans are beginning to act like old, out-of-date Prussians! Yet, they would have us believe that their "national" scheme of school control is **American!**

Is it possible that these far-seeing propagandists can't see this glaring inconsistency?

Now, we propose to show briefly, that this federal scheme of school control is also **unconstitutional**. It is contradictory to the established principles of our American democracy, as expressed in such fundamental

American documents as the "Federal Constitution," the famous "Ordinance of 1789," and all the constitutions of the several States.

The Constitution of the United States contains the two following clearly expressed provisions, intended to safeguard the civil and religious rights of every American citizen:

"Amendment 1. Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

"Amendment 14, Art. 1. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States," etc.

These two articles of our Federal Constitution are the perennial safeguards of our civil and religious rights; and neither the United States Congress nor the Legislatures of any of the separate States, are permitted to make any laws that would abridge or conflict with these rights.

On this point, Dr. James H. Ryan says:

"Amongst the principles which underlie the democratic belief, there is one generally accepted as fundamental; namely, the right of the parent to educate his child as he sees fit. In the great democracy of the New World, the right to establish private schools, provided they meet certain required standards, has never been questioned either by the Federal or State governments."

Now, if neither the Federal Government, nor any of the State governments have ever question this right, on what grounds can Oregon, or any other State, propose now to violate this right? Indeed, in proposing such a measure, Oregon is acting contrary to her own constitution, which distinctly declares: "No law shall in any case, whatsoever, control the free exercise and enjoyment of religious opinions or convictions." If this be true, then, if any citizen of Oregon holds the "religious conviction" that it is his God-given right and duty to educate his own children, Oregon has no power, even according to her own constitution, to prevent it. Can Oregon claim the right to violate her own constitution, as well as the Constitution of the United States? Has Oregon, or any other State, the right to do what even the Congress of the United States is not permitted to do?

A Lutheran writer very properly declares:

"Under the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Oregon you enjoy religious liberty; that is, the liberty to worship according to the dictates of your conscience, and to rear your child according to your religion. If you see fit to send your child to a school in which the religion of your choice is taught, not one day in the week, but every day, and the whole training of the child is permeated by such religion, the State, under the constitution, must not prohibit you from doing so. This bill, if enacted, will prohibit you from doing so. Therefore, this bill is manifestly unconstitutional."

A prominent citizen of Oregon also asserts that "the passage of such a bill is equivalent to repudiation of the time-honored American principle of religious liberty. . . . The founders of the republic never dreamed of a compulsory system of education of any kind; the framers of the Constitution never held that parental rights were subordinate to, or proceeded from, the wishes of a majority which might be swayed by hate or prejudice or ignorance. The constitutionality of the Oregon bill will be tested on these grounds. It certainly makes the child a ward of the States, whether the parents wish it or not; and it is undeniably at loggerheads with the spirit of the Constitution."

The Bay City (Mich.) Times-Tribune declared emphatically:

"From no point of view can this sort of legislation be defended and it is next to a certainty that the courts, after reading the American Constitution, will not be slow to point out how the Oregon measure is without sufficient foundation upon which to stand."

Two years ago, when this question was up in Michigan, the attorney-general of that State advised that the proposed measure was unconstitutional; and, in harmony with this opinion, Justice Fallows, a member of the Supreme Court of that State, expressed the following judgment:

"The proposed amendment is in conflict with the fourteenth amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

"While the proposed amendment is very carefully worded to attract votes, it takes from the parents the privilege of educating their children in parochial or private schools; indeed, it takes from them the right to exercise any control over the education of their own offspring and gives such right to the State. It prohibits the conduct of the business of educating children by private parties, denominations and corporations organized for that purpose under the laws..

"That these schools may be regulated by the State is admitted on all hands, but that their existence may be prohibited by State mandate is an entirely different proposition. Before the business of conducting these parochial schools can be outlawed and prohibited, their prohibition must bear some reasonable relation to the public good, or the public health, or the public morals, or the public safety or the public welfare. The right to regulate I concede; the right to prohibit I deny."

These emphatic statements from eminent legal authorities should convince us, beyond all question, that the exclusive State control of schools and education is unconstitutional.

Not only would this proposed amendment to a State constitution violate the Constitution of the United States, but it would also violate the governmental principles set forth in another of the most famous State documents in American history. The celebrated "Ordinance of 1789," penned by Thomas Jefferson, and signed by George Washington, was virtually an agreement, "forever unalterable," between the Federal Government and the "Northwest Territory," as to the principles that should form the basis of the constitutions and laws of any states that might ever be formed out of this Territory. One of the principles of this famous "ordinance" is this:

"Religion, Morality and Knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

Now, just a little thoughtful examination of the wording of this document should make it perfectly clear to any logical mind that the framers of this "ordinance" associated "religion" and "morality" with "schools" and "education." If they believed that religion and morality were to be fostered by schools and education, then as a logical necessity they must have regarded religion and morality as an essential part of true education. There is no escape from this conclusion.

