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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE IV.

CATHOLICISM AND AMERICANISM.

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NO POWER, perhaps, so tends to modify our American institutions and adversely affect the world's progress as the Roman Catholic Church. The three ideas which underlie alike our government and man's intellectual advancement are liberty, equality, and education. These embrace a variety of principles which find expression in our institutions, literature, and opinions; and these I shall consider with reference to this church.

The Roman Catholic Church is the most un-American, because most controlled by foreign influence. Others have severed their connection with other countries and other ages. While holding friendly relations with churches everywhere, and considering ancient claims on their merits, the Protestant churches in America acknowledge no supremacy out of America. They are modern and local churches, holding that the people of the time and place should control their religion. As Roman Catholics, however, claim their church to be everywhere and always the same, they are largely controlled by other times and lands; so they have not the spirit of our age and country as Protestants have.

The principal idea of Roman Catholicism, which underlies its whole political and intellectual policy, is inequality, which is the opposite of our American principle, and places this church in opposition to our distinctively American aims. And

for this antagonism there is no remedy till the church ceases to be Catholic or our people to be American; and, as the Catholic Church is committed by its past against fundamental changes, and our people, by their increasing love of liberty and force of scientific thinking, are journeying in the opposite direction, there will never be a reconciliation, but rather a fatal conflict between the two.

This inequality of Catholicism appears, first, in the radical distinction between the clergy and the people, in which the former are deemed superiors, with a right of rule, and the latter subjects, obedient to them in the most important matters of life. The difference is radical, and of divine origin and sanction, and the separation final. The clergy, by reason of some "grace" or "initiation," are never, when once clergy, anything else, and the people never assume their functions. Not only is it sacrilege to attempt it, but it has no effect if they do. Special powers are ascribed to the clergy, such as to change bread into the body of Christ, to declare the forgiveness of sins, to absolve from obligations, and to bind men in ways from which they alone can release them — in short, the clergy are thought to have many of the powers of deity and to direct what God may do with men. They are so superior as to be almost superhuman, and the people, in that proportion, so degraded as to be almost below human.

With such differences in power the two classes are almost distinct species; and it is not a difference that can be bridged. The power is in the one, the impotence in the other. The people are dependent on the priests for all they get of certain things, and these things are held to be most vital to them. The dependence of the masses is absolute, and their capacity for revolt gone. Kings and noblemen claim no such supremacy

and no such powers. Since the king was thought to cure scrofula, no supernatural capacity is attributed to state officials. The clergy alone constitute a class with miraculous powers, and are alone above men as men.

It is obvious that where such views prevail, equality cannot exist. The supernaturally endowed can never deem themselves the equals of a class who lack their power; and the latter must always look to such superiors and receive orders from them. Where the doctrine of inequality is thus entrenched there will be a corresponding difference in the functions of the two classes. One will be ruling, the other ruled; one supported, the other supporting; one feared, the other fearing; one honored, the other honoring. Authority will vest in one, and submission in the other. The priest will be leader and the people led, the former master and the latter servants or subjects. No people can believe in such differences between classes without conceding corresponding differences of power and honor. Life must be regulated on the theory of a difference in the nature of men, and the favored will have one set of functions and the unfavored another, and the two will be separated by the most impassable barriers.

So we find the Catholic Church claiming the divine right of the clergy to rule. As the clergy alone control the church, they naturally make this claim, which is simply a claim for themselves to rule. It would be strange if a class that believed themselves endowed with superhuman power did not take advantage of it to dominate those who are without it. The divine right of kings is here reproduced as the divine right of pope, bishop, and priest. The power which these have over the people they claim to have from God, and to exercise in his name. The church is the authoritative ruler of the people. Its rule extends to all religious, moral, and

educational matters, which, as interpreted by the priests, includes everything, as we shall see; so that the control of the clergy is practically unlimited. There is no appeal from them. Laymen have no jurisdiction over them. All appeals are to the clergy. There is no constitution or reserved rights which the people may invoke against clerical tyranny. The clergy are the sole interpreters of any supposed limit to ecclesiastical authority. They alone constitute the ruling power in the Catholic Church. Those who are ruled have no part in making the laws by which they are ruled; nor can they participate in the administration of those laws. The people are only obeyers and followers.

