

enemy appeared. Let our theorists take a lesson from those brute beasts which nature herself inspires to protect offspring with defiant "front to the foe", ever though they be but "children of the common herd".

Our public school system has been in operation for several centuries, during which time our American people have been steadily growing in all the arts that adorn human life, while a large part of Europe, under the incubus of a corrupt priesthood, has been either grossly illiterate or only slowly emerging from ignorance. It is our American example that European nations are forced to follow at the present day, and not that set them by the priesthood. Nor is the moral condition of society any better under the rule of the Romish priesthood than it is where the schools are under the control of the State. In the face of such facts as these the claims of a set of ecclesiasts to take the management of education from the State is but mere impudence, which can not be sanctified by being offered in the name of religion.

The Romish clergy talk of our public school system not being American! While they themselves are acting as a European advance guard, striving to check here at its source the liberalizing tendencies of America upon the old, priest-ridden institution of Europe: while they are seeking to serve Europe rather than America, they complain of our schools not being American.

The idea of the American school is that the citizen controls and directs the State, while that of the Romish clergy is just the opposite that the State is to control and direct the citizen. The whole scope and aim of the Jesuitical education are to teach the citizen that he is to be controlled and directed by higher powers than his own in religion and politics, instead of his controlling and directing them.

A great respect is claimed for the family as a divine institution which is placed above the State; but the object is clear—it is to take control of the family in educational matters from the State and turn it over to the hierarchy of the Romish church. No practical evidence, however, is advanced that the interests of the community would be bettered by this arrangement. That our public schools may be improved, is very true; but their defects are not due to the system on which they are based. Nothing could be wiser or more liberal than that. To find fault with the general system of our public education shows as little practical sense as it would to give a high price for a few saints' bones in exchange for tons of fertilizing phosphates!

Our government of late years has been guilty of acts which are decid-

edly immoral and wrong; but who would wish to see the power taken away from the government and placed in the hands of a few Jesuits? How can any one, knowing the history of the church, ever suppose that Romish priests could manage the concerns of the community to a better effect than the United States government? Wherein are these priests any better or wiser than the average run of men in power? Or what evidence can they show that education and morality have flourished more under their management than under the governments and institutions of more Secular countries?

By reference to the foreign countries on our northern and southern boundaries, where the Romish priesthood is in power of sufficient dimensions to contend against the government, we can see what the tendency of the priestly power is. Though Mexico has been occupied by European races a hundred years longer than the United States has been, yet the condition of that country is but just emerging from the ignorance and barbarism of the middle ages; and in Canada, we are told, it has been almost impossible for the government to insure sufficient protection against the smallpox, owing to the character of the priest-given education of a considerable portion of the people.

It is very plain that if one organization is suffered to order American children out of the public schools into its own schools, then every organization, whether Mormon, sectarian or secret, may claim the same privilege; and in this way children would be taught a narrow spirit of faction instead of a generous love of country. But it must be remembered that the Jesuit organization is a foreign organization, not an American one. It is Latin, not Saxon, in its origin; Romish, not Protestant or Catholic, political, rather than religious, making use of religion for crafty politic uses; and its ideas are not suited, therefore, to the institutions of the United States. It is a foreign secret association, which aims to place all the threads of political action in the hands of the Romish clergy, the natural civil head of which is an emperor.

The parties fondest of abusing the public schools are in the habit of saying that they should not be taxed to support schools to which they cannot conscientiously send their children. It should be borne in mind, however, that these very men are bound by vow to keep out of the state in which children are legitimately possible, and that they are among the few favored parties who can hold untaxed property. When they assume the prerogative of making it a matter of conscience on the part of bona fide fathers to keep their children away from the public schools, compelling them to

choose between a smattering of doctrine-seasoned information and illiteracy, then they set up a claim which no considerable part of any religious denomination is yet prepared to allow, in this country, at least.

When laymen speak of their conscientious scruples against sending children to a school supported by the State, they may be set down as theorists, or their motives are so intensely personal that argument with them would be futile. Why do such people conscientiously drink the water which association and corporate authority send through the water pipes of their cities? Why walk without scruple on the streets which public policy lays out and taxes them for, conscience or no conscience? Why use the results of the surveys which government only could make in a satisfactory and authoritative manner? A system of public education is as reasonable and necessary as a system of sewerage in large cities, and it must be watched as vigilantly and kept in good order, as a preventive of moral and mental pestilence and stagnation. Are the opponents of public instruction also opposed to public sanitary measures? They should be, according to their own methods of reductio ad absurdum reasoning.

What right has the State to teach, any more than to feed, its citizens? What right has the State to tax A to educate B's children? But it has the right to feed and clothe its citizens, and it exercises it, too—in the penitentiary—upon the individuals as the policy of our enemies has encouraged to grow up in ignorance. Something more than intelligence is needed to insure morality; but little or nothing more than ignorance is needed to foster viciousness and crime.

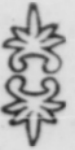
Sectarianism is the personified enemy of public instruction, yet, strange contradiction, we owe the almost non-sectarian character of our schools to this very agency. When sects demanded control of public instruction, they were so numerous that all had to be kept at a civil distance. This distance all but one powerful religious organization are still willing to maintain. That one has been projecting, and is now projecting, a general war on the system. There is fighting ahead.

In preparation for the war, it would be well to make the schools strictly secular. The friends of public schools can defend them more effectively under the taunt that they are godless schools than with the charge that they are Protestant.

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