Again, another important principle in this noted document is the one that insures civil and religious liberty. It distinctly declares:

"No one, demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner, shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or his religious sentiments."

Now, the "religious sentiments" of a great host of peaceable, law-abiding American citizens—Catholics, Protestants, Jews and others—demand that they be privileged to exercise their "inalienable," God-given right to school their children in their own religious faith, and this famous "ordinance" guarantees that right to them.

Thus, it is clear that this recent proposed amendment, which would "molest" the "religious sentiments" of law-abiding American citizens, would be a gross violation of the "Ordinance of 1789."

This brings us now to our fifth and last proposition. We stand for Church and Private Schools—

**Because the Welfare and Safety of Our Nation Depends Upon It.**

Among the serious features of this proposed federal scheme of education, the two most dangerous ones are: (1) The violation of Constitutional authority, and (2) The Secularizing of all Primary and Secondary Schools.

These two things, if carried out, would be destructive of the very foundation of our democracy, and of the moral integrity of our future citizenry. The violation of Constitutional authority is bound to produce either **autocracy** or **anarchy**—sometimes the two in succession—and the exclusion of moral and religious training from our elementary and secondary schools is bound to lower the morals of our people, especially of the children who are to be the citizens of the next generation.

It is well known that religious and moral culture is the very basis of good citizenship. It seems clear, then, that the welfare and security of our nation depends, (1) on absolute loyalty to constituted civil authority, and (2) on the development of high moral character in our citizens. Now, it is these very two conditions of our country's prosperity and safety that would be destroyed by this proposed scheme to federalize and secularize our schools.

The un-Christian and un-American character of this proposed measure is very clearly shown up in a late article in "America," by John McGuinness. Under the title, "The Bulwark of Freedom," Mr. McGuinness says:

"Christian education is the one essential factor in the life of our republic. As our government derives its power from the people who enjoy universal suffrage, its life depends on a virtuous citizenship. Hence, it is imperative that religion and morality be made a part of our educational system, else we will ultimately destroy through legislation our whole moral fabric, the foundation of the government. This is no idle fancy. Listen to the Father of our Country in his farewell address:

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are the indispensable supports. . . . Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. . . . It is a popular government. This rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?"

"Washington plainly saw that if the secularists should ever succeed in their designs of secularizing the State, America would not endure as a free nation. And may we not truthfully ask, has not the decay of which Washington wrote already set in?"

"Our enemies, in striking out the parish school, seek to remove the greatest bulwark of the nation. Their acts brand them enemies of America as well as enemies of the Church. Many of our foremost educators, ministers and statesmen now see the real danger."

Not only Catholics, but a very large number of the most intelligent, fair-minded Protestants appreciate fully the evil trend of this crusade against the parochial schools, and also see clearly the sinister motive which lies behind it, and have the sincerity and courage to speak out openly and express their condemnation of it. Among these is the courageous Editor of the "Liberty Magazine," Washington, D. C., who points out the following evil results that would necessarily grow out of this "national" scheme of education. This courageous Protestant declares:

"It is vicious legislation because it is conceived and born in bigotry, and is the offspring of religious hatred and prejudice against a particular religion. While we do not agree with many of the doctrines of the Catholic Church, against whom in particular this legislation is aimed, yet that church is entitled to the same rights and privileges under our constitutional guarantees of civil and religious freedom as is any other church or citizen of the United States, so long as they respect the equal rights of others. A law that does not respect the equal rights of all citizens alike, irrespective of creed or religion, is not worthy of the recognition of American jurisprudence.

"The proposed law is communistic in principle and practice, as it places private and sectarian schools absolutely under the control of the State. This proposed law is exactly what Bolshevik Russia has put into effect in order to teach Lenin's and Trotsky's ideals of atheism and anarchy."

In the same spirit, Rev. C. S. Longacre, secretary of the Religious Liberty Association, has some pointed things to say about the campaign against parochial schools. Mr. Longacre, who is a non-Catholic clergyman, has the courage of his convictions as an American citizen. He writes:

"Both Oregon and Oklahoma are now testing the Americanism of their citizens by submitting a proposition to them which involves the repudiation and destruction of the great fundamental principle of religious liberty in the proposed anti-parochial school amendments. Back of these amendments is a sinister motive conceived by intolerance and born of prejudice, which aims to abolish both private and parochial schools by indirect methods and to crush the desire and love of religious liberty out of the hearts of the people,

"A powerful organization is seeking to rob a large class of citizens of the blessings of religious freedom so freely granted to them under our Constitution to nurture and train their children in the fear of the Lord and to worship God in harmony with the dictates of their own consciences. This freedom granted to every American parent under our magnificent laws and guarantees of human rights is the most cherished gift of all our temporal possessions in the United States of America."

