

VII. Interactions with the World

H. Church and State

g. The Ohio State Penitentiary and the Geghan Bill

527.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, February 27, 1875 (3)

[Intolerance in the Ohio Penal System]

Ever since we used to read about the able manner in which "B.J.L.," Columbus correspondent of the *Cincinnati Commercial*, conducted "Sabbath Schools" in some public hall in this city, we have been expecting some particular act of mean hostility to Catholics from him. Those pious adventurers have it in them, and it comes out sooner or later--a Hamilton County member (Mr. Geghan) of the House of Representatives, has lately introduced a bill which read[s] like a section of the Constitution of Ohio, as follows: The authorities of any city, county or State Prison Reform School, or penal, or Reformatory institution under the authority of the State of Ohio shall provide a room and prescribe regular times, including certain hours of the first day of the week, in which the inmates shall be allowed religious instruction to be given to them personally, by the clergyman of the church or denomination to which such inmates respectively belong, and by no other, and for this purpose the Church or denomination of any minor child, shall be held to be that of its parents. All other Sectarian practices or religious observances apparently, except by said clergymen, are prohibited; and also all efforts of any officer of such an institution to influence or change the religious belief or opinion of such inmates." Now let our readers ponder this carefully--as presented by "B.J.L." and see whether it does not sound like a rule for perfect religious equality amongst religious denominations, among incarcerated people. Yet this poor specimen of religious bigotry reads it thus:

"Its meaning is to give to Priests suitable conveniences, at the expense of the State for establishing the Confessional and Parochial instructions in each of the prisons, reformatory and penal institutions in the State, etc."

He does not see that his confession is that Catholics will be the only gainers by carrying out the principle of religious equality. If this is so, whose fault is it? Have not the people of Ohio imagined that they were carrying out religious equality ever since the beginning of the commonwealth? Yet here they are told by one who wants things to remain as they are, that a change from the present system to religious equality means concessions to Catholics! He acknowledges this, and glories in it in the following sentence, which would defend any intolerant ever dreamed of in any age or country: "So far as the bill proposed to hedge up the inmates of Reform Schools, and prisons to the 'religion' in which they have reached those institutions, we would think it a good thing for the State if it must intervene in the matter at all, to do so for the purpose of

placing within their reach a better article, one that would tend to keep them away from such places." He is the judge of "the better article," and he would have the state do, what it does now, all it can to give that "better article," by force to "the inmates of such institutions." Of course there is abuse of the Catholic religion to justify the intolerance. The Jews "would not have given up Jesus Christ if he had not been a malefactor." So "B.J.L." would not be intolerant to the Catholic religion--if the Catholic religion did not conduct people to prisons and reformatory schools! But then, under our Constitution, who is to judge of the tendency of his own or his offspring's religion, the man himself, or the state? Can "B.J.L." be correspondent for the *Commercial*, teacher of sabbath school and keeper of all the Catholic consciences in Ohio? If he thinks he has a "better article" of religion than the one which comes straight down from Jesus Christ, cannot he keep it himself--and let other people do their own choosing for themselves?

The fact is, the whole prison system, in Ohio, both in teaching and excluding religion, has been up to this time a fraud and an oppression. Preachers have thrust themselves into positions actually forbidden by the spirit of the Constitution, and, while there, have exhibited an intolerance towards all religious convictions except "the better article" which they brazenly condemned in all others.

If the legislators are not afraid of religious equality let them establish it in the prisons, reform schools, county infirmaries and hospitals. If the pretended champions of religious liberty lose by it, then their pretensions are proved to be sham. Force them to say with "B.J.L."--"if the State intervenes at all let it intervene to make prisoners Protestants."

528.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, April 3, 1875 (1)

[Freedom of Conscience of Ohio Inmates]

One of the small quibbles by which the system of religious intolerance in prisons is sought to be perpetuated, consists in declaring that the Catholics already have as much liberty as the others.

Protestants cannot preach sectarianism--they do not ask for the privilege of giving lessons in the distinctive tenets of their sect, or of hearing confessions, or of setting up an altar and 'performing Mass,' (so these courteous gentlemen designate the offering of the great Christian sacrifice).

Let Catholic priests ask for nothing more and they will meet no refusal. Have not Catholic priests been invited to preach in the chapels of our public institutions? But these priests are not satisfied with what satisfies preachers--but must have special privileges.

This is a small quibble. The state has no right to consider what the Catholic

doctrine is--but must grant us liberty of conscience. It is nobody's business if we believe in the Holy Mass, in catechetical instructions, in the confession of sin. The fact that we do believe so constitutes our right to demand the providing for the spiritual welfare of Catholic prisoners in the Catholic way. What do we care for the privilege of holding religious service in the Protestant fashion--saying a prayer, preaching a sermon, and singing a hymn--being careful not to let fall a word about the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the motherhood of Mary, the Sacrifice, the Sacraments, the Communion of Saints, the authority of the Church, or "any distinctive denominational tenet?" This liberty which is said to be offered to the Catholic conscience, what does it amount to but this: Catholic prisoners in the penitentiary, in houses of refuge, in reform 'schools,' in asylums, renounce your Catholic faith and your freedom shall be guaranteed! Catholic priests, become Protestant preachers, and you shall have all the other preachers have--except the salaries!

