

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE CHURCH IN
REGARD TO EDUCATION.

Acta et Decreta Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio Lacensis. Herder, Friburgi Brisgoviaë.

Der Moderne Staat und die Christliche Schule. By Rev. Florian Riess, S. J. Herder, Friburg. 1868.

Geschichte der Paedagogik. By Dr. Albert Stökl. Kirchheim, Mainz. 1876.

The Judges of the Faith and Godless Schools. By Rev. Thomas J. Jenkins. Egan, New York. 1882.

IN a previous article, taking mainly the natural law for our guide, we endeavored to define the rights and duties of the family and State in matters of education, reserving those of the Church for future treatment. That the Church, according to the intention of her divine founder, should have certain invisible and inalienable rights, must be evident to all true believers in Christianity. Christ has given her a constitution, a social organization, independent of all human power. He has constructed her as a moral edifice upon the unshaken rock of unity, cemented with that divine authority with which He vested her rulers, the apostles and their successors, and chief of all, St. Peter and his followers, her supreme head. He has organized her into a body politic with superiors having power to command, to legislate, to direct, to coërcé; in short, endowed with all those legislative, judiciary and executive means necessary or conducive to her divine purpose, the direction of the faithful to their last end. To those rulers He gave the power of binding and loosing, *i.e.*, of imposing and dispensing with moral obligations, with such efficacy that their decisions should be ratified with divine sanction in heaven. This power has been granted to the Church, not for a time within certain limits, but unto the end of the world, independent of all circumstances, of all social and political changes.

Such a divine social organization as the Church is, must needs by her very constitution possess extensive rights. Chief among them is the right to *teach*, to educate. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the way, the truth and the life, came into the world as a *master*, a *teacher*, a *prophet*. As such He was expected by the Jews; as such He manifested Himself as *the* Prophet, who taught as one having power, not as the Scribes and Pharisees. Through

Him God has spoken to the world, after having revealed Himself at divers times and in divers ways through the prophets of old.

But Christ's teaching was confined to a limited territory and a small portion of mankind. His mission was with the stray sheep of Israel's fold. The preaching of the gospel and the teaching of the nations He reserved for the Apostles and their followers. For this teaching office He instructed His Apostles with the greatest care during the three years of His public life. After having thus trained and prepared them He conferred upon them that inviolable charter available for all times and places: "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth; *going, therefore, teach ye all nations.*" To guide them unerringly in their teaching, He assured them of His assistance to the end of the world; "And behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." He finally sealed their infallibility by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on that memorable day of Pentecost, when parted tongues of fire descended upon them, and they began to speak in divers tongues the wonderful works of God. Thus trained, chartered, and armed with supernatural power, they went forth on their universal mission, according to the behests of their Lord, "in Jerusalem, and Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth," and "they taught everywhere, the Lord working withal and confirming the word with the signs that followed." When brought before the authorities of the Synagogue and the State, and called to account for their conduct, they resolutely and unflinchingly answered: *non possumus*. "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard." "We ought to obey God rather than men." And this has ever since been the watch-word of the Church as often as her divine rights of education have been infringed upon by the abuse of the civil power, *non possumus*.

Nor were the Apostles satisfied with teaching by word of mouth; whenever necessity or utility suggested, they also had recourse to written instructions. They became all things to all men—Jew to the Jew, Greek to the Greek, barbarian to the barbarian, wise to the wise, and foolish to the foolish—to gain all to Christ. It is but natural, then, to expect that the Church should, in course of time, open schools, as the most effectual means of teaching the nations. Therefore we see already in the second century the first of the great *Catechetical Schools* flourishing in Alexandria, which was then a great centre of learning as well as commerce. This school, founded by the convert philosopher Pantaenus, has received undying fame from the names of St. Clement and Origen. Nor were these schools, as might be inferred from their names, institutions for mere religious instruction or the teaching of the Christian doctrine. All the arts and sciences of the time, especially

philosophy, rhetoric, and literature, were thoroughly and systematically taught in them. St. Gregory Thaumaturgus in a panegyric on Origen gives us a graphic sketch of that great teacher's method. "Before receiving students," he says, "Origen used to examine them by a series of questions to discover their defects and to try to correct them. He then taught them logic to whet their understanding—not, however, the logic common with ordinary philosophers, but the logic of common sense, which is necessary to all, Greeks and barbarians, the learned and the unlearned, in short, for all men, whatever vocation they may choose to follow. To logic he added natural philosophy, which he taught in such a manner as to illustrate and classify every single object, to reduce it by a simple exposition to its first elements, and explain the nature of the whole and its parts, and the various changes to which it was subject. This he did to inspire the pupil with a rational instead of an irrational admiration of nature. Then the student was introduced to the study of geometry, the firm and unshaken basis of all the other sciences, and astronomy, which contemplates the firmament and leads to the sublime and heavenly. After these preparatory studies he was taught moral philosophy, and herein Origen exhibited to all in himself the golden mirror of virtue and piety. He taught the student particularly to enter into his own spirit, to provide for the soul above all other things, and to practice piety. He then read with them the writings of the ancient philosophers and poets, except those who denied the Providence of God; for these were not considered fit to be read, lest by them the soul should be defiled. The student was made familiar with all the philosophical systems; wherein the teacher accompanied him in spirit, as on a journey, and led him, as it were, by the hand, when anything abstruse, doubtful, or deceptive presented itself; or, like an expert swimmer, to whom no feat is unknown or untried, who, being himself secure from all danger, stretches forth his hand to extricate and save others from drowning. The course of studies was concluded with the exposition of the sacred books and the Christian philosophy. . . ."

