

VII. Interactions with the World

A. Thoughts on Society at Large

a. Government

348.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, June 10, 1854

Republicanism, and a Spirit of Riot.

These two are incompatible with each other. Republicanism will subsist in this country only so long as public sentiment respects law and discountenances riot. No one who reflects for one moment, can fail to perceive this; for every riot necessarily implies a destruction of property, if not of life. Now, property is a power in the political world, and will protect itself, let it fall into whose hands it may. Hence, in proportion as the spirit of lawlessness increases, in that same proportion will grow the precautionary despotism of property. If the lawless persons are few, the police force will be small. Their numbers increasing, more officers will be required to hold them in awe; and when at last a spirit of riot pervades a majority of the community, a *military force* must be organized, since order must be preserved. We have already passed through two grades of this proportion in Cincinnati. There are those living who can remember that the entire police force consisted of one or two constables elected by the people, and whose official duties by no means interfered with their daily business. Now and then they were obliged to leave work for half a day or a day, to serve a *warrant* or a *subpœna*, or to attend to a "constable's sale;" but they did not consider themselves obliged by their office to be on the alert for thieves or rowdies, any more than other citizens. It was time enough for them to move when complaint was entered and the warrant issued. As time passed, however, and the *frontiers-men* began to have property and commerce, the generation of those who live by their wits appeared amongst them. Rowdyism, too, which does little harm beyond the robbing of beehives or taking the wheels off from wagons in a thinly settled neighborhood, in a crowded city becomes intolerable by its frequency and violence. Hence the old constables, often the shoemaker or the tailor, whose shop was the house nearest to the "Squire's," were superseded by "police-officers," empowered to arrest without warrant all thieves, pickpockets, or disorderly persons. When these same thieves, pickpockets, or disorderly persons became so numerous as to bid defiance to *one* officer, *two* had to be appointed; and the Police Court, with more discretionary power to dispose summarily of offenders, took the place of the solemn formalities of the old-time "Squire's." Now we have almost semi-annually an augmentation of the police force, and probably will continue to have, since crime is on the increase.

We have not yet, however, reached the last grade of military despotism, and let us hope we never will, notwithstanding the malignant efforts to excite dissensions of

some unprincipled men, and the unwise indifference with which others view those efforts. The Know-nothing clique is laboring hard to foment the spirit of riot--first, by openly declaring that the fundamental principle of the American Constitution--religious liberty for all--is to be subverted in order to spite the Catholics; and secondly, by blackening with calumny the reputation of their Catholic neighbors, to the end that all friendly relations of Protestants with Catholics be broken off. And there are many of another class who look with indifference on this course of the bigots, because, first, they have no love for the Catholics; and second, think, very foolishly, that when these are out of the way there will be an end to violence. They act thoughtlessly. The mob spirit does not make distinctions; and they will find, in the end, that when they were encouraging it in order to be rid of Catholics, they were cheering men for scuttling the vessel in which they themselves were riding over the waters of the political ocean. If the spirit of riot prevails, of course convulsions must ensue. The *men* of property now will suffer; but the *class* of property-holders will remain, and will protect itself by despotic means. Either a love of justice, of moderation, a respect for law and attachment to right, must be promoted, or else our citizens must make up their minds to pass through the terrors of anarchy to the stagnancy of military despotism. Republicanism and a spirit of riot are incompatible.

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Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, June 2, 1860 (1)

Popular Rights.

"1. Does the *Telegraph* hold that the people of Italy have not the right to choose for themselves how and by whom they will be governed?

"2. If the people of Italy have not this right, have any other people got it?

"3. If the American people have got this right, where did they get it?

"We pause for a reply."--*Cincinnati Daily Commercial*.

We hold that the people of Italy have a right to a just government; and that they have a right to choose such a government, and no right to choose any other.

They have no right to choose anarchy; they have no right to choose what wrongs others. Right and wrong are, in society, as every where else, quite above the popular will.

The faction calling itself people of Italy has no right to attempt to sanction injustice, oppression, and violence by giving them a republican dress. The leaders have no right to demoralize the country by obscene, blasphemous, and ribald writings, by lying reports, and wilful calumnies. They have no right to gather together the riff raff of the population from the lanes and alleys, to burn haystacks, destroy vineyards, levy contributions on private persons, deface works of art, howl insults at ladies and

gentlemen as they pass through the streets. They have no right to break up the discipline of schools, to send young men from study to the taverns, where they learn to blaspheme, not Christ's vicar alone, for which the *Commercial* would thank them, but Christ Himself. They have no right to gag the Catholic press, to exile Catholic bishops, to threaten canons and curates with assassination for not singing *Te Deums* in honor of their success. They have no right to sit in their secret conclaves and sentence honest men to die by the assassin's dagger.

Abstracting from the habits, enlightenment, virtue, and established institutions of any people, no doubt, the *genuine people*--(not the mob of clientless lawyers, patientless doctors, common loafers, &c.)--have a right to choose their form of government, and the persons who are to administer it. But a people never yet existed, *in fact*, without established usages, and institutions of some kind. And their form of government must fit their circumstances, just as the garment must fit the wearer. Among the pioneers of this western world, republicanism was the only form of government, because neither monarchy nor nobility ever emigrated. The people of this country therefore have not the "divine right" of revolutionizing our present form of government and establishing despotism in its stead. Nor have the people of Italy, or any other country, a right to adopt a new form of government not at all fitted to their condition. The people are as much bound by justice as the ruler.

We understand American freedom to be the acknowledgement of no man's arbitrary will as our law. We yield obedience to God in whatever way He may make known His will to us, but are slaves to no man's caprice, whether that man wears many heads or one. We neither crouch before a throne, nor lick the dust at the feet of the mob; and we regard those who talk about our violating the convictions of the country, and about what a majority of the American people think, as being very unfit representatives of the true freeman. He who crouches before the popular will where that will is law, would crouch before any other despot. He who dare not speak truth where the populace is against him dare not be free. We always find the *Commercial* ready to defend freedom against the poor and comparatively helpless, strong in defying the control of a few printers, eloquent in maintaining liberty against the unpopular Catholics, but mute in the face of the mob! Let him show a little of the spirit of a freeman before he lectures us about our sympathy with despotism!

350.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, June 2, 1860 (2)

[Government and Liberty.]

The Cincinnati *Daily Commercial* which has persistently misrepresented Italian affairs to its readers, in its issue of last Saturday takes the *Telegraph* to task, for not

sympathizing with the guerilla chief, Garibaldi, in his descent upon Sicily. We did not sympathize with William Walker in his doings in Nicaragua, or with John Brown in his raid upon Virginia; and we cannot consistently approve of a similar expedition with a bloodier intent in another locality. Besides, we have seen Garibaldi and the species of cut-throats he gathers together from the taverns and streets; and for that reason cannot but shudder at the fate of a neighborhood that may fall into his hands.

Even supposing that all the English lies about the Neapolitan government were true, it would still be preferable to the domination of a licentious soldiery. One tyrant is a smaller evil than many. To be "executed on suspicion of rebellion" is no worse than to be stabbed on the suspicion that you have money about you.

We are not surprised that the *Commercial* has fallen into the school-boy error of supposing that the American war of 1776 was a war of revolution in the European sense of the word. The fact that our fathers took up arms, not to establish a new order of things but to preserve the old, is as plain as history can make it; yet semi-educated people seem to overlook it.