So while the Catholic Church teaches the divine right of one class to rule, it teaches the equally divine right of others to obey. There is, accordingly, in the Catholic Church, a defined class of followers or subjects — men subject to others, who may not assert their own judgment, but must get their opinions and orders from another class, and content themselves to be a led people — who must be obedient instead of inquisitive or determining. Catholicism teaches that there are powers dangerous for the people to have. There are, in its view, thoughts which they should not think; and sacrilege, or some other sin, attaches to all attempts at independence, or assumption to think for themselves.

Catholic virtues imply weakness. Catholics assume inability in themselves, and power in others. They are disqualified for rulers; so that Catholics are chiefly subject peoples. In Ireland, Poland, and other countries where they are in the majority, they are ruled by other faiths. It is the Protestant nations that control the world — England, Germany, Russia, and America. The Catholic states of Italy, Spain, France, Austria, and South America have little weight

in the council of nations. The Catholic people, not being trained to independence or mastership, rarely take the initiative, or assume the higher functions of power, which demand the spirit of supremacy.

By reason of its principles of subjection, the Catholic Church has favorably regarded slavery. Though this institution has existed in some form from the commencement of this church, it has never been officially condemned by it. Catholics always held slaves as a matter not repugnant to their religion, and white slaves as well as black. Discipline for slaveholding as a sin was never practised. Its disappearance from the civilized world has been slowest and last from Catholic countries. While slavery lasted in the United States, Catholics generally favored its perpetuation. Few were abolitionists. While Catholics, like all other good people, sought to mitigate its rigors, they were in sympathy with its spirit. Being subjects themselves, the idea was congenial to them. Men ought not, they thought, to revolt against subjection. The idea of the inferiority of a race which was to be treated as inferiors was easily recognized. The purpose of God was seen in their subjection, and their obedience was deemed a type of the whole divine system. Slavery was easily acceptable as a divine provision to those who believed in the divine right of special classes to rule. Abolitionists were denounced as infidels, the abolition movement as atheistic, and the revolt of the slaves as an act of disobedience to God. And, though Catholics were not alone among Christians in these views, they were most consistent and uniform in them. The Catholic Church was the only branch of Christianity that could congenially and permanently adapt itself to slavery. It had a code for master and for slave; it recognized the "duties" and "rights" of each; it labored for the welfare of the slave

while recognizing the power of the master over him, and taught obedience from the one as well as kindness from the other. Had the Catholic Church undisputed possession of the country there would have been no serious controversy over slavery. And though Catholicism can adjust itself to liberty, and has done so in most countries, so that it is no longer favorable to slavery there, this adjustment is like that which it makes to republicanism. It can be republican at the same time that it is not hostile to monarchy. In France to-day it is largely republican and fast becoming more so. Popular sentiment compels them to this.

In foreign countries, Catholics generally belong to the Conservative, or royal, party, not to the Liberal, or progressive, party. They are the party of privilege, of special classes, and of the repression of the people. They constitute the Right, the Bourbon, the Clerical, and the Ultramontane factions. In France they were till recently the Monarchists, the cause of the church and of royalty being deemed the same. In the South American states the Republican party is anti-Catholic, or anti-clerical, the priests and those who follow them being regarded as the monarchical element. The church is everywhere known as the reactionary party, favoring some revolt from the republican idea of equality. It demands extension in power for some other class than the whole people. The cause of liberality is everywhere the cause antagonistic to Catholic interests, and Catholics are arrayed against it. Liberals fear Catholics as their chief foes. The popular party is the anti-clerical party.

The history of liberty is mainly a history of the conflict between Catholicism and popular rights. Men aim, in seeking their rights, to get some disability removed which was imposed by the church. The battles for intellectual liberty were

fought mainly against this power. The civil rights of the people were generally wrested from this church, or from those controlled by it or acting in its interest. Persecution was inflicted for the benefit of the church. Most battles for liberty in England were fought against the clerical party. The pope, bishops, and great mass of the clergy advocated some subjection. Especially since the Reformation have Catholics been arrayed against popular liberty. They opposed the independence of England when Henry the Eighth sought to terminate the supremacy of Rome. They sought to reimpose, in every subsequent reign, the domination of the pope in some respect. They espoused the cause of Queen Mary, of Charles I., of Charles II., and of James II. in their conflicts with the people. Most that was gained in the cause of liberty was taken from this church. In France the liberties demanded by the people, and especially their participation in power, were likewise demanded of the church party, or of the government controlled by the clergy. The same is true in Spain and Portugal to-day. The edict of Nantes was wrested from Catholics, and its revocation accomplished in their interest. Nearly every pretext for oppression was made on the ground that the interests of the church required it.