I have quoted this rather long passage to show how the Church from the very earliest ages was solicitous to teach not only the Christian doctrine, but the whole cyclopædia of the known sciences. Alexandria, however, was not the only Christian seat of learning of this kind in the first centuries of the Church. Similar though less celebrated institutions existed in Jerusalem, Antioch, Edessa, Cæsarea, Nisibis, Neocæsarea, Nicomedia, Smyrna, Nazianzen, Byzantium, Rome, Carthage, Hippo, Lyons, and other places. These schools were principally intended for adults, while the children were commonly instructed and educated in the Christian doc-

trine and Christian life, as well as in the elements of learning, privately by the parents, or, at least, under their immediate supervision, as was the custom among the Jews, Greeks and Romans in pre-Christian times.

There are, however, instances of Christian schools for children at a very early period. We meet with the first Christian elementary school in the second century at Edessa, where a priest, named Protogenes, taught the children to read and write and sing the psalms. Nor ought we to suppose that this school was the only one of the kind existing at this period. St. Basil the Great (379), who composed the rule of the Monks of the East, not only makes the education of youth one of their chief ministries, but also gives them circumstantial hints on the method of teaching and the conduct they are to pursue in this avocation. The bishops, following the example of St. Augustine, commonly supported and instructed at their houses or churches a number of boys, who formed a kind of diocesan seminary, and from whom the various ranks of the clergy were filled. The priests soon imitated their examples in their districts, and gathered a circle of boys around them whom they instructed in the Christian doctrine, ecclesiastical chant, and the rudiments of knowledge. This practice, which had been already inculcated in provincial synods, was universally sanctioned by the sixth ecumenical council at Constantinople (681), which prescribes that schools should be opened in all parishes (*per villas et vicos*). Besides, every monastery had invariably its school attached. Whence we find from the earliest ages, besides the higher institutions which coincide with the more modern *universities*, three classes of schools—the *episcopal*, corresponding to our seminaries, the *parochial*, and the *monastic* schools.

But soon the tide of the barbarians poured down upon civilized Europe, and almost swept away every vestige of Christianity and civilization. The light of faith and learning seemed for a time to be all but extinguished, and dismal darkness to hover over the face of Europe. But God, in His sweet Providence, chose a tiny islet in the western sea, which seemed to be out of the reach of civilization, to enkindle a new flame. This "gem of the ocean," illuminated by the ray of Christianity, was destined in a short time to shed its lustre over the known world. Its schools count by hundreds, and its students by tens of thousands. Such was their fame that they attracted the eager student in quest of learning and sanctity from all parts of Europe, even from the classic shores of Hellas, to drink at their pure and untainted fountains. Such was the efficiency of these institutions that they turned out hundreds of apostles to bear the good tidings of the Gospel and the light of civilization to the Scot, and the Pict, and the Anglo-Saxon, and

the Teuton, and the Swiss, and the Gaul, and even into the very heart of Italy, which was itself, both before and after, the centre of faith and civilization. We need only recall the names of Bangor in Ireland, or of sea-girt Iona on the wild Scottish coast, or of St. Gall in Switzerland, or of Bobbio on the plains of Lombardy, to remind the reader of what the Irish Church has done for the education and civilization of Europe. We need only mention the names of St. Columbkille, St. Columbanus, St. Gall, Sts. Kilian and Emmeran, St. Virgil of Salzburg. Such was the drift of Irish Apostles to the Continent of Europe, such was their influence on civilization, that a German writer of the ninth century (Emmerich von Reichenau) exclaims, with the pointedness and warmth peculiar to his time: "O, how could we ever forget Erin, from which such light and splendor has dawned upon us! For, though born in a land which lies to the East, the Sun of the Faith has arisen upon us, contrary to the course of nature, from the extreme West, whence he has gone forth in his splendor over all nations."

The fearless and enterprising sons of St. Benedict went forth from the Sunny South and met the sons of St. Patrick on their apostolic expeditions. To the Benedictines is mainly due the conversion and civilization of the Anglo-Saxon. Their first care on landing in Britain was to open schools. What manner of pupils they met with, we see in St. Aldhelm, Venerable Bede, Alfred the Great and Alcuin, who were prodigies of learning and burned with the desire of communicating their knowledge to their fellow-men. To these men humanity and education owe more than to generations of our modern noisy philanthropic educators. The Anglo-Saxons, now converted and civilized, took the lead in the work of civilization among European nations. From them went forth St. Winifrid, or Boniface, as he is usually called, who became the Apostle of Germany, with a numerous host of apostolic companions. Alcuin was employed by Charlemagne, not only as his own tutor, but also to found schools in various parts of the Frankish Empire. Many other Anglo Saxon and Irish monks occupied chairs in these institutions.