The other school-boyism of supposing that liberty is secured to a people by this or that form of government, is also what was to be expected from the *Commercial*. Only *just* government can secure liberty; and although we think government is most likely to be just where the people have a voice in the matter, yet, the *fact of their ruling* is not enough to ensure freedom. As for the Italians they are not capable of the republican form of government. The revolutionary leaders do not mean freedom by republicanism. Where they gain ascendance they do not lighten taxes, establish freedom of the press, abolish laws against political crimes, and the like, but multiply confiscations, proscriptions and executions.

Probably we have as much of the "rebellious fluid" that rises against tyranny flowing in our veins as the editor of the *Commercial*; but we do not see why patriotism should require us to be ill-informed on matters of fact, or illogical in theory. We do not think it necessary to the vindication of our love of liberty, to compare men whose avowed object is the destruction of the Christian religion, Christian literature, art, civilization and morality, with our Washington, Adams, and Franklin.

As for the Catholic priesthood being opposed to liberty it is a bald old charge, contradicted by all history and in the nature of things improbable. From her founder Jesus Christ, who died for "violating the convictions" of the Jews to the present day, the Catholic Church has nourished, and animated millions of champions of true and rational liberty. Every one of her millions of martyrs died for his love of justice. From the first pope St. Peter who said he would obey God rather than man, down to the last pope Pius IX., who refused to assent to injustice in the face of power, under the threats of exile, she has been ever struggling for justice, truth, liberty. Wo to the people could she be enslaved! Wo to the people were they handed over, sheep without a shepherd,

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into the hands of the demagogues!

The Catholic priesthood has no motive for abetting tyranny. Priests are generally children of the poor, whose interests are identified with those of the people. They have no hereditary dignity to support, or transmit. Bad passions may lead some astray; but if so, the spirit of their vocation, and the interest of their order will be opposed, not promoted.

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Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, February 23, 1861

[Revolutionizing the Government.]

An article published in the *Telegraph*, a few weeks ago, maintaining that to attempt to preserve the Union by fighting, is to change the nature of the government, and therefore to take away all motive for the struggle, has met with the following objection:

Granting that ours is not a government of force, still is it not a government? Has it not power to protect itself against rebellion? If not it is worthless, and was worthless from the beginning. This objection has seemed to some to be very weighty.

A government of the people is just as strong as the people of the different communities under it choose to make it. It has a right to protect itself from a rebellion of a few factious and criminal men. But where whole communities comprising good and bad, learned and unlearned, repudiate its authority, that authority is by the very fact of their opposition at an end. So weak a government may seem worthless, but a government based upon the will of the people cannot easily be stronger than the people themselves. It is inconvenient to the ruling party, but to the defeated section very comforting.

But has not the majority the right to compel submission to its behests, legally expressed?

We answer, it has, with two qualifications: 1st that the behest be just; 2d that the majority be of that consolidated community where the behest is to be law.

1. The reason of the first qualification is obvious. No majority has a right to do wrong. The oppression of Catholics by the Ohio School Law, by the taxation of Orphan Asylums, and excluding of Catholic instruction and priests from the house of refuge, &c.--is not just because the majority concur in it.

2d. Every community is a moral unit, and as such has its rights. There are more votes in Cincinnati than in Covington. Yet a majority of Cincinnatians would not have a right to make laws for Covington. Now it is manifest that our Federal Government is not a consolidated government. The people of the United States are not one community but many. the Preamble to the Constitution may say "We, the People," but the

consolidating policy went down hopelessly with the elder Adams, and "Federalist" has been a term of political reproach for many years. The Federal Government cannot therefore be the channel through which the people of one State can govern the people of another. Each community must govern itself. Now the question whether the seceding States complain justly or unjustly, is not to the point.

They do complain and secede. You may regret the catastrophe, but you cannot prevent it by force nor attempt to prevent it without revolutionizing the government.

If such a government is "contemptible," the fault lies in its nature, and not in its administration.

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Lecture, *The Urbana Union*, Aug. 19, 1863 and *The Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 18, 1863

After Confirmation at St. Raphael's Church in Springfield, Ohio, on August 15, Bishop Rosecrans gave a lecture that evening in the court house "of a metaphysical character on Law and Liberty." This, no doubt, was in part a response to the feelings that prompted the draft riots in New York City the previous month.

Law and Liberty

(synopsis 1, *The Urbana Union*)

He defined law to be whatever is ordained of authority from God. In politics, the legitimate government should be recognized as the law-giving power, and its dictates should be obeyed. Liberty, he declared to be the free exercise of that which is right, and not the want of restraint from doing what is wrong. In conclusion, he said, that he had been advertised to make a speech on the so-called topics of the day; but his vocation would not permit him to interfere in things that are the subjects of merely momentary interest. But those that are now in arms, he said, have my sympathy, and no life can be said to be lost that is sacrificed in behalf of the Union.

(synopsis 2, *The Chicago Tribune*)

He declared liberty and law inseparable, defined liberty to be the free exercise of that which is right; declared the observance of just law the fulfillment of liberty, and insisted upon the obligation of the people to observe law because it was ordained of God. The indulgence of passion was an abuse of liberty, and the obligation to observe law was not contingent upon men's opinion, but upon its justice and necessity to the safety of society or the security of the State. In conclusion the Bishop said his sympathies were with the men who were fighting in the Union army, his dearest friends stood among them or had fallen on the field of battle, and he was sure the humblest one who did tall for the Union cause did not fall in vain.

b. Fads and Reformers

353.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, July 9, 1853 (1)

Reforming by Law.

A large class of men have in our times adopted and pertinaciously retain the idea that the world is to be set to right by legislative enactments. There are, in the first place, the European Red Republicans, who thought that if an assembly would declare Europe to be free, Europe would, forthwith, be free--forgetting that in the change of tyrants, the *tyranny* remains.

In the second place, there are the "manifest destiny" men of our own country, who think (regardless of the unredressed social oppression they see about them) that if the American flag but waves over a land, that land must be an elysium.

Thirdly, we have the fanatical abolitionists, who dream that if Congress should pass a law abolishing slavery, the colored race would cease to be "down trodden."

Fourthly, comes in a phalanx of Maine Liquor Law men, who speak as though a law against drinking liquor would at once banish drunkenness from the land--forgetting that there is a much drunkenness in the Eastern States since its enactment as there was before.

Besides these there is a host of other fanatics, socialists, Fourierites, women's rights people--all eager to get some favorite law passed, and shouting that should it be passed, evils are to cease and disappear.

It is wonderful how men of any logic can be deceived by such patent nonsense. No law can remedy any evil unless it be *obeyed*. No law will be obeyed unless its subjects have a *motive* for obeying it. Now the evils at which our reformers aim arise precisely from the fact that the people are not taught the sanction of laws already existing, and not for want of laws.--Thus for example, the evils of slavery would not exist were masters taught that in proportion to their power over the slave is their responsibility of preparing him for heaven by instruction and example. Again, the sentence that drunkards shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven would do away with the evils of drunkenness, could drunkards be brought to believe practically that there *is* a kingdom of heaven at all.