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That sheet so famous for being an upholder of any principle that might come conveniently to hand, styled the *Cleveland Leader*,--a leader, forsooth!--in enumerating the bills passed by the LXIst General Assembly, has this to say of the Geghan Bill:

"Its results will be to demoralize and break up the Sunday religious services which now form so important a part of the discipline in our State reformatory system and set gangs of carpenters at work erecting Catholic altars in the asylums, jails and prisons, workhouses and reform institutions. It is, so far as the House is concerned, an important and significant victory for Catholics, a step toward the general supremacy of popery in America, toward which they are so persistently aiming."

Listen to this sad lamentation of one who, perhaps, has never seen the inside of a Catholic chapel, of one who has been taught to regard a Roman Catholic as a monster and having no rights that those, differing with him in religious convictions, are bound to respect. He is the proud and haughty Pharisee, who alone is worthy to address the Almighty. He groans over the thought of "gangs of carpenters at work erecting Catholic altars, in asylums, jails and other reformatory institutions." Catholic altars! What other altars are there? We know the passage of this bill will cause some fat chaplain to seek another means of earning a livelihood other than by drawing a salary for "preaching" to those whose convictions can never be his. Catholics are not accorded any privileges, they have simply been placed on an equal religious footing with other denominations in the eyes of the state, and it is this that has aroused the Puritanic spirit. "Keep these detestable Catholics from the enjoyment of any religious liberty and make them support us in our evangelizing work. We know how to speak to Almighty God, we know what is wanted."

This is their reasoning and the thoughts that continually occupy them. "Popery!" What a string of terrors does the word awaken! Catholics will rule supreme, then what

shall become of our free country. How amusing to the instructed Catholic are these common expressions? How shallow the mind of one who uses them and permits bigotry to lead him blind into most ridiculous blunders, and convert him into a laughing stock for his fellows. Now, Mr. *Leader*, take a little wholesome advice,--don't talk before you know what to say. Keep quiet and your neighbors will not discover your stupidity and childish propensities. Better read the Geghan Bill and see if you can spell that great bugbear, "Catholic," in it.

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The interests that threatened slaughter to the Geghan Bill in the General Assembly of Ohio were undoubtedly the salaried chaplains' interests. Most people believe in all religions being equal before the law--and most people in Ohio believe that this religious equality is practiced in the state. They do not seem to take in the significance of the fact that in spite of the constitution, money of the state does go to the support of a particular religious denomination, in the shape of regular salaries to regular chaplains. And these chaplains, if they preach anything, must preach doctrines that are sectarian. They are sectarian from the very fact of being preachers. The fear that these chaplaincies would be abolished, with the emoluments thereto appertaining, was what caused the reconsideration.

And thus the case stands today. It happened to be the Catholics who asked for an authorized declaration of the rights of conscience of imprisoned persons. Members of both houses saw the justice of it, and the House passed it by an overwhelming majority, and its passage seemed secure in the Senate. All at once the salaried preachers took the alarm--and the bill was reconsidered. But again it passed the House and went to the Senate, where it was defeated by the first vote, but was on the same day reconsidered and passed by a handsome majority.

Thus the Catholics have the satisfaction of being the successful advocates of freedom of conscience secured to the inmates of the reformatory institutions of Ohio.

529.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, May 1, 1875 (5)

[No Catholic Proselytizing in the Prisons]

Last week the *Catholic Telegraph*, of Cincinnati, said truly that Catholic priests, visiting prisons, would have nothing to do with any other prisoners than Catholics. A paper here rejoins that the *Telegraph* lies in saying that priests will not meddle with the non-Catholics. They must meddle with them [says that paper]; their Church will not allow them to be quiet. It is a proselytizing Church, and will seek not only the Catholic prisoners but the whole of them.

Now with this spirit in our adversaries what is the use of trying to defend

ourselves. If what we say can be distorted into a charge against us, the charge will be framed. If what we say is fair and unexceptionable then we will be accused of lying. Here in Columbus a Catholic priest has been visiting the Penitentiary for the last five or six months, and has never meddled or wished to meddle with the non-Catholics of the prison.

Our calumniators in this matter of the Geghan bill will help to make history of the fact that Catholics ask nothing more than equal rights before the law, in order to be sure of winning all minds and hearts to their faith.

530.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, June 19, 1875 (1)

[Errors of the *Journal* re the Geghan Bill]

The Senor Francisco has been scandalized because we characterized some assertions contained in a Know-Nothing article which appeared in the *Morning Journal* last week, by a word of one consonant and two vowels, to wit: a LIE. The expression is not very "meek and lowly," we acknowledge. But we know no other Saxon. The Senor Francisco, after the approved Know-Nothing manner of proving to you that you do believe what you know you don't, goes on to speak:

As to persons living in adultery who are not married according to the requirements of the Church: It happens that one priest in Massachusetts is on trial, before a civil tribunal of the State, for slander, for asserting the precise thing we have charged, and the case, with the disagreement of the first jury--ten for and two against conviction--has been reported in our columns recently by the Associated Press. If the assertion is a lie, the priest is the liar, and not the *State Journal*. The same case covers the second point. The third proposition is an inevitable deduction from the first and second, and the traverse of the *Columbian* simply discredits an anointed priest of the Church, who is "infallible," unless overruled by the Pope.

Would it be meek and lowly to call this spiteful drivel? A particular priest is sued for slander, for saying that a particular couple is not validly married, and the Senor Francisco claims this for evidence of the general doctrine of the Catholic Church! By the way, the *Boston Pilot*, of last week, having for authority the foreman of the jury, says that the jury stood ten for acquittal and not for conviction, and that the report of the Associated Press is false. But suppose the priest had been convicted, the fact would not convict us of believing what we do not believe.