In these schools and in the episcopal and monastic institutions we find the germs from which the great *Universities* of the Middle Ages have been gradually developed. When we look at the number of these great institutions, when we consider the multitude of students from all parts and of all classes who flocked to them, when we review the extensive course of studies which they pursued, when we behold those great lights who occupied their chairs, we must conclude that, in those ages which modern writers and talkers are pleased to call "dark," though illiteracy may have been more common, yet higher education was more universal and a good deal

more thorough and substantial than in our own enlightened age.¹ Whatever modern educationalists may think or say in disparagement of the mediæval system of education, we cannot induce ourselves to believe that institutions which turned out writers and thinkers like Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, Alexander of Hales, Roger Bacon and such polished geniuses as Dante, Petrarch, Chaucer or Sir Thomas More, have been inferior to our modern "cram" and high-pressure universities with all their vaunted progress. Nor can the mediæval schools be despised for their ignorance in the natural sciences any more than Lord Bacon or Sir Isaac Newton can be blamed for not inventing the telephone or the electric light.

While higher education was thus provided for by the Church in the Middle Ages, the popular or primary schools were by no means neglected. About the year 1400, the diocese of Prague alone, which covered a comparatively limited territory, had at least 640 elementary schools. Now, taking this number as a basis for the 63 dioceses into which Germany was then divided and which were in great part more extensive and populous than Prague, we obtain more than 40,000 elementary schools in Germany alone. As the same discipline essentially prevailed with regard to schools throughout the Church, we might make a similar approximate calculation for the other countries. In the year 1378 we find 63 lay teachers occupied in elementary schools in the city of Paris, a very considerable number for the then existing population. Of these, 22 were female teachers, a circumstance which shows that the education of the female sex was then sufficiently provided for. The education of the female sex, however, was then, as it is now in the Church, wherever she is free, mainly in the hands of religious women. Every convent had its school for externs as well as for the members of its own community. Should any one wish further information on the high attainments of the ladies of the Middle Ages, we would refer him to Montalembert's brilliant chapter on the "Anglo-Saxon Nuns," in his interesting history of the *Monks of the West*.

We see, therefore, that the Church has from the beginning looked upon education as her province. She has practically educated the nations for 1800 years, and continues in the exercise of this minis-

¹ Before the so-called Reformation we count 66 European Catholic Universities of note, of which Italy possessed 17, Germany 14, France 12, Spain and Portugal 10, England 2, Scotland 3, Hungary 3, other countries 5. In the 14th century the University of Bologna numbered 13,000 students, while the University of Oxford (including fellows, tutors and students) formed a body of 30,000. The number of years devoted to study exclusive of the preparatory course was generally 7 for arts and 12 for professional branches (Theology, Medicine, Law), making in all at least 19 years of higher studies, or more in case of less than ordinary success.

try wherever she enjoys her liberty. She has received an inviolable charter from her divine Founder. She has founded the first schools in Christendom and gathered the élite of Christian genius to imbibe the pure waters of learning from their limpid sources. She preserved the remnants of ancient civilization from the devouring flames of barbaric invasion and the levelling fury of sectarian fanaticism. She has given birth to those great institutions of learning which will be remembered in history as the cradles of genius and seats of literature and the fine arts when all our modern public schools and universities will have glided into forgetfulness. From her bosom have gone forth the great teaching orders and congregations of both sexes, who, bound by the holy vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, untrammelled by all earthly ties, free from the clogging influences of worldly affections, devote themselves, whole and undivided, to the work of education. To-day, while her rights are violated by the machinations of godless states and still more godless secret sects; while her children are perfidiously enticed or violently driven into godless and irregular state schools, she shows her divine charter, and says, as the Apostles did, "*non possumus* ; we cannot yield, we cannot betray the charge of Christ ; let the little ones come to me."

The fact that the Church has from the very outset claimed and exercised the right of educating the Christian youth is a sufficient proof of the existence of such a right. Her rights may be violated. The youth may be wrested from her arms with brute force and driven into godless institutions. Concessions may be extorted from her, whereby, to prevent greater evils, she may yield a portion of her rights, provided only the principle be maintained. But the rights entrusted to her by her Divine Spouse she can never abandon, because they imply the most serious and binding duties. Let us now enter somewhat more minutely into those rights and duties, and try, as far as space permits, to determine their extent more in detail.

And for the first, we say : *The Church has the divinely constituted and inalienable right to provide for a complete religious education of all her children in all schools, of whatever kind or grade they may be.* By a *religious education* we do not mean the mere instruction in the Christian doctrine. This, though an essential element, does not constitute a religious education. A religious education supposes a knowledge of the Christian doctrine and consists mainly in a religious and moral training by the exercise of virtuous acts and all those practices of religion which, according to the principles of revelation, constitute or insure a Christian and supernatural life. This training the church owes to all her children, and she has an indisputable right, unmolested, to fulfil this duty through

her lawful ministers, under all circumstances and in all institutions—in the high-school and university, as well as in the elementary school.