We have plenty of laws already. Right and wrong are sufficiently defined. Men need a *motive* for doing right and abstaining from wrong. This motive never can be a legislative enactment, nor a corporal penalty. Corporal penalties are of weight among a people who are reminded by them of the terrible and unerring justice of God. But where no thoughts of eternity are stirred up in the beholders, the sight of a man swinging between earth and heaven deters no one from crime. It may lead to greater caution in the *manner* of its perpetration. It may induce him to seek a darker night, a

lonelier spot, a surer dagger, a subtler poison, but it gives him no horror of the *crime*, unless he see in the human penalty a figure of the more awful penalty to be inflicted in the other world by God.

When will quack reformers learn that reforms must commence in the individual, and not in the mass? When will they understand that laws have no weight if the moral sense of society be not correct and strong?

When Christianity overthrew the paganism of Rome, the impure worship of idols was never prohibited, until the sixth century, when the common sentiment of the masses cried out for it. The reform had been working its way through the individual mind for six centuries; and, after many fiery persecutions, had at last leavened the masses and found its expression in public statutes. So every reform must commence from the individual. The *individual* must be taught what is right, and *why* he ought to do it. And one by one the great majority of the members of society must be "reformed" before the reformation can be written in the statute books.

Suppose the Legislature of Ohio should pass the Maine Liquor Law;--would drunkenness cease? Certainly not, at least not until two conditions were fulfilled, viz.: 1st, the law should be proved just. 2nd, the people should be furnished with a conscience so tender that they could do nothing unjust. Legislation, especially in this country, may *express*, but it cannot *control* public sentiment; and it is ridiculous to expect that laws are to reform society.

354.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, August 27, 1853

Theories and the Poor.

The world is full of theories for the benefit of the "down-trodden poor." Reforms, projects of legislative acts, benevolent societies, associations for mutual relief, *striking* cliques, are plentiful as thistles on a Scotch heather. In all these movements and speculations, there is, no doubt, *some* honesty of purpose in many of the individuals engaged therein; but, in the main, they are hollow deceptions, false as the world that gave them birth. They are all humbugs; and their proposers are, consciously or unconsciously, wholesale cheats.

He who runs may read the truth of this assertion, both in reason and in experience.

1. They all, without exception, propose to give to masses happiness in this world; but the masses can not have their happiness--as can no individual man--this side of the grave. Therefore, they are all deceptions; and their advocates, wittingly or unwittingly, deceivers.

2. The judgment of experience, that has seen them in practice, tallies with the

voice of reason.

The humbug of Red-Republican Revolution was practiced in Rome in 1849-'50--and how fared the "down-trodden masses?" They had to work, as before, from morning till night. Their taxes were the same, and levied in the same manner. Their food was the same, but scantier. The press was gagged for them, worse than formerly. Police spies were around them in multiplied numbers. Sickness, want, trouble, were in their families as before. What availed to them the cry of "*Viva la Liberta!*" that was howled through the streets? They understood the hollow cheat. It meant the liberty of a few penniless demagogues to fatten on the public money, but no liberty for son of toil.

It was practiced in France in '94, and ran to the end its bloody course. Royalty fell, aristocracy was annihilated, "Liberty" was enthroned. But the many-headed million toiled on, and sweat, and groaned, and wept. "Liberty" (to rule) was for Danton, and Robespierre, and Napoleon the First--not for the multitude.

So the humbug of "strikes" has been tried, under our own eyes. Meetings were held--chairmen, orators, committees appointed--contributions made. The heads of cliques have spent a few idle days--proprietors of public halls have profited by the rent of the room--a few newspapers had advertising patronage--the gas companies were paid from the subscription money, for lighting the room; but the *masses* remained where they were before--remained in their rickety garrets and dingy cellars--remained in all the heat, and filth and discomfort of poverty, with the half-naked children crying for bread, with the sick wife or husband wasting away for want of medicine and attendance, and healthy air, with the rent coming due and no marked-money in the morning--to work!

In like manner, the Maine Liquor Law humbug will probably be put in practice here. Some demagogues will be elected to office, and have the people's money, with which to buy admittance to the room in the hotel where liquor is not *sold*, but *set on the table*. Committees will be paid for canvassing, editors for writing, publishers for printing, and the million will be left toiling. The abused wife will still have her drunken husband, the ragged children their tippling mother. While the advocates of the law will have grown rich on subscription and treasury profits, the *people* will be left in its old time misery.

Thus we might analyze the entire list of theories proposed in this country and in Europe, and show how experience proves their hollowness and falsehood.

Gigantic schemes are afoot in Europe. Mazzini and Kossuth pass their days in affluence, giving and receiving public dinners, and writing letters for the newspapers; while the multitude is working away, paying its weekly quatum to the secret societies, and awaiting a *change of masters*. "*Vanitas Vanitatum et omnia Vanitas.*" Yet is there no hope for the multitude? Must the masses toil on, forever, to support their deceivers, and fill with the fat of the land those who despise and cajole them? No. There is hope

for them. Not indeed in hollow systems, devised by silly or knavish men--not in the theories of Ledra Rollin, or the designs of Mazzini--but in the Catholic Church. The people must be guided either by bad and foolish, or by men divinely appointed. As long as they refuse to be guided to their eternal rest by the Church of God, there is no hope for them. So long will they labor, and toil, and weep in vain. But they will not toil and weep in vain, when under the teaching of the Church, they learn to look forward to eternal joy as the reward of suffering here, and to unite their privations with those of Jesus Christ, in order to be united to Him in His glory. If they suffer with Him, with Him shall they be glorified.

355.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, December 15, 1855

Faith in Humanity.

We noticed some time ago an expression of a political editor to the effect that his calculations on the success of a certain party were based on his "faith in humanity." This "faith in humanity" is the most common faith now-a-days. Almost every where you find men holding opinions because others hold them, and acting upon views whose correctness they have never thought of examining for themselves. You see them speaking of the approbation of the public, as though the public's approbation were an unquestionable proof of merit; and threatening to their adversaries the scorn and execration of mankind, as though the scorn and execration of mankind were too heavy a punishment for mortals to bear. Public opinion is set up for a god; and its willing worshippers with costly sacrifices, of peace, of comfort, of fortune, and too often of conscience, woo its favor and deprecate its wrath.

Yet, why should public opinion be a god? What are its titles to divinity? If we look upon it with eye of faith it is but the judgment of men, weak, sinful, laboring under God's curse since the fall of Adam. If in determining its value we use only the light of philosophy it is but the decision of an ill-informed, rash, capricious multitude.

One simple glance at the monstrous errors that have been engrafted on public opinion from time to time, is sufficient to strip the idol of every divine semblance. Idolatry--the worship of stocks and stones--by bloody and impure rites, was once established in public opinion. Every species of crime, as Paley remarks, in his attempt to prove that men are born without conscience, has at some time by some people been held honorable. And in matters of fact the judgment of the public has erred as often as in matters of theory. Jesus Christ was gibbeted as a malefactor amid applauding multitudes. His apostles and disciples, for ages were held to be the enemies of the human race. And at every period of the world, as the scriptures testify, the just suffer persecution. Public opinion persecutes the just--is public opinion a god?