The Senor Francisco then proceeds to offer his evidence that the late Democratic Legislature submitted to priestly dictation in the following form: "Mr. Geghan wrote a letter to John W. Murphy, Esq., and speaking for the Roman Catholic Church of which he is a member," etc. Ahem! What difference does it make what he said? Suppose the

Senor Francisco speaks for the State of Ohio, of which he is a member, what then?

Then the argument goes on:

Shortly after this letter was written Mr. Geghan had a meeting with Archbishop Purcell and in the next number of the Cincinnati *Catholic Telegraph* was an editorial demanding the passage of the Geghan bill on peril of losing the Roman Catholic vote in case the bill was not passed.

It is very probable that Mr. Geghan had a meeting with Archbishop Purcell. But that he had any meeting in which the Archbishop promised anything or threatened anything to the Democratic party is so improbable that we would not believe it on the Senor Francisco's oath.

The writer in the *Telegraph* was merely expressing his idea of the feeling among Catholics in regard to the Geghan Bill. Here was a law manifestly just. A clamor was excited against it because the Catholics would gain a chance to spend time and money on prisoners by it. Would the party of religious freedom for all go back on it for that reason? If they did Catholics would have no reason for trusting them ever again.

The mistake of the Senor Francisco and of his fellow Know-Nothings is in supposing that all the actions of persons who call themselves Catholics are in pursuance of directions received from the ecclesiastical authorities. Catholics are citizens as well as other people, and they will take sides in politics according to their judgment.

The Senor Francisco assumes a difference of statement or opinion between the *Columbian* and the *Catholic Telegraph*, and to give it point puts in the little-ah! aberration from rectilinear exactitude of expression--that the Archbishop exercises immediate supervision over the *Telegraph*. But in the passage quoted the *Telegraph* is simply expressing its idea of how Catholics will feel towards those who were or were not afraid to do a right thing because they would be obliged by it. The Archbishop is not speaking, but the editor. To represent it as a bull of the Archbishop is simply to misrepresent it.

In regard to the proposition of the Pope's Encyclical about liberty of belief and worship being the right of every man we are not afraid to believe that the editor of the *Journal*, if he studies over and takes in the true meaning of it, will accept it himself.

531.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, July 31, 1875 (3)

[Sectarianism at the Penitentiary]

We cannot hold any discussion with the *Ohio State Journal*. But there are some misstatements in its issue of Monday last which we note.

The statement that Catholic priests were not only at all times welcome to visit the prison (Penitentiary) and perform the offices of religion according to their faith, is

untrue.

That they were allowed to hear Confessions, with difficulty and under restrictions, is, of course, a privilege not granted to those who do not believe in Confession. But to *italicize* this, as a privilege, is simply to say that we have no right to be Catholics.

There was one Warden who used to send for a priest in case a convict was dying, but he did not afford any further facilities than access to the sick ward, where the attendants hung about the priest and sick bed so as to make it necessary to give general absolution and extreme unction, without attempting to administer the Viaticum. Still he risked so much in doing even this that we never wished to have him compromise himself by doing more.

There was no Douai translation of the Bible in the prison library until this year.

The King James' Bible is a sectarian book.

That all other sectarian books were rigorously excluded from the library, is disproved by the financial report of the Warden, where forty dollars' worth of hymn books, and eleven dollars and eighty cents' worth of *Ohio State Journals* are marked as paid by the State.

"The prison officers sought to conciliate by sending special invitations to arrogant priests who had no need of invitation or aught but devotion to duty in order to gain admission. Some of these priests sent sneering replies that 'preaching' constituted but a small part of the service of the *true* Church."

This misrepresents (1) the fact of the invitation which was sent to only one "arrogant" priest, and (2) the spirit of his answer, which was not sneering, and (3) the letter of it, which said nothing about the *true* Church. [*See below.*]

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"Privileges" of Catholic Priests in Public Institutions of Columbus.

The *State Journal* discussing the Geghan Bill and its obnoxious properties, in granting religious equality to the different denominations, that is giving Catholics the same privileges as other sects, said in Monday's edition that the Catholic priests previous to the passage of the Geghan Bill were given "privileges," which were not granted to any other ministers. The Protestant salaried chaplain had the right, he did not need any "privileges," but as soon as the law granted the right to Catholic ministers as well, the horns of Know Nothingism began to appear.

The *Journal* says the only person ever permitted to see a prisoner out of the presence of an officer was a Catholic priest. This "privilege" we dispose of elsewhere [above]. But we know another "privilege" of which the *State Journal* is ignorant. Last winter and spring there was smallpox in the County Infirmary--a public institution. The Catholic priests of this city enjoyed the *privilege* which no "preacher" enjoyed,--to breathe the foul air of the Pest House, frequently, to bring comfort and consolation to

the afflicted ones, to hear their Confessions and touch their plague stricken bodies in administering the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. Nobody objected to this *privilege* of Catholic priests,--they were left to enjoy it alone. The *State Journal* was mute on the subject, and in all probability did not know anything of it, as its news gatherer and penitentiary man did not venture in that direction.

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The one priest mentioned above who was invited to the Ohio Penitentiary was Bishop Rosecrans himself. These letters appeared in the pages of The Catholic Columbian:

from *The Catholic Columbian*, April 3, 1875

Preaching at the Penitentiary.
An Invitation to Bishop Rosecrans,
and the Declination.

Warden's Office, Ohio Penitentiary,
Columbus, March 25, 1875.