This is manifest, first, from the duty which the Church has of directing the faithful by efficacious means to their supernatural end. With the exercise of this duty the Church cannot dispense at any instant of man's life, from the moment she has received him into her fold until she delivers him up to the Supreme Pastor, at the hour of his death. But towards no stage of life is this duty so strictly incumbent upon her as towards that of youth and childhood. "As the twig is bent the tree's inclined." She must, therefore, exercise the greatest vigilance, that, while the child and youth is growing, physically and intellectually, his moral and religious development may keep pace with his bodily and mental growth. She must take care that the germ of supernatural life, which is deposited in his soul in the Sacrament of Baptism, be nurtured and watered by instruction and appropriate devotional exercises, in order that it may take deep root and wax strong into supernatural maturity. She must guard that principle against the evil influences of false doctrines and demoralizing associations, lest it may be blasted in the bud. And should the supernatural seedling become extinct by the blighting breath of sin, she must restore it by the regenerating virtue of the sacraments. Such is the divine mission of the Church, such her indispensable duty. If then the Church has received this charge from her divine spouse, she surely has the right to fulfil it without let or hindrance. But it cannot be fulfilled without free access to the schools, without a perfect freedom in teaching the children, in assembling them to daily exercises of devotion and, at stated times, to the sacraments, without the means of assuring herself of the moral and religious tone of the schools, of exercising the necessary supervision, to prevent any thing being taught by word or example which might endanger the faith or morals of the children. Any institution which excludes the Church from those functions of education or obstructs her in their free exercise evidently violates her most sacred rights. That such an institution also infringes upon the natural rights of the individual, of the family, the parents and children, and tramples under foot the inborn claims of conscience, we have shown in our previous article.

Nor need the advocates of non-sectarian education point to the reading of the Scriptures without note or comment, or to the compensation of the Sunday-school. Abstracting from the fact that the reading of a disapproved version of the Scriptures will be against the convictions of a large fraction of the parents and children, no one will look upon such reading of the Scriptures, "without

note or comment," as part or portion of a religious education, unless he indulge in the old-fashioned Protestant theory that the word of God acts immediately and directly on the soul by a quasi-inspiration. Nay, we are convinced that such mechanical reading and hearing of the Bible "without note or comment," in the schools, can only produce skepticism and generate contempt for the word of God in the minds of the children. The experiment has been so unsuccessful here in our own country that the practice is now all but abandoned in our public schools. The Sunday-school experiment, as far as non-Catholics are concerned in this country, has proved equally unsuccessful. This is evident from the complete disintegration of the Protestant sects, the gross ignorance in religious matters and the wide-spread religious indifference outside of the Catholic Church. How many of our go-to-meeting and Sunday-school young Americans know even those articles whose knowledge is absolutely necessary for salvation, to say nothing of the absolutely necessary means of salvation? Such is the drift at present, that, unless our public educational system is changed, we shall, in a few generations, have a nation of educated pagans, who will have retained of Christianity no more than a few conventional phrases. And how can it be otherwise if religion is ostracized from the schools and relegated into the Sunday-school as a branch of knowledge and education that is not worth caring for, that does not deserve a place in the ordinary life of the child or man, but is merely a matter of private interest and taste? Still less effectual will be the work of the Sunday-school, when, as is frequently the case, it is paralyzed during the week by the naturalistic or anti-Christian tone of the school and other demoralizing influences. So much has already been said and written on the influence of secular education on the Catholic youth, especially in our own country, that we prefer to pass it over in silence. The conviction has been brought home to every thinking Catholic, worthy of the name, that only a complete religious education, such as is given in Catholic schools, can preserve our children from the drift of infidelity and the deluge of immorality which a godless system of education has brought upon the country. Should the education be Christian, it is plain to all right-thinking Catholics that the schools must be Christian, that the children must move in a Christian atmosphere, not for one day in the week only, but all the year round. And this can be obtained only by the direct influence of the Church on the schools and their daily workings. If the child has an immortal soul to save, and his eternal weal or woe depends upon the issue of this affair of salvation, surely no less, but much more stress should be laid upon his training to success in this all-important business than to cleverness in the secular pursuits of life. If such

is the case, why should the Church, the divinely appointed organ instituted by God for the salvation of mankind, be excluded from the domain of education? Such an exclusion is a crying iniquity against God and man, manifesting either the grossest ignorance of the most elementary Christian maxims or the most inconceivable and fiendish malice.

But we go still farther and assert that the Church has not only the right to give a complete religious education to her children in all schools, but has also *the right of supervising the secular instruction, both literary and scientific*, at least so far as to assure herself that there is nothing either in the subject-matter taught or in the manner of conveying it which might endanger the faith or morals, or obstruct the moral and religious development, of the youth. This will appear a hard saying to the advocates of secular or unsectarian education. Yet it is only a corollary of the preceding principle. If the right of securing a complete religious education for her children can be claimed by the Church, also the right of employing the necessary means to this end must be conceded to her. A right to the end implies a right to the means. Now, who does not clearly see that all the efforts of the Church to give a Christian education would be frustrated if she had no control over the secular teaching? What will it avail the Church to teach religion to the children and inculcate its practice, if the secular teacher undoes her work by teaching and inculcating the contrary? What will it profit to teach the child that Christianity is a divine institution, if the secular teacher tells him that Christianity is a myth? What will it benefit to teach the child the history of the creation, the fall of man, and the redemption, if the secular teacher happens to be an evolutionist, and teaches that we descend, or, as some please to put it, "ascend" from the ape? What use will it be for the Church to inculcate morality, if the secular teacher denies the existence of a future retribution, or the immortality of the soul, and thus makes the lot of the just equal to that of the criminal, or puts man on the same level with the beast? In vain will the Church try to direct the child to a Christian life and to Christian virtue if, in his tenderest years, the most dangerous literature is thrown in his way, if even the school-books contain objectionable passages. And what if, as is not seldom the case, treatises on physiology are explained and illustrated to boys and girls, in their very childhood, in a way which is highly prejudicial to morality? What if the text-books of history and literature are teeming with calumny and slander against the Church and all her institutions and practices? Can the Church look on with indifference, or is she not bound to raise her voice, in protest, against such outrages done to her children, and seek redress of such grievances? But without exercising