Again: examine but for a moment the process by which public opinion is formed, and say what respect is due to it. In matters of theory children imbibe, unquestioning, the prejudices of their parents, and carry them through life. In matters of fact rumor, and the public desire, guide public opinion throughout. How many have escaped unwhipped by public opinion for crimes they have committed, who have sunk under the imputation of faults not their own? Who stops to investigate, before repeating the story he heard of this one's dishonesty, of that one's intemperance, or of this other's hypocrisy? And public opinion--the aggregate of these flippant judgments--demands our faith, nay, pretends to our worship!

Nor have we any faith, that mankind will ever arrive at the point of doing justice to all that is good, and of condemning all that is bad. God will put all things right at last, and, among the rest, public opinion itself. In His justice we have faith, as in His mercy hope, but neither faith nor hope in humanity. What humanity could do, it has done; and the history of its doings, is little more than a record of crime and sorrow. Grace does not find human nature utterly depraved; but so degraded as to need a ground of hope from without, instead of being able to furnish one from within itself.

356.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, June 12, 1858 (1)

National Vanity.

The vulgar book on races, reviewed in another column, discloses a spirit quite common amongst men but alien to the spirit of the Catholic Church. In individuals, vanity or the itching after praise is ridiculous; and amongst all classes of society, whoever aims to obtain the applause of others, is set down as the butt of ridicule. All men thus acknowledge, even unconsciously, the independence of the human soul and the worthlessness of human judgment, since God alone is the judge.

But many ignorant persons seem to think, that vanity enlarged is not ridiculous, that while direct self praise is puerility, the praise of one's nation is patriotism. Hence the race of "spread eagle" writers in America, of "rule Britannia" writers in England, and of similar absurd partizans, in other countries. It is the custom of this class of writers to praise indiscriminately and immeasurably whatever belongs to their country. Thus you will find Americans glorying in the precocious corruption of American children, Englishmen boasting of the horrible manufacturing system of their beloved island; Frenchmen admiring their savage revolutions; Irishmen speaking with pride of the spirit displayed at Donnybrook fair; Germans recounting the names of able, but infidel writers, and so on.

But the most absurd of all conceivable themes of laudation, to the Christian mind, is the *national blood*. To glory in the Saxon or Celtic or Asiatic or African stock, is

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the height of nonsense. Are not all men of the same blood? Are not all children of Adam--to whom no one can look back with any great pride of ancestry? Call the blood Celtic or call it Saxon, it will not change its quality. As the rose by any other name will smell as sweet, so old Adam's blood, is neither refined nor rendered coarse by being called, what name you will. Again we are all born in original sin with the wrath of God resting on us, and without title to the Kingdom of Heaven. Our parents gave us what they had--sin, shame, sorrow and infirmity, whether they were American, English, French or Irish. Is our birth therefore a thing to boast of? Is the place where we first saw the light, to be honored because, another child of shame was born, another offshoot of an accursed stock first appeared in it? Baptism may be something to remember with joy; but natural birth is no legitimate motive of self-gratulation.

It may be said that without birth we could not have baptism, and therefore birth may be a source of pride, as the forerunner of baptism. We answer that, without having been wounded we could not be healed, but no one thinks of celebrating the day he was knocked down as the forerunner of the day when he recovered from the effects of the blow.

It is noble to show fealty to one's country, to sacrifice one's comfort, and property to the public good; but it is bare and puerile to praise our country, in order to praise ourselves, and foolish to praise ourselves for what ought to be a source of shame for us--our blood.

357.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, August 14, 1858 (2)

The Terror of Public Opinion.

Public opinion, is one of the gods of the XIX. century, in fact the Jupiter of modern mythology. Money is powerful, and has many worshippers; pleasure and place rank high among the deities to which modern civilization offers incense; but public opinion--that confers wealth, and inflicts poverty, that gives place and takes it away, that defines the nature of pleasure, over-riding even the instincts of sensuality--is high over all. Public opinion is the arbiter of respectability; and, with the modern world, if we accept a few wild-headed radicals, and some earnest Christians, respectability is the end of man.

Public opinion has a code of its own, according to which it approves and protects, or condemns and outlaws. Here and there, it may coincide with God and His Church, but the coincidence is accidental and the points of difference numberless. With the Church it condemns murder, arson, theft; but of itself, it condemns with equal energy poverty, helplessness, and ragged linen. With the Church it commends honesty, sobriety and piety; but, of itself, desires, that these go not beyond appearances. Its code

is its own, its judgments are its own, and people bow to it as to a god. Now is it a wonder, that, once in a while a man upon whom public opinion frowns, a Catholic, for example, resting under the shadow of Protestant obloquy, should turn upon the power that goads him, and ask for the grounds of its authority to oppress, the seal of its divinity?

What is, in fact, public opinion, whose terror is always freezing as into trim propriety, and making us forget the majesty of God, in our anxiety not to incur its censure? What title has it to extort our fears, or command our exertions?

It has not the title of right. For "he that judges, is the Lord." The whole world may stand up against us, and in its rage seek to destroy us, as it did against the martyrs and their divine Model; and yet our innocence be stainless, and our title to heaven, sure. What is it, but an aggregate of rash, and hasty judgments, blundering often both in theory and in facts, or of idle clamors which no judgment has preceded, no knowledge prompted?

Nor has public opinion, for its tyranny over us, the title of power. We may fear, sometime, what is not right but power. We may be cautious not to offend, what we would have a right to offend, lest mischief might ensue. With public opinion such fears were idle. We hear persons, sometimes, talk of public opinion crushing certain men. It never crushed any one yet, unless as a surgeon crushes a filthy tumor on the body, to drive out unhealthy humors from them.

When we have done our work, our destiny is in the hands of God; and on the day when He is to decide for us, the authors and worshippers of public opinion, will stand side by side, with us, cowering and trembling, in the valley of judgment, thence the breath of their praise (dared they utter it), would not lift us up to heaven, nor the cries of their rage hurl us down into the abyss.

Public opinion has no power over us therefore; and the terror with which it inspires us, is a senseless panic. If it does good by checking the indecencies of crime, it does infinite evil by insinuating false views of good and evil, by choking down the warm impulses of generosity, by freezing with cold suspicions the aspirations of those to whom what is noble, and unselfish, and above the world seems, for a time, of no impossible attainment.

358.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, February 9, 1861

The New Idolatry.

Men must worship. They cannot be educated, or ridiculed, or corrupted out of a sense of dependence, and a desire for a greater good than they find within themselves. In ancient times they made pictures and statues--often hideous enough--to represent, in

detail, the passions to whose violence they yielded, and adored in deities what they were ashamed of in themselves. Since the coming of Christ the idols have been crushed, but not the idolatry. Human pride has survived the example of Calvary; and wherever pride has existed, there the altar has been raised to the idol.

In these last days, pride has built its altar to the ABSTRACT MAN. We no longer adore any man in particular as in the days of the emperors. It is too clear that each man, in concrete, as Smith, Brown, and Baxter will lie, and cheat, and gormandize, and trample down right for self; will tremble at storms and run away from small pox; will get sick, and weak, and die, and rot; but the grand aggregate of their weaknesses, and deformities, HUMANITY, which is nothing real, and therefore neither fears nor suffers, is made a thing to be adored. The living worship of the day opposed to Catholic worship is the worship of the PEOPLE GOD.