Right Rev. Bishop Rosecrans:

Dear Sir--You are hereby most respectfully invited and earnestly solicited to preach to the inmates of the Ohio Penitentiary on next Sabbath day at 11 o'clock a.m. If you find it impossible to comply with the above request on the day named, be pleased to name some other Sunday when it will be convenient for you to hold services in the chapel of this institution.

Your brothers in Christ,
W. M. Ferguson, Chaplain, O.P.
G. S. Innis, Warden.

Substance of Reply.

Columbus, O., March 26, 1875.

Rev. W. Ferguson and Col. G. S. Innis:

Gentlemen--Your courteous invitation to preach before the inmates of the Ohio Penitentiary has been received with thanks. It is impossible for me to do so next Sunday, however much I might be inclined.

In regard to the appointment of some future Sunday, you will permit me to speak frankly, and I hope to do so in such a manner as to show my appreciation of your personal courtesy, while I explain to you the reason why I would prefer not to accept the invitation.

In the first place preaching in our church is only a very small incident of "religious service," which consists of things of weightier importance. I should be very

loath to put any sermon of mine up for "religious service."

Secondly, I should dislike to intrude my discourse on those of the inmates whose attendance is compulsory. We welcome non-Catholics to our churches because they come voluntarily, and leave us free to preach our own doctrines, and when they are tired of listening, or annoyed at what is said, can go away. But I should feel very uncomfortable to know that I must refrain from saying what I conceive to be what is for the real good of my hearers, or saying it must ruffle the feelings of those who cannot help enduring it.

With many thanks for your courtesy, I remain, gentlemen, your obedient servant,
S. H. Rosecrans,
Bishop of Columbus

Since the above was in type, another very generous invitation from Col. Innis has reached the Rt. Rev. Bishop, which being received, as he was about to leave the city for a day or two, cannot be published this week.

from *The Catholic Columbian*, April 10, 1875

Preaching at the Penitentiary.

Following is the reply of Bishop Rosecrans to a second letter from Colonel Innis:

Dear Colonel:--In reply to your kind letter of March 31st, I desire to say that I do not see any need of any change in the way matters of conscience are settled in your establishment. Your own sense of justice had already rendered to us the substance of what we thought our due, and we ask no more. In regard to the invitation to officiate in the regular chapel at the public hour, offered so cordially, I will accept as soon as my duties and engagements will allow me to give a two weeks' notice to you, probably not before the second or third Sunday in May. Your obedient servant,

S. H. Rosecrans.

532.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Sept. 4, 1875 (3)

The Geghan Law

The Know-Nothing papers overdo their vituperation of Catholics when they seek to fasten on them the authorship of a law securing the right of conscience to all inmates of prisons in the State of Ohio. Let us see--how is it that the fundamental law of the Republic reads? What is the motto of the star spangled banner? What notes does the American eagle scream from end to end of this glorious and free land? Will the Honorable Ben. Eggleston put us in mind? They make it appear that Catholics have to

step in and compel, by threats, the execution of the fundamental principle of American freedom--which proclaims no distinction of race, color or creed. This reminds one of the yell--"Thou art the Son of God"-- which came from the cast-out devils in Judea.

For the benefit of our readers, and others who have not as yet seen the famous Geghan Bill that has so much excited the indignation of the Know-Nothing press throughout the country, we publish the full text of the same. We invite a careful examination of the same for the discovery of the Catholic bugbear.

AN ACT to secure liberty of conscience in matters of religions to persons imprisoned, or detained by authority of law.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio*, That as liberty of conscience is not forfeited by reason of crime or by reason of detention in any penal, reformatory, eleemosynary institution or any house of refuge, work-house, jail or public asylum in this State, no person in any such institution shall be compelled to attend religious worship or instructions of a form which is against the dictates of his or her conscience; and it shall be the duty of every director, trustee, superintendent or other person having in charge any such institution, to furnish ample and equal facilities to all such persons for receiving the ministrations of the authorized clergyman of their own religious denominations or persuasions, under such reasonable rules and regulations as the trustees, directors, managers or superintendents shall make, but no such rules shall be so construed as to prevent the clergyman of any denomination from fully administering the rites of his denomination to such inmates; provided, such ministration entail no expense on the public treasury,

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect from and after its passage.

Geo. L. Converse,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Alphonso Hart,

President of the Senate

Passed March 30, 1875.

533.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Sept. 18, 1875 (5)

[Geghan's Re-nomination]

When we hear men growling about the re-nomination of Geghan, we are inclined to believe that they are endeavoring to bring religion into political discussion, because it shows that Geghan's action in the legislature is regarded by them as an unworthy act, and the sooner his career is brought to a close, the better for the country.

534 - Grosvenor and the Geghan Bill Again

This is the long and short of the matter. The Republican growls and snarls, because he fears that the Catholic Church will be placed on an equality with other religions in the eyes of the state. The Democrat grumbles at the convention that re-nominated Geghan, because his political opponents accuse him of affiliation with the Catholic Church. To the former, we would propose this question, "Does the Geghan bill grant more rights to the Catholic Church than to any other?" Of the latter we would ask, "Are you afraid to become the champion of religious liberty?" If these questions are answered fairly and squarely by each, it will be evident that Geghan has as much right to a second term in the legislature as Hayes has to a third term in the gubernatorial chair, since he has been guilty of no disgraceful act.