a certain supervision over the secular teaching in the schools, the Church has no means of preventing such calamities or redressing them. Her ministers must, therefore, have free access to the schools. She must be free to examine into the subjects taught, the manner in which they are taught, and the instruments which are employed, especially the text-books. She must have the means of assuring herself of the orthodoxy and the good moral character of the teachers, and have the power of correcting and the possibility of removing them should this be necessary. She must satisfy herself that such discipline is maintained in the schools as to prevent perversion or immoral contagion among the pupils.

All this follows as a logical sequence from the duty and corresponding right which the Church has of providing for her children a full religious Christian education. Whoever believes at all in the divine mission of the Christian Church, be he Catholic or non-Catholic, must grant so much. Whoever denies the Church this right, manifests that the idea of a Church or a divine ministry does not enter into his creed. By the very fact that non-Catholic clergymen do not insist upon this right they but too clearly show that they have a very inferior notion of their ministry, and forcibly imply that, as far as they are concerned, their existence might, without any inconvenience, be dispensed with, and their places filled by the superintendent or the schoolma'am.

This right of supervision we vindicate for the Church in virtue of her divine mission in regard to all schools of every grade, from the kindergarten to the university, though not in the same degree. Preëminently she holds and exercises it towards *primary schools*. These latter have ever up to the present century been looked upon as ecclesiastical institutions (*annexum religionis*), and were wholly under the control of the Church. As such they have been considered by Protestants as well as Catholics. As such they have been acknowledged by the conventions of the various governments with the Holy See. As such they have been acknowledged in England, as far as the High Church is concerned, to this day, and the same rights, with some restrictions, are now extended to other denominations. Non-sectarian schools have so far been opened by the British Government only in default of the Churches; and though these public schools are growing in favor with some English politicians, yet the denominational schools meet with a fair share of justice on the part of the British Government at home and abroad.

The correctness of this view of the elementary schools is evident from the very nature of the case. The essential function of primary schools is religious education. For, if the child has religious faculties to be trained; if it has a soul to save and must learn the

necessary means to save it, both theoretically and practically; if it must learn to walk in the path of virtue and salvation in its tender years; surely this spiritual training is of more importance than the learning of the three R's and other more ornamental than useful "cram" with which the children in our times are afflicted. The three R's should be taught and all well taught; but (to speak as Christians) these are subordinate to the elements of religion at this early age. At this tender stage of life, the whole surroundings, the atmosphere in which the child moves, should be religious. The eyes should be chastened by the contemplation of pious objects; the ear should be trained to the melody of sacred song; the lips should be taught to lisp the holy names, the tiny hands to fold themselves in prayer, the whole person to compose itself to Christian modesty; the imagination should be stored with pious and chaste representations; the memory should become the treasury of holy recollections. The practice of religion should, at this age, be made sweet and easy by frequent and appropriate exercises of devotion. Oh, that teachers took half as much pains for the religious training of children as the godless kindergarten does for their secular drill! If they only employed even a fraction of those devices which modern pedagogues suggest to awaken the senses and the minds of the children to the observation of the phenomena of nature to fit them for the future pursuit of natural science! Yet, here we will not speak of methods. All we say is, that elementary education, being essentially religious, must consequently be mainly under the control of the Church. We do not deny the State its due share in the conduct of schools. It may put its claims within its own sphere, in regard to the secular results to be obtained; but the Church, being charged with what is essential in the education, must have the decisive vote and superintendence.

The Church must, therefore, claim the right of *erecting* elementary schools for the education of her children, and of *directing* the same, independently of all civil authority, though she is bound to listen and conform to the *just* wishes of the State, and especially of the parents, in things pertaining to the secular training. She must claim the right of *educating the teachers* of elementary schools, and, therefore, of erecting and conducting *normal schools*; for this is a necessary means of obtaining a staff of teachers who are not only qualified for secular instruction, but also fit to give a religious training by word and conduct. She must claim the right of *examining, approving, and inspecting* the teachers, to assure herself of their capacity and standing, at any given time, to ascertain whether she may safely continue her approbation, or be obliged in a given case to withdraw it. She must claim the right of *removing or exacting the removal* of such teachers as from moral or other

causes prove themselves unworthy or unfit for their office. These rights the Church has by divine institution. She cannot, or will not renounce them. They may be and have been violated by brute force; but this circumstance cannot change the fact or detract anything from the just claims of the Church. Against her divine rights there is no prescription possible.