As to what our attitude should be toward the bigots who are so zealous in their efforts to destroy our Church schools, Roger W. Babson gives us this wholesome reminder:

"The prosperity of our country depends on Christian education and leadership. With the forces of evil, backed up by men and money, systematically organized to destroy, we must back up with men and money our campaigns for Christian education. Yes, the safety of our Nation depends on Christian education."

No greater calamity could possibly befall our great nation than to have autocracy and centralization take the place of our glorious American democracy. When that occurs we may as well write "Ichabod" over the portals of our Temple of Liberty. We would do well to heed the words of that eminent Protestant historian, John Fiske, who in his "Critical Period of American History," gives us this solemn warning:

"If the day should ever arrive (which God forbid) when the people of the different parts of our country should allow their local affairs to be administered from Washington—on that day the progressive political career of the American people will have come to an end and the hopes that have been built upon it for the future happiness and prosperity of mankind will be wrecked forever."

Brother Americans, the fight is on! Under the leadership of one of the most powerful organizations in America, there has been formed a conspiracy whose determined purpose is to destroy all the elementary private and religious schools of our country. Shall we permit it? Are we too indifferent or stupid to stand up for our "inalienable" rights? Shall we allow a set of bigots and political adventurers to drive us into violation of the most sacred principles of our American democracy?

This diabolical conspiracy to crush our religious schools, is absolutely contrary to the principles of the great statesmen who founded our republic; and, hence, it is not only a **Godless**, but an **unpatriotic** scheme, which should receive the uncompromising condemnation and unremitting opposition of every true American citizen. It is anti-Christian and anti-American, and every believer in 'civil and religious liberty, and every champion of human rights' should put forth his ceaseless and unrelenting effort to defeat the infamous proposition.



For the benefit of those who may think that these serious predictions of future trouble are overdrawn, or unwarranted, we will present here a few illuminating statements made by the very men who are backing up this crusade. Look at some of the following arrogant boasts. The "New Age" (Aug., 1920; p. 354), declares openly:

"We have often frankly said . . . in so many words, that no avowed Roman Catholic should be elected or appointed to any office of public trust under the United States, or any State. . . . We propose to make it impossible for the hierarchy to undermine and overthrow the Constitution (1) of the United States, and substitute therefor the un-American doctrine of Church and State."

Every well-informed man should know that this is a false alarm; for in every crisis through which our country has passed throughout her entire history, no class of American citizens have proved their loyalty to the government more promptly and emphatically than our Catholic citizens have done.

In another issue of the same paper we find this insolent threat, based on a false and foolish assumption:

"There is just one way to get at the Romanists, and that is to disfranchise every one of them until the Pope openly, specifically and without the slightest reservation or equivocation, renounces any and every claim to temporal power and authority, and releases every Roman Catholic in every land from any and every obligation to support him in any such claim or pretense."

Here again we have an amazing exhibition of ignorance and bigotry. But it is gratifying to know that not all Masonic papers, nor all Masonic individuals, are of this type. There are reputable Masonic papers which are not in sympathy with the "New Age." In the February number (1922) of the "Square and Compass," a Masonic journal published in Denver, the Editor comments as follows on the "New Age."

"The country is full of Masonic journals, and the remarkable monotone evoked from these harps of one string is wonderful in this sameness: I said 'one string'—but in that I overstepped the mark—because they have two. The first is devoted to the wonderful sky-blue-pink perfection of everything and everybody to whom the name 'Mason' or 'Masonry' is attached; and the other string is devoted to telling what a hell of an outrage the Roman Catholic religion is, and what a blot it is on the world in general—and Masonry in particular.

"Take the best known and widest distributed one of them all, 'The New Age,' as an example. The January and February issues 'scream' with anti-Catholicism."

Neither are all individual Masons so bitterly intolerant. We are glad to learn, from those who claim to know, that many Masons in Oregon and other States labored hard to defeat the anti-parochial school bill. It is gratifying to know, too, that a large number of other non-Catholics, besides many Masons, have proved their sincere devotion to what they believe to be right by voting against the exclusive public school. The average American is independent and tolerant, and is willing to grant to others the rights which he claims for himself. The Hon. Joseph Scott, of Los Angeles, Calif., a staunch Catholic, recently paid this compliment to the average American non-Catholic:

"Speaking with some little experience in my travels, and with some positive views as to what the pages of history unfold, I have no hesitation in saying that the non-Catholic American, taking him as a class, is the most tolerant type of manhood in the world today."

All honor to a class of high-minded, independent American citizens, who cannot be driven, even by their own organization, to violate the sacred principles of civil and religious liberty! We are glad to believe that the average American citizen, Catholic or non-Catholic, can be depended on to do what he understands to be the right thing.