So long as devotion to the interests of humanity proceeded on the hypothesis that humanity is needy--that men are weak, ignorant, "full of many miseries," and need enlightenment, solace, nursing--that devotion belonged to the Church, founded by Him who died for men, and was shown in many a sharp trial, from age to age. But now the cry is no longer for devotion to the interests, but subserviency to the caprices of society. "Public opinion" now calls every thing to account--God, the Bible, the Church, and all besides.

"If the Bible teaches slavery," says a preacher of the modern worship, "blessed are the infidels." "Christianity," says another, "sustains views, revolting to the feelings of the people, therefore away with Christianity!" "Religion was good in the middle ages, when the people wanted it," says another, of more "enlightened" stripe, "but is good no longer," "There can be no Providence," writes another, "for men are often incommoded by storms, and other similar events."

Thus man is taken as the measure of truth, justice, religion--is deified. This doctrine underlies the sense in which the much abused word liberty is commonly taken now-a-days. The cry is for man to enjoy the liberty--not to do right, but to do what he pleases. In Europe, this cry is the moral theology of Pantheism, Mazzini being professor; in America, it is the reaction of the Puritanic mind from the revolting tenets of Calvinism.

The Church, ever true to the people, is as ready to defend them from themselves, as, of old, she defended them from their tyrants. She has the power to change them from what they are into partakers of the divine nature, but she will not recognize them as gods as they are. If they come to her sorrowing, she is all theirs; but she has no homage for them, when they call for worship. In her majestic career, among rising and falling dynasties through time, she is ever ready to stoop in pity and compassion; but in reverence she bows to none but her AUTHOR,--GOD. In her the new idolatry can have no part.

359.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, February 13, 1875 (4)

[Mind Your Own Business]

It is very strange to note the different opinions of individuals on the same subject, or the various ideas the same individual may entertain upon one subject when placed in different circumstances. This, however, only manifests the fault common to so many, that of instability fickle-mindedness. Sorry are we to say, nevertheless, that physical weakness or instability is not always to be laid down as a reason for the extremely opposite views and professions of individuals or of the same individual, differently affected. Worldly gain and pride, with a cowardly disregard for truth and a mind bent on the destruction of a neighbor's reputation, are too frequently the characteristics of people that are passed over by an indulging public as feeble-minded. Such ones, who apparently have no mind of their own, are too much taken up with the doings and designs of others and are too eager to imitate the example of any that may for the time agree with them. To these we would say, "Mind your own business" and you will find plenty to do. A man will declare his regard for you, will express his willingness to assist you in any manner he is able, but let better opportunities for his own aggrandizement present themselves and he immediately becomes oblivious to friends and seeks the great object of his thoughts. As long as all things tend toward his own worldly success, so long will he be heedless of the wants and distress of others. His mind changes as he sees himself becoming dependent upon his fellows for a subsistence and he would willingly place himself in the meanest and humblest position.

Every day we witness individuals sneering at the success of others and endeavoring by every means, most unfair in nearly all cases, to bring disgrace or ridicule upon those who may be the object of their envy. Success has ever thus been the object of attack by all who possess a weak mind, and to manifest a spirit of envy marks the individual as one not worthy of trust in any position of life.

These reflections have been forced upon us by many events that have transpired of late; and now, more than ever, do we see the extreme fickle-mindedness of the world. From one all-absorbing topic the world turns for relief to another. Becoming weary of truth, it turns for relief to fiction and frivolity of disordered imaginations and undeveloped intellects. A celebrated scientist will write a long-winded dissertation in which he wraps his pet theory, giving it such a shape as to cause a willing public to pronounce it an atheistic bundle. He rejoices in mysterious expressions, and laughs to see a servile world trying [to] divine his meaning.

Read the histories of theories, sciences and arts, as well as literatures, and see how the civilized world has been so frequently excited, humbugged and led blind by the so-called reformers, scientists and philanthropists generally.

360.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, July 29, 1876

Woman's Rights.

We have been solicited to define the position of the Catholic Church on the woman's rights question, agitated in this country. We were also once requested to define our position upon an article of soap, which was invented for the express purpose of inaugurating a new era in the laundries of the world. The labor of solving the latter question being now fairly performed, the answer to the first comes in order.

Man's rights belong to both male and female alike. Man has the right to know God, serve Him and to be eternally happy with Him. Woman has the right to all the Sacraments necessary for salvation. She has the right to renounce this world and live for the true life, just as man has. And in the history of the Church there are recorded as many instances of heroic virtue in women as in men. Mary, the mother of God, was more beautiful in holiness than any mere man. St. Agnes was as perfect an example of martyrdom as St. Lawrence. St. Bridget was as illustrious a founder as St. Columba. St. Theresa was the peer even of St. Francis.

The "valiant woman" has never been surpassed in all that ennobles humanity by the heroic man. When we have said that woman as well as man has a right to partake of the divine nature, to "see God as He is" for all eternity, what more can we say?

The essential rights of the two sexes being identical, their differences will be in minor and trivial matters, quite beneath the province of religion to define, and have to be settled by common sense and custom. The right of voting, holding office, filling employments, cannot be settled by abstract principles of eternal justice, and it is ridiculous to appeal to them in connection with such frivolities. Inherently, a woman has a right to keep a razor and a shaving brush, and a man has a right to wear a chignon. No great principle forbids a woman to vote, or play baseball, or hang around saloons, or chew tobacco. Questions of propriety like these are settled one way by persons who have Catholic instincts, and are left open for dispute by those who believe in the world. For those women who are willing to take Mary for a model, the question is settled. For those whose type of womanhood is formed upon their own rude longing after anything that they see anybody else prize, there never will be a settlement.

361.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, August 15, 1878 (2)

[Hope of Societal Reform]

A New York paper deplores the fact that a certain class of boys in that metropolis make too much money for their own good. It refers to the boot-blacks who, having

secured some profitable corner or place in a restaurant or hotel, make as high as twenty-five dollars a week, which is spent in buying cigars, obscene literature and going to theatres. Here is another field for missionary work opened up that should require the attention of the labor reformer. The boot-black seems to have become a necessary adjunct to civilization, and the only profitable and expeditious manner of disposing of him is by requiring cloth boots and shoes to be worn. These young boot-blacks will grow to be men, and become too big for the menial labor of their youth. Thrown, then, out of the use of the dimes they were accustomed to, they join the larger class that tramp the country and call for bread. This is one of the sources of recruits for the penitentiary and the work-house, which only religious influence can destroy. Catholic protectories and homes established for these boys, whose parents neglect them, will do the work. Why, if we send money and establish societies to take care of the little heathen infant discarded by his parents, why not for greater fellowship and charity look after those that are daily losing their souls in our larger cities? Charity begins at home is an old saying, though it should be general as all men are neighbors, and so these unfortunates should receive the attention that the Chinese or Japanese infant does. Their souls are just as precious. Surely there are associations of ladies and gentlemen in large cities, whose object is to look after street arabs, but, founded as many of them are on mere sentimentality, they can accomplish no good that will be lasting. The training must come from the implanting of faith, nourished by good works. The Catholic Church will be the only hope of those who seek reform in the rising generation.

[It's not clear what tone the Bishop is trying to take here. Part is certainly tongue-in-cheek, but the conclusion is not.]

c. Barbarians and Infidels

362.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, June 2*, 1854 (1)

The Cause of our Evils, and their Remedy.