We now pass from the elementary schools to those which are generally termed *middle schools*. Under this appellation we comprise all those educational institutions which lie between the elementary schools and the universities, properly so called. Their object is to prepare students, especially by a *literary* training, for the higher studies of philosophy and the professional branches of learning, theology, medicine, law, etc. This course of preparation, which generally covers a period of six or seven years (in Germany it is now extended to nine and ten years) formerly consisted mainly in the study of the Latin and Greek classics. These still maintain their place as the principal instrument of training in all well-organized institutions, while other branches, especially mathematics, science, history, modern languages, and literature, receive greater attention. The exigencies of our times have also created a separate class of middle schools, known in Europe as *polytechnical* or *real* schools, and in America as *high schools* and *special courses*. But these latter are generally little more than an appendage to the ordinary elementary schools, and must be treated by the Church in the same way, with slight modifications, which we cannot here define.

With regard to those middle schools which are really preparatory for the higher studies, their relations to the Church are not entirely so intimate. Such institutions are not *essentially* religious or ecclesiastical. Any individual or corporation endowed with the necessary qualifications may establish and conduct such a school, provided the laws and demands of the Church be complied with, and the full exercise of her rights be allowed. They are not considered in law as *annexa religionis*, as elementary schools are. Their immediate object is not religious but secular training, with a view to the pursuit of higher studies, whether sacred or profane. But while the mind is being formed with letters and science, the religious side of the character must be harmoniously developed, and that with the more care the greater are the dangers that beset the pursuit of letters, especially at that age when the passions are so strong and character so flexible, at that stage which is generally decisive for after-life. During this time the religious instruction as well as the secular has to be continued. The students must acquire a full and well-digested knowledge of the Christian doctrine. They must be kept up to the practice of their

religion, and guarded against the dangers attendant on youth. The Church must, then, enjoy full freedom to continue the religious education she began in the elementary schools, in the widest sense of the word. She must have a full insight into the interior workings of the schools, possess all the means to avert all dangers of corruption or perversion, whether these may arise from teachers or text-books, or method, or the discipline of the schools. But without the exercise of an efficacious supervision all this is impossible. Hence we conclude that though these institutions are not strictly religious, the Church should exercise nearly the same supervision over them as over the elementary schools. If such schools are founded and supported by the Church, it is plain that she has the exclusive control over them. All the State can justly demand in this case is the necessary qualifications in such of the students as present themselves for public offices. Where they have obtained these qualifications is not the business of civil authority to inquire. Should the institutions conducted by the Church, however, receive their support from the State, it would then have, at most, the right to examine into the results of the secular training by competent inspectors; unless in the case of strictly ecclesiastical schools, such as seminaries, which are exclusively under the control of the Church. But even though the direction is not in the hands of the Church, there remains for her at least the inviolable right of giving the pupils, as an essential part of their training, a complete religious education, and exercising such a supervision over the secular instruction and training as to have a sufficient guarantee for the security of faith and morals, and the necessary safeguard against the perversion of her children.

If we further apply these general principles to the *university*, the necessity of a similar supervision will be manifest. What is a university? Taking it in its general acceptation and as it presents itself to us historically, a university is an educational institution in which *all* the sciences which constitute a liberal and professional education are taught (*studium generale*). Now, if a university be such as to deserve that name, also religion or theology must be one of its faculties, and to teach religion or theology, as every one knows, is the province of the Church, as she alone has received this commission from the Divine Founder of Christianity. The Church must, therefore, be represented in a university and occupy that place which her dignity and the rank of that science which she represents require.

But even though a university, or what goes by that name, should profess only secular sciences and arts, such as medicine, law, philosophy, science, and letters, it cannot, therefore, exclude the influence of the Church. Secular sciences, too, have all their neces-

sary bearing upon religion and theology. Not one of them can dispense with the aid of theology. She must keep them in check within their proper boundary. If we wish to keep on the standpoint of revelation, she must say the last word on every subject. The teaching of reason and revelation, coming from the same divine source, can never be at variance with each other. The truths of revelation must, therefore, form certain landmarks within which reason must confine itself if it would not stray from the path of truth. As soon as it wanders outside these confines, without the guidance of theology, it is sure to err. But who has to define what *is* revealed truth and what *is not*? It is only the Church, to whom the deposit of faith has been consigned. To the Church, therefore, and her science must be subordinate every other science, inasmuch as she can assign them their proper sphere, check their vain curiosity, and bid them go "so far and no farther." The wild aberrations of science and scientists in our days prove to evidence the necessity of this control.