534.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Oct. 2, 1875 (1)

Grosvenor and the Geghan Bill Again

The *Athens Journal*, a couple of weeks ago, called upon us to give proofs of Grosvenor's favorable action in reference to the Geghan Bill, under the penalty of our being put down as calumniators of a great and good man, and deserving of the just contempt of all honest citizens. We consider it an unnecessary work to reproduce all the proofs that have been brought forward in support of our allegation. Mr. Grosvenor's course lately is of itself sufficient to condemn him as a hypocrite, and one whose sole object is to serve the whims of a public from whom he derives his daily bread. He is now canvassing the State, lying, slandering and ridiculing the Catholic religion and its practices. Sincerity he is apparently devoid of, for at the celebration of St. Patrick's Day in this city, last 17th of March, in reply to a toast of Catholic sentiment, he made assertions that directly oppose those he is now making. He then took occasion to eulogize the Irishman and the Catholic. The terms of praise heaped upon the Catholic religion then by this man, who now fails in finding words to express his contempt of that religion, must of necessity condemn him as a falsifier, for words of praise far outweigh any amount of abuse he may utter. Good words are prompted by a good spirit, and a desire to be truthful, but abusive language always originates with a desire to injure. As to Grosvenor's speaking in favor of the bill, we can produce the sworn statements of several gentlemen in this city to that effect. Moreover, fifty persons present in the House the evening of its passage heard him. Mr. Dodds, a clerk in the House, recorded the vote as given, and Mr. Grosvenor's name appears on the affirmative list. This list we can produce at almost any time. Couple this with the assertions of those who are willing to make affidavit to its correctness. Again, Mr. Geghan himself pointed out to us a passage in the bill as passed, written by Grosvenor himself, and who, at the time of its second appearance before the House, said that his

535 - To Repeal the Just Geghan Act

constituents had threatened him with political ostracism if he should vote for it a second time, and telegrams to that effect he showed Geghan, but he assured him, nevertheless, that he had his sympathy. Now, let Mr. Grosvenor come out and make a bold and fearless denial over his signature, that he never in any manner supported the Geghan bill. In the meantime, whilst Mr. Grosvenor is pondering over this, the *Athens Journal* can rest assured that we will make no assertions that we cannot prove. The hundreds present in the City Hall last 17th of March will bear witness to the language used on that occasion. We clip the following from the *Cincinnati Enquirer* of the 22nd ult.:

Mr. C. H. Grosvenor, Representative of Athens County in the Ohio House, is on the stump making a row about Catholicism. Grosvenor favored the Geghan Bill when it was before the House, and helped in its preliminary steps. Representative Chapman, of Meigs County, a Republican, says in his paper, the *Meigs County Telegraph*, that--

"General Grosvenor stated publicly in his place, on the floor of the House, that he voted for the Geghan Bill, and that the Clerk's record in the case was wrong. That was the first time the bill was up. More than that, we heard him vote in the affirmative on that occasion. He also made a speech in its favor. After the Geghan letter came out, he said to us that he should vote against it when it again came up, and he did so. In view of these facts the record of the Clerk, which was often incorrect, counts as nothing."

535.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Oct. 30, 1875 (1)

[To Repeal the Just Geghan Act]

Now, the Know-Nothing press is calling upon the incoming Republican Legislature to repeal the famous Geghan Bill. Not because there is anything objectionable or partizan in it, say they, but because Catholics were in favor of it. The bill is acknowledged to be just, but it is obnoxious since Catholics dare presume that it granted them equal rights with other denominations. If its passage is an act of justice, then its repeal, circumstances remaining the same, would be an act of injustice, an act perpetrated through bigotry and hatred. Repeal the bill and make a mockery of religious liberty. The Democratic Legislature of last winter, in a sense of justice, made the law, and was condemned as favoring the cause of Catholicity, yet in a way that the Know-Nothing press cannot but acknowledge just. If, therefore, the incoming Legislature repeal this act, which is admitted to be just, it shall immediately stamp itself as a sectarian Legislature, guilty of an admitted injustice.

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The following is the conclusion of the article "Bishop Rosecrans and the Geghan Law" by J. Michael Finn, in the *Bulletin* of the Catholic Record Society-Diocese of Columbus, Vol. XXXVII No. 5 (May, 2012).

In October 1875 Rutherford B. Hayes was elected as the 32nd governor of Ohio. Also, as a result of the election a Republican majority gained control of the Ohio General Assembly. Although the Geghan Law was not the only issue in the election, Hayes garnered a national reputation as being the guardian of Protestant-American cultural norms. This popularity would catapult him to the Republican nomination for President in 1876 and eventually served to put him in the White House.

The new Republican-dominated legislature met on January 3rd, 1876. One of its first proceedings was to pass an act repealing the Geghan Law. Both houses passed the bill, along party lines, and Governor Hayes signed the repeal into law.

Despite the constitution, Ohio's prisons and institutions remained a Protestant stronghold with limited access granted to other religions. In most institutions the process reverted to the Chaplain rules. That is, if the Protestant chaplain and the warden or administrator of the institution were amenable to Catholic participation, greater access and improved facilities were granted. Gradually, this would change as Catholics became a larger part of the population in Ohio.

At the Ohio Penitentiary, Catholic priests designated as chaplains by the Bishop continued to visit the prison and minister to the Catholic inmates, but it would not be until 1884 that the Ohio Penitentiary would have its first full-time and recognized Catholic Chaplain, Father Thomas F. Delaney, as well as its first make-shift chapel, located in an empty and dingy room above the offices of the Deputy Warden and Protestant Chaplain.