That there are evils in the world we need no host of conceited "Reformers" to tell us. We see them with our own eyes. The world is full of them. Evil is the negation of good, and there are in this valley of tears as many evils, as there are goods to be denied. There are evils in the individual, and evils in society;--moral, mental, and physical evils; political, social, domestic evils; evils among the rich, and evils among the poor; evils in the city and in the country, evils everywhere. Life is beset with them, from the one that wrings the first wail from the infant, at its opening, to the one that starts the last groan of the agonizing, at its close. To the eye of the angel, who, from his own high sphere

*The issue of Saturday, June 3, is incorrectly labeled June 2.

looks down upon us,--as the traveller over the Swiss mountains looks down from some beetling crag into the torrent that roars and foams through the gorge below,--our whole world is a great whirlpool of evils, whose resistless eddies bear aloft or submerge, whirl, hither or thither at their caprice, all the children of men. The history of our race is a record of woes, the description of our present state an enumeration of calamities. This earth has well earned its name of "valley of tears"--it is full of them to overflowing.

Under the pressure of these countless evils it is no wonder that men are restless--no wonder that society is heaving and tossing, no wonder that many are running to and fro, and crying "*quis ostendit nobis bona.*" "who will show us good things?" No wonder that every wild theory of quack reformers has its adherents, that every scheme of change has its advocates. "Drowning men will catch at straws." In the excitement of suffering we do not discuss the aptness of the remedy, but only hasten to escape the intensity of the pain. It is no wonder that Mazzini, Kossuth, and Mitchell are in vogue. People do not reflect that when Mitchell and Mazzini and Kossuth have had their way--that when they have been delighted with seeing the "smoking rafters of Europe's royal palaces," and swept from the face of the eastern continent every vestige of its present forms of government, the evils they declaim against will still remain--inequality of condition, oppression, injustice, poverty, starvation, sickness, suffering, will still inexorably remain.

"Who, then, will show us good things?" Obviously He alone who knows their origin can discover the remedy of our woes. What is their origin? The question is worth thought.

In the outset, we observe that since society is only an aggregate of its individual members, it is clear that social evils are but the aggregate of the evils that befall the individuals of a society. The origin, therefore, of social evils is to be sought for in the individual. Now in order to understand the difference between real and apparent evils in the individual, it is necessary to distinguish between the good of which he is deprived, and his estimation of it. A bad dinner is no great evil in itself, but it will make W. Plump, Esq., very miserable. The most of our misery arises from fancied evils. But why should there be *any* fancied evils? Certainly because we either do not know what is truly good, or knowing it, are unwilling to love it. *Ignorance* and *concupiscence* are the source of evils in the individual. Ignorance of the great fact that our destiny is in our own hands, and that no power in heaven or on earth can deprive us of it, often causes the innocent to despair. Concupiscence that inflames the heart with affection for transitory, unsatisfying, and unworthy objects, makes the guilty gnash their teeth with anguish. Let truth dispel ignorance, and reason take the place of concupiscence, and the source of evil is taken away. In other words, let Catholic Faith be received, and Catholic morality be practiced, and evil will be known no more. It was to overcome evils that Jesus Christ came into the world; and it is little to concede to a God made

man, that the plan He instituted for the regeneration of mankind is wise and effectual.

363.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, October 7, 1854 (1)

The Seeds of Barbarism.

"There is nothing new under the sun. What will be, is that which was." However men may differ about the definition, the causes, the value of civilization, they cannot but agree that it never has constantly flourished in any nation of the world. Like wealth and influence in empires, or strength in dynasties, or dominance of philosophic schools, or glory of races, the fluctuations of its existence in the annals of the world are marked out by times, [and] limited within certain regions. As the revolution of the earth causes the day to be breaking and the night to be closing all the time in successive points of its surface; so, through the lapse of ages, the changes of civilization have made many different nations successively feel the gladness of its presence, and grovel in the strife and sorrow of its absence. It was in Egypt, and left the pyramids there its imperishable record; and a little after, Egypt became barbarous. It was in Greece and Rome; and, as time passed, Greece and Rome sank again into barbarism. Civilization, like all else that is human, has come and gone, without stability of existence in any place. What was, is what will be. We have no reason in history to trust the stability of our present civilization, but every reason to expect its gradual decay and final downfall. And if to the general teachings of experience we add the startling fact so patent to every observer of our times, that causes are now at work tending to barbarize the society in which we live, the apprehension settles into a mournful conviction, that our civilization also is to be set down in history among the things that were. These barbarizing causes now at work are not merely those remote causes that tend to destroy civilization by demoralizing society, but others working more directly towards the same fatal end. Whatever tends to erect crime into a duty, or to make hatred of neighbor against neighbor an employment,--to take away all respect for others' rights--to extinguish the spirit of charity and the desire of living in peace--is of course an immediate cause of barbarism. Now that there are men in our midst who make a trade of instigating and defending riots, who inflame by the most reckless acts the passions that prompt strife and bloodshed, is a fact as undeniable as it is painful. These men now are exciting the Protestant against the Catholic. When that ceases to pay well, they will seize upon and fan into fury some other popular caprice. Without principle, they seek to agitate the public mind at any cost. They care not who is led to crime, or who suffers innocently. But the turbulence they produce, the violence they defend, tend to create in society the settled impression that every success is to be achieved by physical force, every dispute to end in the death of one of the disputants, every opposition to be quenched in blood.

These are the men who are sowing broadcast in our midst the seeds of barbarism. Barbarism is but the predominance of passion in society; and these panderers to passion are the bitterest foes that civilization can possibly have.

364.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, May 1, 1858 (3)

Martyrs of Satan.

Once, when a little child, walking, in a servant's charge, in the streets of New York, we met a long, a solemn and an imposing procession. A hearse topped with sable ostrich plumes, drawn by white horses heavily draped in black; long files of soldiers, with muskets reversed; societies in rank and countless citizens wearing the outward look of sorrow; and the sad roll of the muffled drum and the wail of the dead march from many sweet-toned instruments, told of a public sorrow for the loss of a public man. We were informed that it was the funeral of James Monroe [died July 4, 1831]; a patriot, a statesman, once President of the United States; a man of lofty character and rank, of dignity, of worth, bearing to his grave well-deserved honor, followed by reasonable mourning that he was gone.

Another time, long after, landing from a protracted voyage [Aug. 23, 1852], and walking up Broadway, we met another procession. There were the nodding, gloomy plumes again, the bannered train of mourners, the black draped horses; and there the sad roll of the muffled drum and the wail of the dead march. For whom this time? What patriot? What great lover of his land? O, mocking demons! for none such! But for a profligate ruffian; for a fellow who bit off men's noses and fingers and pummeled them into jelly; for a prize-fighting brute, shot down amid the whiskey fumes, the discordant blasphemies, and the miscellaneous scuffling of a drunken row in a bar-room. Shocked, insulted, disgusted, we turned away,--asking ourselves what people were these who so outraged the mete funereal respect paid to the heroes of the country? We have still to be shocked and disgusted; for it seems to have passed now into a rule that the manner of interment, real or *in memoriam*, which is the best we can give to Monroe and Jackson and Harrison and Henry Clay, shall be accorded likewise to Bill Poole and Paudeen McLaughlin and Felice Orsini.