That the abandonment of science to its own resources leads not only to its own ruin but also to the overthrow of religion, is equally patent from daily experience. Where is the science to-day which does not glory in the mouth of the infidel of having dealt a deadly blow at religion? "Just as comparative anatomy, political economy, the philosophy of history, and the science of antiquities, may be and are turned against religion," says Cardinal Newman (*Idea of a University*), "by being taken for themselves [apart from theology], so a like mistake may befall any other. Grammar, for instance, does not at first sight appear to admit of a perversion; yet Horne Tooke made of it the vehicle of his peculiar skepticism. Law would seem to have enough to do with its own clients and their affairs, and yet Mr. Bentham made a treatise on judicial proofs a covert attack on the miracles of revelation. And in like manner physiology may deny moral evil and human responsibility; geology may deny Moses; and logic may deny the Holy Trinity; and other sciences now rising into notice are, or will be, victims of a similar abuse." It is an acknowledged fact that science, divorced from religion, is, and has always been, hostile to religion and productive of infidelity. To prevent this evil by the reconciliation and close alliance of both science and religion, is the duty and has always been the endeavor of the Church. Hence, she has always opposed herself to mere secular training in every department of education and every dominion of science. In no other respect, perhaps, has the Church shown the divine instinct of the Holy Ghost as in her wonderful foresight in this matter. Time has but too truly realized her dire forebodings on the effects of mere secular education. Her claims, therefore, to a place in the

higher institutions of learning, for her own defence and the benefit of science, must be admitted by all those who do not totally ignore the influence of Christianity on the intellectual life of individuals and nations.

Nor can the Church renounce her claims. She has been entrusted with the deposit of faith by Jesus Christ, her Spouse. It is her mission and duty not only to teach the true faith to the nations, but also to defend it and preserve it in the hearts of peoples and individuals. But as the faith is nowhere more endangered than in institutions of learning which have broken off all connection with the Church and cast away the restraint of revelation, the Church must employ all means to obviate such an evil by maintaining and exercising her right of supervision; and as this right is, as we have shown, a divine prerogative, no temporal power can violate it without committing a flagrant outrage against God and His Church. If the Church holds her proper place in a well-organized university representing the sacred science, all extravagances and encroachments on the part of the profane departments and their representatives can be easily prevented. The tone of the whole institution will be Christian, and the salutary influence of Christianity will spontaneously make itself felt in all departments without much direct interference. In any case, however, the least the Church can demand of a Christian university is orthodoxy and a good moral character in directors, teachers, and other officials; Christian discipline and the exclusion of all elements dangerous to faith and morals, and, finally, a perfect freedom in the exercise of her saving ministries within the institution. The Church can never approve of an educational institution which denies her these prerogatives. Nor can she permit her children to frequent them; unless, indeed, in the case in which other institutions are not available, and *then only* when the danger of perversion is remote, and special precautions are taken to counteract the pernicious influence of an exclusively secular training.

We here speak of the "Church" and a "Christian university" in the very widest sense. For all denominations, who profess to be Christian, must make these same demands, provided they believe in Christianity as a divine institution, which is not only a medium of salvation for mankind, but the most powerful agent of civilization and culture. They practically ignore the divine mission and the civilizing influence of Christianity who would in any way subordinate its functions to other than the God-appointed authority. If the gentlemen in the ministry, outside the Catholic Church, were strongly impressed with the belief that they were called to minister to the faithful in the "things that appertain to God," they would very soon see, as we do, that their first duty is

to preserve the Christian faith in the people by making education religious in the various grades of educational institutions.

The attitude of the Catholic Church towards State education has been often clearly and forcibly set forth, as well by the bishops who have been "set by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God" as by the Sovereign Pontiff, her Supreme Head. As long as the Church was in the undisturbed possession of her rights, there was little controversy on the subject. She quietly exercised the function of Christian training on every field of education. She insisted in her synods on the multiplication of schools of the various grades, especially popular schools. But as soon as the controversy arose, her bishops all over the world did not fail, singly and in synod assembled, to proclaim aloud those rights which we have just been vindicating, to condemn Godless schools in the strongest terms, to exhort the faithful to keep their children aloof from those seminaries of infidelity and consequent immorality, and, where necessary, to erect and support their own schools. Space is wanting to quote even a selection of their valuable, beautiful, and zeal-inspiring utterances. We can only refer the reader to Father Jenkins's excellent work, or the voluminous and useful *Collectio Lacensis*. Such is the unanimity of the "judges of the faith" in condemnation of the Godless school system that it undoubtedly constitutes a *consensus*, which no Catholic can oppose without incurring shipwreck in the faith.

We may be permitted, however, here to translate a few utterances of the Holy See, even at the risk of repeating what is already known to many of our readers. In a *brief* addressed to Herman von Vicari, Archbishop of Friburg, Baden, July 14th, 1864, Pius IX., after reviewing the dangers of Godless schools in general, expresses himself concerning the common or primary schools as follows: "As common schools have been instituted mainly for the religious education of the people, to cherish Christian piety and morality, they have, therefore, always deservedly and with perfect right claimed the whole care, solicitude and watchfulness of the Church above all other educational institutions. And, therefore, the designs and endeavors of excluding the Church's authority from the common schools proceed from a most hostile disposition to the Church and from the desire of extinguishing the Divine light of holy faith in the nations. Wherefore the Church, which first founded those schools, has always bestowed the greatest care and zeal upon them and considered them as the most important department of her authority and jurisdiction; and any separation of them from the Church cannot but be productive of the greatest loss to the Church and to the schools themselves. All those who would have the Church resign or withdraw her salutary direction

of the popular schools demand nothing less than that the Church should act against the behests of the Divine Founder, and neglect the most important charge committed to her of procuring the salvation of men. Assuredly, in whatever places or countries these most dangerous schemes of excluding the authority of the Church from the schools should be attempted or put into execution, and the youth should be lamentably exposed to the danger of suffering loss in their faith, the Church is *not only* bound to use all her zeal and efforts, and spare no pains at any time that the young should receive the necessary religious education, *but* is also bound to admonish all the faithful and *declare to them that such schools, being hostile to the Catholic Church, cannot in conscience be frequented.*"