I. Ethnic and Racial Groups

536.

Lecture, U.C.L.A. Research Library, Special Collections No. 663, General William Rosecrans Papers, Box 107, Folder 7

This no doubt was the lecture given at Mozart Hall in the evening of Sunday, Feb. 18, 1866, on "Our Country from a Catholic Point of View." Proceeds went to replace the organ in the seminary chapel. (See The Catholic Telegraph of January 31 and Feb. 28, 1866)

Catholicism in America

(conclusion only, on "our Colored brother")

...I would seem to some, perhaps, to have studiously shunned the great topic of the day, did I close without any allusion to "our colored brother." I will not shrink from

speaking of him, though one can scarcely utter his thoughts on the subject without being dragged forward as the supporter of this or that political faction. Let me repeat what I have said already. I belong to no political party, since the Union is safe, and our soldier boys away from danger. I care nothing about who is in and who is out, beyond the reminiscences the war has left. Speaking of the Negro, I do not propose to say anything about his right of suffrage, much less that matter of taste, the social equality of colors. Suffrage is a right, not founded in nature but in law, and social life is all a matter of fashion and conventionality. But I speak of natural rights, of the rights that belong to a man because he has God for his creator, Jesus Christ for his redeemer, and the beatific vision for his final destiny.

All the men of the earth are of our blood, sprung from Adam and Eve; all the men of the earth are born under sentence of death and, unless born again of water and the Holy Ghost, shall not enter into the kingdom of God. In the curse of the outraged Deity, all are equal. So also are they equal in the blessing Christ did for all. God wills all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Every man has therefore a God-given right to learn what his Creator wills him to believe and to do in order to be saved. That is to say, every man has the right to religious instruction, to the Sacraments of the Church, and to be unmolested in practicing all the duties of a Christian, no matter what his nation, his rank, his ---, or his color. These rights the Negro has, and no man can deny them to him and be a Catholic.

The Church knows no distinctions but those appointed by Christ when he instituted the hierarchy. Baptism, Penance, the Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, Matrimony belong to all His children alike. You have seen white people and black people going to Communion together side by side. I myself was ordained sub-deacon, deacon and priest in Rome in 1852, side by side with a Negro from Guinea. No flesh can glory in the sight of God. If being born under a curse would make a man black, there would be no white. It is not for you and me, my friends, to pretend to have fathomed the designs of God and to affect cooperation with Him while we indulge our spleen and prejudice. Let us mind our interests and save our own souls, taking care to deprive no man of what belongs to him under any pretext. The Black race, in this country, it seems to me, is perhaps even more unfortunate in its friends than in its enemies. The men who have made political capital out of them have no happiness to give them. As soon as they cease to be a stepping stone to notoriety and power, they will be as little talked of in the newspapers, and as little thought of, as poor white men; and they will find that they are but in the beginning of sorrows.

What relief they get, if indeed they ever get any, will come to them through the Church of Christ. That Church once abolished slavery all over Europe--so gently that, like the end of night in dawn, no one could tell when it happened, yet so thoroughly that it took the Reformation nearly three centuries to bring back a quasi-slavery upon

the poor. And if the present revolution is not to end fatally for the weaker party, that Church must stand as the cause.

537.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Aug. 21, 1875 (4)

Catholic Church and the Colored Race

J. Sella Martin is the name of a colored gentleman whom the Republicans have trained to make speeches for them during the campaign. Martin has the dread of Catholics bad. Martin reasons thus: Nearly all Catholics are Democrats, Democrats are opposed to Negro education, therefore Catholics are opposed to Negro education. He says the people of the South are opposed to Negro education, and the Catholic Church is lending assistance. How can he make such assertions and force his unsuspecting brethren to admit such a willful slander and unmitigated lie? Martin knows in his heart, unless he is like the individual in the Bible who says there is no God, that the Catholic Church has done more to refine and educate his race than any other denomination on the face of the earth. It was owing to the influence of the Catholic faith that slavery became to be so generally denounced. Only a little less than one year ago, the papers of the day chronicled the news of a number of priests landing in this country destined for the Negro missions in the South. Throughout the country, the Catholic Church admits the colored people to her sanctuary and white priests devote themselves to the care of their souls. We would simply refer this slandering and deceiving Martin to the testimony of the numberless people of his race that have received untold favors at the hands of Catholics. Let our colored brethren seek admission into the churches of those sainted politicians who smile upon them during the political canvass, and note the reception they have. The Catholic Church recognizes not color. All the human race are equal in her sight.

Martin gave a quotation from Father Ryan, of New Orleans, asserting that the "Negro had never amounted to anything; that the Negro had never accomplished anything." Admitting that Father Ryan did make use of such an expression, is it not correct? We challenge Mr. Martin or any one else to prove the contrary. We cannot place the African race on the scale of civilization equal to that of European nations. The race has been kept down and shut out from refining influences by the very unchristian spirit that exists outside of the Catholic Church, and this is the force of Father Ryan's assertion, which we fully corroborate.

Do the numberless schools established by Catholics for colored children exclusively prove that the Catholic Church wishes to impede their education? All we can do is to warn our colored people against such individuals as Martin, who are paid to speak somebody else's piece, and who are consequently too treacherous to be trusted

at all.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Aug. 28, 1875

Something for J. Sella Martin and his Friends to Study

Cincinnati has a free Catholic school for colored children, supported by Catholics who besides pay for the support of all the public schools. This is the way the Catholics oppose Negro education.