Only when Catholics themselves have sought liberty have they espoused the cause of liberty — never when liberty was sought for the whole people. When Catholics themselves have nothing to gain, they aid the Conservatives. While they demand greater liberty for the Catholic Irish, for example, they oppose liberty for Protestants in Rome, Spain, and South America.

There is no lay rule in the Catholic Church. The idea of rank runs all through ecclesiastical government. The masses are to be ruled, instead of ruling. Religion is something to

be given them, not received through them. The priests alone conduct the government of the Catholic Church. The people, who are most concerned, have no voice in it. The only part played by the people is obedience. The masses pay the bills, but have no voice in disposing of the money. Catholic Church government is an aristocracy, whose power is absolute.

Clerical rule is not only exclusive, but secret. The masses may not know, any more than participate in, what is done in the church councils. The sessions of these are secret; their discussions are not reported; all is considered and decided without the knowledge of the outside world, and is then simply handed out for the lower classes to accept and follow. The strength of Catholicism is largely in its secrecy of counsel. The church rulers constitute the greatest secret society on earth. Did the masses know what occurs behind the closed doors, they would differently regard the clergy. Secrecy is necessary to inspire awe in a ruled body. The unknown plays the most important part in Catholic faith and obedience. As long as one class can believe that another class knows what it does not, it will be subject to it, as it is when it believes that such a class has a power which it has not.

There are occasional conventions of Catholic laymen, the result of, or concession to, the American spirit, but these conventions have no power in the church. Wholly unofficial, they impose no obligations on clergy or people. They are only for discussion and declaration of obedience to the clergy. They are held under the supervision of the priests. The clergy control the discussions, map out the conclusions to be reached, and formulate the declarations to be made. Such gatherings are intended to reflect the clergy, and are condemned and dispersed when they suggest new teachings, or

exhibit independence of their superiors. Any suggestion of serious modification in the conduct of the church is treated as disloyalty, or, at least, impertinence. The principal lesson taught to laymen is to know their place, and not rise above it as the equals of the priests.

There are lay societies of a benevolent or social character, but even these are under the clergy. They have a chaplain or spiritual adviser, as a rule, and they are carefully guarded against acts and utterances which ignore the superiority of the clergy. When they show signs of revolt against the sacred classes, they are admonished, and, if the revolt continues, disbanded. No matter what their object — whether political, literary, or musical — they disband if ordered. They generally get the blessing of the clergy on their organization as a guarantee of its legitimacy or security; and, while the societies or meetings of the clergy are secret above all others, those of laymen must be open to the clergy. Secret societies among the people are prohibited, while among the clergy they are required. The higher classes have a monopoly of secrecy. The most secret of all societies is most hostile to secret societies. One never tolerates in another that of which he himself wants the monopoly.

The inferiority of the people is recognized and enforced in many other ways by the Catholic Church. The people must confess to the priests, telling their secrets, and putting themselves in their power. The forgiveness of sins is made dependent on such confession. Laymen may not know what the clergy do not. Knowledge is guilty when not shared with the priest. The people must fear what they know, and get permission even for information. It is judged dangerous for the lower classes to know what the higher do not. The priests must be kept informed of what is transpiring. The minds of

laymen must be disclosed to them. Anything of moment must especially be revealed. A scheme to secure their own liberties would have to be disclosed before the masses could act upon it, and it naturally follows that many enterprises of the people are headed off by the knowledge which they are required to give to the higher classes. The priests thus get at the very minds of the people, whose thoughts they control before they are yet fully formed, or translated into action. They not only prohibit certain thoughts in the masses, but know what the masses actually do think. They both give commands and know whether they are obeyed.