The Sacred Congregation of the Inquisition, in the detailed Instruction to the Bishops of the United States concerning the *public schools*, June 30th, 1875, after quoting the last sentence of the above citation, adds the following words: "These words, inasmuch as they are based on the natural and Divine law, enunciate a general principle, which holds universally and refers to all plans where this most destructive system has been unfortunately introduced. It is, therefore, necessary that the illustrious prelates should, by all possible means, keep the flock entrusted to their charge aloof from the corrupting influence of the *public schools*. In the opinion of all, nothing is so necessary for this end as that Catholics should everywhere have their own schools, and these not inferior to the public schools. Every effort must, therefore, be made to erect Catholic schools where such do not exist, or to enlarge them and make them more useful and efficient, that in the course and method of training they may be nowise inferior to the public schools."

The Sacred Congregation grants that there may be circumstances in which Catholic parents may, in conscience, send their children to American *public schools*, viz.: when no Catholic school is at hand, or when that which is at "hand is not fit to give the children an education suited to their station and conformable to their age." It is to be remembered, however, that the frequenting of the public schools can be permitted, even in these cases, according to the declaration of the Sacred Congregation, only when the danger of perversion can be rendered *remote*; and that *the decision is left to the Bishop*, not to the parents or children.

These utterances of the Holy See refer especially to the common or elementary school. The following propositions, condemned in the *Syllabus*, December 8th, 1864, are quite universal, and apply to all schools, of whatever grade:

Proposition 45. "The entire direction of the public schools in which the youth of a Christian State is educated, diocesan seminaries to a certain extent excepted, can and must be apportioned to

the civil authority, and that in such a way that no other authority has the right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the direction of the studies, the conferring of degrees, or the choice and approbation of the teachers."

Proposition 47. "The most perfect state of civil society requires that the common schools which are open to the children of all classes of the people, and the public institutions in general which are destined for teaching letters and the exact sciences, and educating the youth, should be exempted from the authority, direction and interference of the Church, and be subjected to the absolute power of civil authority, at the direction of the rulers of the State and according to the manner of prevailing public opinion."

Proposition 48. "Catholic men may approve that system of education of youth which is separated from Catholic faith and the power of the Church, and which regards only, or, at least, chiefly, the natural sciences and the field of social life on earth."

From the doctrine condemned in these *theses* it follows :

1. That the State has not absolute power over the schools. In other words, they are not and cannot be mere State institutions, under the sole direction of civil authority.

2. That there can be no legitimate plea for exempting the schools from the authority of the Church, whether they are mere elementary schools or literary and scientific.

3. That no Catholic can connive at a system of education which has divorced itself from the authority of the Church and the Catholic faith, and has for its object, solely or mainly, natural or secular training.¹

Such is the doctrine of the supreme teaching-office of the Church on secular public schools. Whence the reader may conclude in what light those so-called Catholics are to be considered who tell us that the public schools are as good as any else, and that neither they themselves nor their children have ever taken any harm from them.

But some one may say that these utterances of the Holy See are not *ex cathedra*, that they are consequently not infallible, and that we may think what we please of them. Such statements in any case would be highly irreverent to the authority of the Church, to say

¹ We did not deem it necessary to subject the right of educating the *clergy* to any special treatment, as it is sufficiently evident to all Catholics that this right belongs exclusively to the Church. The forty-sixth proposition of the *Syllabus*, which runs thus: "Imo in ipsis clericorum seminariis methodus studiorum adhibenda civili auctoritati subjicitur," excludes all right of interference on the part of the State. See Pius the Ninth's letter to the Archbishop of Munich, March 23d, 1865. The pending transactions between Berlin and the Vatican show how uncompromising the Church is on this point.

the least; but in the case before us we think that they would not be far short of heretical. For, granting that these are not *ex cathedra* pronouncements, they still partake of absolute infallibility from the universal consent of the bishops of the whole Catholic world, who, though dispersed, when *unanimously agreeing* with the Supreme Head of the Church and with one another on any point of doctrine, are *infallible judges of the faith*. Such, in our opinion, is the unanimity of the whole body of the Episcopate on these general principles that they are no less infallible than the decrees of the Vatican.

In no country is this *consensus* more manifest than in our own. There is, we believe, hardly a bishop living to-day in the United States who has not condemned the *existing* system of public schools in the strongest terms, and earnestly exhorted the clergy and the faithful entrusted to his charge to provide for Catholic schools for the education of the Catholic youth. Much has been done already in this direction in a comparatively short time, and much more is justly anticipated in the near future. The bishops shortly to assemble in Plenary Council, with Apostolic zeal and prudence combined, and the additional experience, deliberation and prayer of years, will deal with the question under its more practical aspects. If we have only done something to throw light on the more general principles and to contribute to a more correct and healthy public opinion on the subject, we have amply attained the object of these articles.