538.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, May 16, 1878 (4)

[A Question of Race]

Editor Catholic Columbian:

Is a Catholic obliged to stay till the end of Mass, on Sunday, if a colored person comes into the same pew with him? CAUCASIAN.

Ans. Theology has failed to touch this point. If you do not incommode the colored person, much, you had better stay till the end of Mass. Possibly becoming absorbed in your prayers, you might forget what his color is.

539.

Editorials, *The Catholic Columbian*, April 15, 1876 (1)

[The A.O.H. Not Condemned]

Whether the episcopal authority is at fault because men associate themselves together under a certain name, and for a good object, and depart from their original purpose in one locality, while adhering to it in another, is a question easily decided. Those who do wrong are the ones to fall under censure whatever their name is. And those who do right are praiseworthy, no matter what wrong others may do, under the same name. We have been asked for an opinion on the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and we propose to give it frankly, as our opportunities have enabled us to form it. The Order is composed of Roman Catholic Irish. Every member must be a practical Catholic. It is not a secret society, in any sense, differing from a debating club or a base ball association.

In Pennsylvania it has been identified with the disorders perpetrated in the mining region by the "Molly Maguires"; but the Society, at large, has repudiated all connection with that ring of assassins. The *New York Freeman's Journal*, whose means of information are, of course, very great, cautiously, but very positively, says that the organization is under the control of a ring of bad leaders, who use it for selfish and

therefore evil purposes.

These are points on which we cannot criticize or correct. But this much we can say: that the men adhering to the organization who are known to us are sincere and worthy men, having no object but to promote the good of the Irish and of the general community; that the constitution, as exhibited in printed form to us, contains nothing objectionable.

Of course, we would like better to see an union of Catholics simply, without reference to blood or miserable human nature in any shape; but we cannot condemn people who find an attraction in associating with their "kith and kin." The Irish nation has always been Catholic since St. Patrick's time; and if men of that nationality chose one another's company, in business and in recreations, we cannot find fault with them for it.

There are members of the Order in Steubenville, Bellaire, Straitsville, and Columbus, who are Catholics of undoubted standing. In Cincinnati there is no taint on their name. What new facts may be developed concerning the workings of the society, or what decisions may be evoked from the proper authorities by facts known to them but not to us, we cannot tell. But until then we cannot condemn the Ancient Order of Hibernians of our own ability.

We repeat, however, that we would much prefer to see Catholics overlook blood in all the undertakings which they unite to accomplish.

"A. O. H."

A few weeks ago we noticed the organization in this city of a branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The members composing the division here we found to be honest, upright, intelligent, and good practical Catholics, who regarded their faith more than their own hearts' blood, and would not knowingly be guilty of a breach of the laws of the Church. The constitution by which they are governed is a rule that would do credit to a religious organization; for though the Order is not strictly religious it is nevertheless intended to foster religious sentiments, and promote the spiritual and temporal interests of Irish Catholics throughout the country. In the preamble of the constitution, we find this stated as an object of the Order, which cannot but be pronounced Christian in the highest sense: the members of this Order do declare that the intent and purpose of the Order is to promote Friendship, Unity, and true Christian Charity among its members, by raising or supporting a stock or fund of money for maintaining the aged, sick, blind and infirm members, and for no other purpose whatsoever.

This, in the face of the confession published in the *Daily Dispatch* of the 7th inst., and purported to have been made by James Kerrigan, under sentence of death for complicity in the Molly Maguire murders in the coal region, should be of itself a

sufficient contradiction of the slander of any connection between the Molly Maguires and the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

The constitution of the Order expressly states that only a Roman Catholic, whose parents were also Catholics, can become a member. Catholic in name is not sufficient. The member must be a practical Catholic and attend to his duties regularly. A member is expelled *de facto* if found guilty of perjury, robbery &c., and here again is the refutation of the charge. The Molly Maguires are not a chartered organization. They are a union of miners, who pledge themselves to rule the prices paid for their labor. Their object is antagonistic to the order of society and they would not be permitted in the meetings of the A.O.H. This one Kerrigan may have been a member of the A.O.H. His comrades may have been members, but willfully mistaking the object of the organization, banded together under another name, and committed the crimes that every member of the A.O.H. detests like any true Christian.

Next Sunday the members of the Columbus division will receive Holy Communion in a body. Go and see if they are the most hardened villains, as Kerrigan sweepingly confesses (?) [sic] We do not say but that members may have been guilty of many misdemeanors, in which they implicated the Order in the places in which it existed. But this does not lay guilt on the whole Order. Its object speaks for itself. Its exemplary members in this city are a guarantee that they are not Molly Maguires.

The preamble and resolutions lately adopted by the National Convention in New York are then presented.