The "tribute of respect" to the last-named person has, before this can be read, been paid in New York. Processions and torchlight and music and oratory. His name has been coupled with the name of the Redeemer of the World. "*Orsini and Christ!*" It has been said that their pictures should "hang side by side in every family." The wine cups or beer glasses of Orsini's admirers have been drained to the toast of "The Gospel and the Poignard." All this publicly announced; advertisement and editorials heralding the "Celebration" for weeks in advance; and no stern burst of indignation from the

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citizens, no prohibition on the part of the authorities, for this frightful development of blasphemy and crime; this honor to the sanguinary Italian, who, in his cold-blooded attempt to murder the French Emperor, has wantonly slaughtered more than a dozen innocent men and women and children.

Is there a "lower deep" than this?

O, ye philanthropists whom negro slavery so vexes; who are so disturbed about the lesser liberties of European subjects; ye who spend your lives in striving to cure the political scratches of the Austrian and the Russian, how is it that you cannot or will not see the purulent ulcers that are devouring your own bodies? Do try and be a little less telescopic in your vision; look at home; try and see the nuisance lying, reeking, on your door-step. Stop in some way this disgraceful triumph of rowdyism; this apotheosis of prize-fighters; this popular canonization of the Martyrs of Satan.

365.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, February 5, 1859

[False Infidel Claims.]

At the usual Thomas Paine fandango in this city, one of the "toasts" highly commended Theodore Parker, and preachers of his stamp, for their love of mankind, and condemned the "orthodox clergy" for their love of creed. It is usual for the remnant of Voltairists to imitate their masters in claiming a monopoly of "good-will to men." The Church labored long to make charity a popular virtue; and when after ages of exhortation to almsgiving, of devotion to men's true interests, she succeeded, the infidels appropriated charity, called it philanthropy, and made it what the English politicians call their "cry." "It is a vile thing to sympathize with slaves," said the infidels of Nero's time. "It is impious to treat their masters as men," cry the infidels of ours. So our infidels are all philanthropists, pre-eminently, immeasurably philanthropists. It is through the love of mankind, that they are moved to hate religion, and for the love of mankind that they are anxious to spend their money, influence and talents.

To one in whose mind the facts of modern history are fresh, the mockery of this infidel vaunt is hideously transparent. The horrors of the French Revolution of 1794, the foul tyranny of the factions that succeeded one another in power and deluged France in blood, the oppression exercised upon all orders except the guilty, that caused the nation to hail military despotism as a relief from anarchy, are a specimen of infidel philanthropy which makes the cry of the Paineists of 1859 to seem an effort of hypocrisy.

The revolutions attempted in Europe in 1848, '49, wherein the people were oppressed with forced loans, and a worthless currency, and the mob-leaders enriched by the plunder of royal palaces and public property, so as to be able to retire to some

"free country" and enjoy a life of opulence, make another instance of infidel philanthropy which, by no means, commands respect for these boasters of good deeds they never do.

Theoretically considered, what ground of confidence can infidels offer to society? They desire the influence of religion to be blotted out. What shall we have instead? According to them, religion gives the passions of men full play, for, they say, that crime and revivals flourish together. Whatever of good they can expect from human passion, ought to exist therefore in a religious society. From what other source are we to look for good? "Once released from the trammels of orthodoxy, men will follow their instincts, and universal harmony will be the result." Is not the very trouble in the fact that men follow their instincts too much already? If men bearing the name of Christian, can oppress, steal, murder, what would they do if they had never heard of Christ? If the belief in judgment, hell, heaven, will not stay the murderer's hand, how should it not reek with gore, were that belief removed and crime left free from the fear of retribution? If extortion, theft, swindling, find place amongst those who believe in the necessity of restitution, what security for property would there be were the restraint of this belief removed? Can mere unbelief curb a passion? can it stifle desire? can it extinguish hate? soften anger? root out avarice? take away selfishness? If so, we should like to know the psychological process by which it produces its effect.

The short-comings of Christians, are the common themes for infidel declamation, as though the doctrine of Christ were false because men will not practice it! Why, what shallow sophism for these who, in indulging their caprices, would have us believe that they are guided by reason! Because men shut out of their hearts the fear of God, and judgment, and hell, and commit sin, therefore we should not believe in God, and in His eternal justice! Men who can argue thus, ought not to claim the exclusive possession of reason, and society can expect but little benefit from plans of their devising, or deeds of their doing.

366.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, April 10, 1875

The Baseness of Politics

With each return of election day corruption, bribery and deceit make themselves manifest and obtain their victims. Sorry are we to make this assertion, but the truth is too evident and must be confessed even at the expense of the blush of shame that rises to the cheek of every honest and thoughtful voter. So low, indeed, has become the general run of politics, that whilst able and honorable men are ignored amongst candidates for offices, the voters feel that they have no longer any interest at stake, and the conscientious voter must award his vote, not to the candidate of his choice, but to

the one whose character for ability outweighs that of his opponents. Of many evils he chooses the less. But how unfortunate it is that evils must be chosen among, and that good and worthy citizens must stand by to see the government administered, frequently, by men whose only object is to live out of the public purse and fatten on the labor of the honest toiler. There is too much adherence to ring-leaders, ward magnates and others who exert an influence in their districts in direct proportion to the number of dollars or drinks of whisky tendered them by the begging office-seeker. There are men in this city, whose names could be given, that realize handsome little sums as their share in the work of electioneering. No longer is it deemed the province of the office to seek its worthy incumbent, but, on the contrary, for the influential men to connive in such unworthy means as will insure their being placed in the offices to which their avarice leads them to aspire. Several instances came under our immediate observation, at this and last fall's elections, in which politicians, for the sake of injuring their opponents, actually and openly falsified them and their acts, whilst these very falsifiers set themselves forward as spotless and innocent little lambs, most worthy of public confidence. Such we know, and marking them well, cease to place any trust in them, whether they attempt to play friendship's role or approach us in the capacity of business men.

Voting is a conscientious duty--a duty for whose just performance we will be held responsible to God. If a man is prompted by revengeful feelings, by a bigoted disposition, by promises of pecuniary reward, or by threats, then must he be placed amongst the traitors to his country. A traitor sells his country; a traitor voter sells his vote and therefore indirectly his country. How proud for America would be the day when her honest voters can approach the polls unsolicited, with hearts and hands willing to work for her cause! Why do American citizens claim a republican government and civil liberty, if they thus permit themselves to be duped and dictated to? Where is the independence of a man who barter his vote, his interest in the government that protects him?

Simple-minded men, and it seems their number is great, are easily moved by the apparently earnest protestations of office-seekers, and readily give them the promises of their votes. Such politicians suit themselves to circumstances. They are advocates of principles that suit different times and places, and after being insured of election they completely ignore the doctrines they upheld to an admiring multitude. There are, of course, many honorable men, who sometimes have honors thrust upon them, but they are the exception. Talent and worth are laid aside in this age, and their places are occupied by deceit and wealth.

There is another class of public men who, perhaps, stand high in the estimation of the masses, but who in their dependent position feel obliged to throw off their religious garb and attend to matters of eternity with as little concern as possible. It is

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not fashionable to be Catholics, we must acknowledge; it is not expedient for politicians in this country to have anything to do with Catholicism, except to belie and outrage it. The day is not far distant when, we trust, such men will see their folly.