And while laymen thus communicate everything to the priest, the priest never returns the favor. The clergy do not confess to the people. There is no intercommunion of thought. The tracks all point one way. The lower confesses only to the higher, and the higher in each case absolves the lower. There is a gradation in confession, as in everything else Catholic. The people may get orders from the priests — something which they can obey — but not confessions — something which they may learn. The people are thought to have no use for what the priests know, and certainly no right to it as inferiors.

To make the people more willing to tell their secrets, and more satisfied in having them shared, they are taught that they are confessed to God, not to man; just as they are taught that the power which they exercise over the people comes from God instead of man. Subjection becomes easy if it is believed to be subjection to God; and, under such persuasion, men not only practise obedience, but count it sacred. What is but meanness thus becomes a virtue, and Catholics subject themselves to others under the impression that it is to God, which impression the others of course eagerly promote.

This act of subjection is more effectually compelled because many things desired by Catholics are obtainable only through it, as we have seen; such as the remission of sins, admission to the Eucharist, and church marriage. Not only are the chief benefits of religion at the disposal of the priests, but they are imparted only on some special expression by the people of their inferiority or subjection to the clergy; and since many of these benefits, to have value, must be given frequently, there is provision for not only subjection, but the repeated expression of it. By the oft-recurring observances of "obligation," laymen are perpetually reminded of their inferiority, and priests kept assured that the popular subjection is continued. The clergy have severe penalties for insubordination. Penances, excommunication, and the denial of special privileges are repeatedly threatened and often inflicted, and terrible calamities are alleged to follow them.

The clergy are also ready with rewards for those who prove faithful in their subjection, such as indulgences, and various sacramental graces; and great importance is attached to these. Between the penalties and the rewards, therefore, which the priests offer, and which mostly extend to the next world, and last through eternity, the masses are kept in subservience, their fears and hopes being about exhausted in this way.

Catholic laymen may not read with freedom. While the rest of the world go through all literature, and select what suits their taste, Catholics are restrained within narrow limits, others besides themselves fixing what they may read. They may no more know what others think than think their own thoughts without permission. The highest authorities provide an index of books which the faithful may not read. This index contains many of the world's best productions,

without which none can be abreast of scholars in science, history, or other departments. In still other ways much literature is kept from the masses.

The Bible itself may not be read generally, or placed in the hands of all the people, as among Protestants. The very book on which their religion rests is feared, and the clergy forbid its use except under the direction of superiors. Their faith in God is such that they dare not let him speak directly to the people, lest he injure them, but only after his words have been subjected to the censorship of the priests.

There is like opposition to the free use of newspapers by Catholic laymen. That they may read nothing that will "injure their faith," or impair their subjection to the clergy, they are warned against many publications, and encouraged to patronize others conducted with special reference to their church requirements. In most cities, at least one paper is pledged to print nothing that will disturb Catholic views. Without confidence in free discussion, they hold that the masses were not intended to consider the claims of the church or to participate in the clash of intellectual views, but rather to be protected from controversy, and to have opinions suitable for them prepared by the clergy and presented to them readymade.

Catholic laymen are also carefully kept from public libraries and reading-rooms, lest they read what may be detrimental to their faith. Libraries of their own are established, not so much to furnish reading matter as to keep Catholics from patronizing others. They provide a substitute for public libraries, as they do for public schools. Furnishing chiefly Catholic literature, which is meager, and to most persons insipid, such libraries repress rather than encourage reading, in which they do their chief service to Catholicism. For a

reading people is not a submissive people. Readers think, and thought soon makes men independent, and independence is not compatible with subjection. The Catholic press is strongly opposed to Carnegie libraries.

Catholic laymen are not, as a rule, educated. The policy of the church regarding education is to train a few. It has never favored universal education. In the old cloisters only priests and nobles, as a rule, were taught—those who had to rule the masses. They were part of a royal or aristocratic system. Catholic education has never been democratic, except as, in recent times, universal education has been enforced by the non-Catholic element.

Especially is compulsory education opposed, which means the education of the whole people, and so their general equality and independence. Universal education means revolt. The task of controlling the people is rendered harder by their education.