540.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, July 24, 1875

"Catholic Irish" Riots

The hateful intolerance of the Catholic Irish for the Orangemen was illustrated again at Lawrence, Mass., on the 12th. The Orangemen and their families were peacefully celebrating the Battle of the Boyne, when they were brutally set upon by the Catholic Irish and beaten with clubs, stones and other missiles. The rioters were finally driven off by volleys from revolvers, which hurt some of them badly. We are eloquently told that this is a land of tolerance, but riots like this make these statements appear like mockery.--*Dayton Journal*

This is another way in which news items of trifling import are exaggerated and distorted. We are far from approving of any such demonstrations, no matter how trivial, as that which took place at Lawrence, and we would be sincerely glad to see the instigators brought to their senses, but we do most emphatically object to laying the charge at the feet of Catholic Irish. The Irishman, trained in the doctrines of that faith which sainted so many of his ancestors, possesses too much of the true Christian spirit to permit his angry passions to obtain the mastery over him, even when the colors of his

most brutal persecutors are flaunted defiantly in his face. He is taught to pray for those who calumniate and persecute him and to forgive all injuries. Change the places and the circumstances of the Orangemen and the Catholic Irish. Let the Orangemen view with Irish eyes and feel with Irish hearts, and let the Irishmen persecute to the same extent that he was persecuted and then will the influences of Catholic faith be manifested? No honor to the Orangeman for being quiet and peaceable. What has he to incense him? Their parade and show on the 12th of July is never without the intention of provoking a riot, as is evident from the fact that the paraders are always prepared for such affairs as on the occasion in question. The mob that was provoked to the use of clubs, stones, etc., is disowned by the Irish Catholics as much as the disorderly Communists of France were disowned by the French, and we repeat, with all order-loving citizens, that the offenders should be brought to justice.

The paragraph above quoted, however, is sufficient condemnation for the Orangemen, since it is easily seen from it that they intended to excite the "Catholic Irish" to a riot, since they were provided with their revolvers, whilst the latter used only clubs, stones, etc. Where would the blame be most likely placed, on the side of those who were fully prepared for battle, or on the side of those who used whatever weapon came conveniently to hand? We state the question only in this light in order that the full force of the above statement may be made manifest.

541.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Oct. 9, 1875 (4)

Ireland in the Centennial

The commissioners having in charge the Philadelphia Centennial have determined to allot no space to Ireland separately, as they have done to other nations. It is true that she will be permitted to exhibit her unequalled linens, poplins, laces, etc., but the exhibition must be made in connection with that of England. This is a direct insult to the numerous sons of Ireland who have struggled with America throughout every epoch in her history, from the time that the infant Republic lay almost helpless in the cradle of liberty to the time of our last civil war. During all these trying periods, Irish citizens have ever manifested their love for the land of their adoption, but now, forsooth, they are nobody, they must step aside and give up the fruit of their industry, as they have ever done, to that power against whom their efforts have been constantly directed in the endeavor to free themselves from oppression.

It may show generosity to invite a once formidable enemy to join in the anniversary celebration of his defeat, but at the same time the effect of this generosity is destroyed by the casting out in the cold that nation that came gallantly to the rescue in the hour of need. Let this action of the commissioners, therefore, be inquired into, so

that much hard feeling will be obviated, and Ireland placed in the rank of nations where she belongs, and where America should be the first to place her. In the name of justice and honor we demand this right; in the name of countless Irishmen, who love to blend the colors of America's Centennial banner with the green of their own beloved flag. If Canada is permitted a space by herself, then also must Ireland, for a greater reason.

542.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, January 24, 1878 (1)

[Ill-mannered *Sunday News*]

The *Sunday News*, speaking of the prospect of a large procession in Columbus for St. Patrick's Day, expresses it thus: "Paddy will be out in full force, with all the glory of green regalia." Now is not this quite an unnecessary exhibition of contempt for the Irish? There is not a hod carrier in America so ill-mannered as to throw gratuitous slurs on those who show kindness to him.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, January 31, 1878

The solicitude of the editor of the *Catholic Columbian* for the Irish name is so intense as to deserve ridicule. He seems incapable of comprehending the difference between jocularly and derision. We have the best of reason for believing that his attempts to prejudice the *Sunday News* in the estimation of our Irish fellow-citizens is not appreciated by them.--*Sunday News*.

This touches the exact point. There are vulgar people in this country who imagine that an Irishman is necessarily ridiculous, and think that what would be impertinence to Odd Fellows, Masons, Red Men &c., is "jocularly" when used of Irishmen. In the St. Joseph's Benevolent, the School, the Total Abstinence, the Holy Name Societies, are men at least the peers of any attached to the *News* office; and fully capable of seeing how much "jocularly" there is, in calling their public and proud profession of their attachment to the land from which they are exiles, a "public display of Paddy, in all the glory of green regalia." It is the same "jocularly" as that exhibited by the boys of the High School in defiling the holy water fonts at the Cathedral; and by the girls of the same institution in their unseemly conduct within its walls. It is the jocularly of the boy, who, for amusement's sake, throws stones at the dog. If we are to have jokes, let us have them as between equals; and let them be printed with "joke" labeled on them.

543.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, April 15, 1876 (3)

Roman Catholic Benevolent Union of America

A correspondent, signing himself "President," makes a suggestion in another column that is worthy the attention of the societies composing the Irish Catholic Benevolent Union of America, as well as the societies of the Central Verein. This thing of exclusiveness, by forming societies according to nationality, is very good and commendable so far as ties of nationality serve to bind more intimately into one brotherhood, and thus to bring about good results for religion and the members of the union, but to have all Catholic societies formed into one grand organization, to be called the "Catholic Benevolent Union of America," would be a grand scheme and one of the best means for promoting the interests of our holy Church, and uniting its members in one common fellowship. Make it in fact Catholic disregarding nationality. The Irish societies might yet retain their national individuality, and the German societies likewise, but let them form a grand union by combining their forces.

It is true that the Irish Catholic Benevolent Union admits all nationalities, but the name is exclusive. We would not, however, ask them to drop the "Irish." That is correct and should stand so long as the Germans have their Central Verein or other nationalities their unions. Still we would have these unions tributary to a head Union of the country, free from national differences.

Can't this be accomplished in this Centennial year.