We have had these reflections forced upon us frequently, but only now take advantage of the time to make them public, without reference to any political party. We censure where censure is deserved, and praise when good men do their duty to God, their country and their neighbor.

367.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, June 19, 1875

[Disgraceful Representatives]

We cannot understand how individuals, pretending to be men, can hold up their heads and look the true gentleman in the face, after giving vent to a systematic flow of oaths and curses. Their barefacedness is, however, their own condemnation. Such individuals cannot come into social or business relations with each other without disgusting every refined person by the language they make use of in the state of excitement attendant upon any discussion. It is a disgrace to have men of such character and disposition to represent the people. But it seems to be in accordance with the spirit of our time to banish all refining and Christianizing influence from the institutions and councils of our nation. A man is nobody unless he can leap into the political arena untrammelled by the mandates of Christianity and have full license to indulge his passions in all sorts of vices, providing the letter of the law is not openly violated. It is high time, then, that even in the primary meetings of political parties, a reform should be instituted. Let not men of principal, of honor, of refinement be forced back and be compelled to submit to the dictations of the rude, and of those whose interests lie only in the deep recesses of their pockets. We make an appeal to the public that when delegates are chosen, they be verily and indeed representatives, that they be a credit to their constituents in all their deliberations.

368.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Sept. 4, 1875 (1)

[Barbarians in the Heart of Society]

Uncharitableness is bad; but contempt of charity is worse. It is better for rival Catholic commercial enterprises to beget quarrels and evil speaking, than for it to produce scorn of those who urge peace from motives of religion. It is a noted truth that there is, in these days, no religion in either commerce or politics. The man who sells an object of devotion wants the money for it. The man who throws himself into the breach

to save his country wants a salary, payable at least every three months.

In the long suffering Providence of God it may be as well that the selfishness and unbelief of the prosperous should strengthen the commune, and whet the sword they hold concealed but at all times liable to be drawn from its scabbard against the favored class.

Perhaps a revolution which would uproot society as it is now constituted might be of service to the salvation of souls. It would not hurt the interests of the Church, because they are in the hands of One who is above all the vicissitudes of human society. The convulsion might shatter what now seem to be established institutions. It might level monasteries and convents and cathedrals to the ground, along with banks and stately dwellings, but it could never establish any thing solid on the basis of denial of God and of the Catholic religion. And so the outcome of it all would be what happened when the Roman Empire dissolved.

All classes turned their eyes for salvation to the Catholic Church. The well-disposed sought refuge in her cloisters. The rich courted her for guarantee of their riches. The poor sought her for sustenance and protection. Kings begged of her recognition of their titles, and subjects implored of her to be shielded from oppression. Feudal lords swore fealty to her, in order to have security in their dominions, and bondsmen appealed to her fearlessly against injustice and brute force.

The deluge covered the world and all hands were stretched out towards the ark. That may come again. What are the million soldiers of Germany, if they have no belief in their cause? The barbarians need not come from the north. Infidelity is raising the crop of them in the heart of society. The oppression of the weak by rulers is adding to their ranks. Every imprisoned bishop, every exiled religious, cuts loose a new fastening of the government from its foundation. A leveling, destroying revolution may make martyrs. It cannot hurt the Church.

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Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, March 11, 1876 (1)

[Chivalry and Respectability]

Chivalry and respectability are going farther apart every day. The chivalry which the Church blessed belonged to those who had the ability to protect and shelter the weak and unfortunate, and who vowed before the altar to devote themselves to that end. The natural tendency of human society was to gather the means of being chivalrous, and then spending them on the passions. That was done in all ages since chivalry was honored. Still it was not done avowedly, nor with impunity. The aid to the poor, the defense of the helpless, the upholding of justice, were respectable and fashionable, and considered by society as obligations. St. John of God in the twelfth

century is related to have rebuked with exceeding energy a nobleman for ill-treating his dependents. And Gregory XII. did the like to Czar Nicholas of Russia, at a reception of him in the 19th. But wherever Protestantism has been able to exert its disintegrating force, respectability has on gone attaching itself to power, birth, and wealth, irrespective of the duties of those called respectable. In fact, it is now the fashion for the strong to stand aloof from the weak, in every manner as if they were another race. Grasping the power, gathering the money, and spending both in self-glorification is respectability now. The rich are respectable now. Hence the custom of taxing the people for aristocratic schools, hence the name "pauper" instead of "poor man"--the county infirmary instead of hospital and monastery. Hence, in short, comes all the hateful difference between a society where Christian brotherhood is acknowledged to be right even if not thoroughly practical, and one in which Christ is rejected and might is worshipped. The sentiment of the pagan Horace, "*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*,"* is as thoroughly English and American, as it was Roman. The wall separating the two races [classes] was rudely battered down in the French Revolution, and those who had built it turned the fury of its destroyers on the clergy who had always opposed its construction, themselves escaping. The representatives of truth and justice were guillotined; and the Napoleons lived to perpetuate the idea that the world can be governed by human cunning and fraud.

The same gulf is yawning wider every day in this country between the prosperous and the unfortunate. The more both classes learn to think lightly of eternity, and to place all their hopes on earthly goods, the bitterer the strife will be. Communism is kept out of the United States today simply by the extent of its unoccupied territory.

* *Generally translated, "I loathe the unclean and keep my distance."*

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Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, June 27, 1878 (3)

[Justice through Agitation]

The Baltimore *Mirror* comes back upon us bristling with triumphant interrogations on the policy of "agitation" for the rights of American soldiers and sailors. There are two ways of getting justice by agitation. One is bringing the matter before people who did not know of any grievance before, and have no interest in allowing it to remain. The other is in intimidating, by a show of strength, the party in power into redress. The first of these has been done. The people know how the case stands, and do not think it much of a grievance, either. They don't care what church they go to, and don't see why common Irishmen and Dutchmen should be more particular than they are. The second cannot be done. Good Catholics may feel keenly

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the injustice inflicted on their brethren; but they will never let that influence their partizanship. When it comes to hard names and threatened proscription, the political Catholics will say, "Only the priests wish it." We have an example here in Ohio. There is no Catholic who does not feel aggrieved at being forced to pay for the support of a system of education from which his children can reap no benefit. Yet our ward politicians assure their political cronies that the earnest cry for liberty and equality of all parents in choosing what their children shall learn is only gabble of the priests, and a little faction of bigots who follow them. Even among Catholics the prevailing fashion is to be as little Catholic as is consistent with keeping out of hell. So that there are no numbers to intimidate with, and the second way of doing good by agitation is shut out. *Our* suggestion would be, by earnest efforts to make Catholics lead holier lives, offer more fervent prayers, and thus to first convert the country, and then "All these things shall be added unto us."

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Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, July 18, 1878 (2)

[Respectability and Scandals]

Owing to a mistaken idea of things, wealth and position in society are considered the essentials of *respectability*. If people having such respectability get into trouble, their scandal is made known, but their names are not made public on account of their respectability. But if a poor man happens to be guilty of a slight fault there is no effort whatsoever to conceal his name, though he may possess more true respectability than wealth or society could ever bestow. It is true that scandals must come, but it would be far better for society if the scandals, as well as the participants therein, were left unnoticed.