The parochial schools, even now, do not contemplate universal education. Only the few are trained there. The poor are induced to train their children for trades or daily labor. "Paddy needs a hoe, not an education," said an archbishop. Free education is not the policy of parochial schools, and did not the public schools gather in the poor, the church would not fight for them. Only in self-defense does it require attendance at parochial schools, or rather absence from public schools; for none are anathematized who patronize no schools at all.

Did the church take arms against the saloons, an acknowledged evil, it would render a colossal service to the country as well as to itself; for Catholic youths are there ruined by thousands. The saloons, however, tend to promote the subjection of the people, rather than their independence. Brains

that are muddled are not so liable to revolt as those that are clear. Dull minds are less dangerous than active ones. The Catholic Church has not issued orders to remove its youth from the saloons as it has from the public schools, though many get their chief training there. It has not provided a substitute for saloons, as it has for schools, or sought to abolish them as it has the latter. It has not advocated parochial control in drinking matters. Catholics are rarely prohibitionists or high-license men. They favor free saloons, though opposed to free schools, being the champions of a vice as enthusiastically as they are the opponents of a virtue. Universal drinking is thought less damaging to Catholicism than universal education. A nation of drunkards might be an obedient people, but not a nation of educated men. The dread of Catholicism is not degradation, but insubordination.

The attitude of Catholics toward their masters, especially the highest, may introduce several serious disturbances in our nation. The pope, for example, is to be believed and followed in all he says and commands for this country. The fact that his followers believe he can never say or command anything but what is right makes it impossible for them to consider whether it is wrong. For while they say they will follow him only when right, they say also that he never does anything else than what is right.

Catholics claim, indeed, that the pope will not unduly interfere in our national affairs. But the very fact that they believe he will not unduly interfere, makes them believe, when he does interfere, that such interference is not undue. Believing in the unfailing wisdom of the pope, they cannot but approve whatever he does. A mistake is never conceded to one believed incapable of making a mistake; so that the very fact that the pope or church takes sides in our politics is con-

clusive proof that the occasion for it has arisen. There is no subject on which the "rights of the church," for example, may not be thought involved, or something affecting faith or morals; so that there is no subject on which the church may not properly interfere.

This introduces a foreign element into our politics. The Catholic Church is controlled by foreigners, and mainly by those of one country. These foreigners are among the least progressive in Europe, and are the most reactionary of their own nation. American politics, therefore, wherein controlled by the Catholic Church, is controlled by the most backward element of the Italians. This is unnatural, and must produce serious friction. Millions of our citizens who feel it wrong to rule are subjected to the inhabitants of a country far inferior in intelligence and general ability. A large proportion of Americans are thus taken out of politics to be replaced by foreigners at Rome, or else remain here to do the bidding of their foreign masters.

It is futile to hope there will be no trouble from foreign interference on this subject. The points are many on which Catholics clash with other Americans. One is the right itself of the state to educate. Catholics claim this right for parents, alleging that the public school system is founded on a wrong — on the invasion of the rights of the people. Education is thought to be a private right, which the state should leave to the parent. In its dealings with the parent, however, the church next claims this right for the church.* So the Catholic policy is, by two steps, to take education from the state and give it to the church. By the first it takes it from the state, by the next it lodges it in the church. The fight is made in the name of "liberty" — "liberty of the individual," of "the parent," or of "the Christian." Only when it seeks

to take away the right from the individual does it assert the right of the church or pope. Parents alone, it says (in politics), are responsible for the education of their children. Parents, however, it says (in religion), have no rights as against the church. The church alone is entitled to direct education. It is accordingly, in the final result, a contest between the right of the state and the right of the church to educate.

The foreigners whose jurisdiction is acknowledged by Catholics are thus enabled through them to obtain from the United States, and from the several States, much of their power, so that we are getting a divided government. Catholics owe a double allegiance — to the United States and to the ecclesiastical power at Rome, the latter being deemed superior. They are engaged in a long and determined struggle to get more power for their foreign master; and the school is to be the principal prize sought in the interest of their Roman superiors.