For every such blue-blooded, patriotic American we can but have the highest respect. First your **God**; then your **Country**; then your **Order**, if it is true to God and Country!

We wish it distinctly understood that we are not fighting the public school, as such, but we are opposed to this new proposition that it shall be the **only** school system in our country. While we are aware of the **defectiveness** of the public school, yet we are willing that it shall have its place in our educational system, but not the **exclusive control** of it. We simply mean to defend our inherent, constitutional right to have church and private schools, if we want them.

Now, from the foregoing declarations of some of our most eminent scholars and educators, we are forced to conclude that it is absolutely essential to the safety and welfare of our country that both Catholics and Protestants shall have their own church and private schools in which moral and religious culture shall be given.

If moral and religious training is necessary to the development of the highest citizenship; and if such Christian training cannot be provided by our State schools; then our American youth must be prepared for Christian citizenship in schools established and maintained by the churches.

Again, if morality and religion are essential to a nation's safety and prosperity; and if moral and religious culture can be acquired only in our church and private schools; then the establishment and maintenance of private and church schools is absolutely essential to our country's welfare. This is a crucial point which we dare not ignore. We have already ignored it too long and allowed the situation to become deplorable. The alarming fact that 60,000,000 of our population—more than 50 per cent—have nothing whatever to do with churches and religion, is a solemn warning to us that we have already made frightful strides in the direction of heathenism. This state of things is all the more appalling when we consider the fact that 27,000,000 of this 60,000,000 are young people below the age of 25, the very people who will control the affairs of our country in the next generation. At the present rate, it is only a matter of time when our dear Christian country will be wrecked on the rocks of paganism. The only thing that can save our republic from such an appalling fate is the active **support and promotion** of our **religious schools**.

Now, we feel assured that under the five preceding propositions it has been proved conclusively that we **need church and private schools** for the **moral, religious, economic and civic** welfare of our country, and even for the **very safety and perpetuation** of our **American democracy**. Without these schools our country will go to the dogs.

Wake up, Christian Americans! This is no time for dozing and dreaming. We've been at that too long already. And for Heaven's sake, don't "walk in your sleep!" That's more dangerous than standing still. If you **must** sleep, go to bed; but if you are really pretending to go somewhere, keep awake and know where you are going. Oregon is our warning that going to sleep **while a fight is on**, is not a safe thing to do. Not even "sleeping on your arms" is quite safe or sane while the battle is raging. If you mean to fight, better stand on your feet with your head on your shoulders and your face to the foe.

**Our enemies are wide awake, and organized, don't you forget it!** They know the value of **men, money and leadership**; and we, too, need

to appreciate the same, and organize ourselves, and keep organized, until we have won the fight for God and Country. We need to note every move the enemy makes, the instant he makes it, and never allow it to gain strength by deliberation. "Eternal vigilance" is as necessary today as it ever was. We want "minute men," who, like the "Georgia Laymen's Association," will "be there" when the fight begins, and stay there till the foe is vanquished.

Let us take a hint from the wise old autocrat, Bismarck, who when he was putting all the private and parochial schools of Prussia under State control, used this significant motto: "**Who Has the Schools Has the Future!**" Brother, do you see the significant truth lying at the heart of this transparent sentence? And do you appreciate fully the far-reaching possibilities and consequences involved in it? Here is a civic sermon in a single sentence. Even the devil preaches a good gospel sometimes.

It is unquestionably true that the future welfare of our nation will depend on the character of our schools, and the character of our schools will be determined by the character of the men who institute and control them. Now then, shall this **Christian Nation** have secularized schools from which morals and religion have been eliminated by a set of bigots and atheists, or shall we have schools controlled by Christian men in which the principles of Christian citizenship shall be instilled into every young American heart? Brother, which shall it be? Remember, "**Who Has the Schools Has the Future.**"

As long as a spark of moral and religious sentiment fires our souls, as long as a drop of patriotic blood courses our veins, and as long as we retain the courage inherited from our heroic forefathers, so long shall we not cease to resist this un-American and un-Democratic imposition. As long as we treasure in our hearts the sweet memories of our Christian fathers and mothers, we shall never allow the insidious schemes of a set of atheists, socialists and bigots to undermine the inalienable parental rights of the American home.

As loyal Americans, who cherish the civil and religious freedom for which our heroic forefathers bled and died, let us stand shoulder to shoulder, Catholic and non-Catholic, and defy and defeat these fanatical bigots who are threatening to trample under foot the liberties of American citizens. In the strength of our American manhood, and with the weapon of our democratic franchise, let us crush this insidious attack upon the very foundations of our American civilization. Our **Homes, our Schools, our Liberties, our Religion**—all are calling for our loyalty and service.



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