The principal issue on which Catholics antagonize our schools is their unsectarian character. The Roman policy is church schools, and Catholics are directed to antagonize all others, and, as this will be a great issue, the superiority and infallibility ascribed to the church and pope must have a great influence in our politics. Claiming that non-sectarian schools are non-religious schools, or "godless schools," they insist on having religion taught in the schools, and that the religion taught shall be their religion. They know that this is impracticable; so that, if their purpose prevail, either the public schools must go or Catholics must be set apart in schools of their own, with a share of the public money. This amounts to having the state support Catholic schools, that is, to having the state give Catholic instruction, or pay for it. The state must either teach Catholicism or employ Catholics to do so.

This scheme would tax the whole people for a church, and let the church spend the money. It contemplates, to that extent, a union of church and state, which would in the end destroy our political system.

This position of Catholics is one of the greatest dangers that threaten our nation. It involves the official division of our people in religion, and a treatment of them according to belief. It implies that Catholics be set apart and subsidized as Catholics, and that they be educated and employed as such. Guarantees are to be given that their religion shall not be disturbed. Catholics alone must have employment in certain public offices. Foreign tribunals must be recognized as authority in settling what constitutes Catholicism. The church at Rome — the pope — must thus have the final decision in matters of dispute affecting part of our public schools, and (ultimately) of other institutions. There is, in short, to be a union of civil and ecclesiastical power which would be fatal to our republican system.

There is no complication that might not arise should we open the door to any union whatever of this church with our government; and yet such union is persistently sought as the only logical result of the Catholic position; and American Catholics must contend for it, no matter how they love our institutions. For, having conceded to others the right to guide them in these matters, and having ascribed to them infallibility, they can consistently do nothing else than be guided by them.

The schools, however, are not the only subject on which submission to foreign dictation produces friction. Catholics want other church institutions subsidized, or else themselves exempted from taxation. In nearly every State they seek appropriations for hospitals or reformatories. They com-

mence by getting part of the paupers, insane, blind, and especially orphans, and then ask the state for appropriations for keeping them. They profess dissatisfaction with the state institutions because they do not provide Catholic training, and so establish institutions of their own, with the ulterior objects mentioned. The state is asked to disparage its own institutions for rival ones, and so declare itself as incompetent to care for its citizens. Catholics want the church recognized as a competitor of the state in public charities, and many institutions are organized with no other object than ultimately to obtain funds from the public treasury. A show is made of doing the state a service by keeping its unfortunates, which is only the first step. Compensation is next asked for this service, and great sums are annually demanded for what was commenced as a charity.

To ask, in view of these advantages, special privileges from the state in order to get still greater gains is not to undertake a benevolence. Catholics in insisting on favors as Catholics in these matters attack the very basis of our political system. They are out with the government more than any other class, and insist on having their disaffection not only recognized but rewarded. Wherein they do not approve of the state's conduct they want the state to pay for their dissent.

Catholics thus insist on a public recognition of the religious differences of our people, and their treatment according to such differences; and in doing this they want especially the recognition of the foreign power mentioned as the authority that controls them. They want this government to recognize Rome as the sovereign of a part of its citizens, and to treat such citizens as Roman subjects entitled to rights different from those of American subjects. A great part of the government functions they seek to take from the government and

lodge in the church, as we have seen. Wanting the church to rule them, they want, to that extent, the state to release them. The state not only must not teach and care for Catholics in such places, but must not tax Catholics for such purposes. The church should be allowed to levy such taxes; and what Catholics have to pay they want to be allowed to pay to the church.

I have thus aimed to present the attitude of the Catholic Church to the political and scientific problems of the day — its relation to our government and to the progress of the world.

I have not considered the benefits which it confers on the country or world in other respects, which is not pertinent to my subject. I may state, however, that by standing in the way of radical changes, the church heads off some movements of doubtful value; by criticizing scientific investigators, it compels them to be more careful; by opposing Socialism, it is a breakwater against dangers of an anarchistic or revolutionary character, and by controlling workingmen, who largely compose its ranks, it diminishes labor riots. Its attitude on divorce prevents many ruptures in families, and its confessional, by disclosing incipient crimes, defeats their consummation. As many will not commit sins when they must disclose them, it promotes morality in various ways. This infallible church does not always err. It would not be human if it did not generally give good advice, and do much to enforce it. Where the church's interests do not intervene, Catholics are exceptionally patriotic. There is no occasion to discriminate against them any more than in their favor, which would equally violate the principle of equality.