

ROMANISM AND THE SCHOOLS.

The *Christian Herald* says: –

"An attack on the Public School System is reported from the Northwest. The Roman Catholics are endeavoring to so curtail the efficiency and development of the public schools as to fill sectarian schools with the children for whom the public schools have no provision. The *Evening Post* mentions several movements of this character. At Barton, Wis., the Roman Catholics attended the annual meeting in force, and passed a resolution that no public school should be maintained for a year. At Melrose, Minn., the priests succeeded in getting the public school year shortened, thus giving the parents the option of letting the children remain idle or sending them to the Romanist schools. And in Stearns county, Minn., the Romanist catechism is openly taught in the schools in defiance of the law, while religious instruction is given by the priests either at the opening or closing of the schools."

An English writer of some note, H. G. Guinness, writes thus: –

"Fifty years ago there were not 500 Roman priests in Great Britain; now there are 2,600. Fifty years ago there were not 500 chapels, now there are 1,575. Fifty years ago there were no monasteries at all in Great Britain; now there are 225. There were even then sixteen convents, but now there are over 400 of these barred and bolted and impenetrable prisons, in which 15,000 English women are kept prisoners at the mercy of a celibate clergy, who have power unless their bequests are obeyed, to inflict on these hapless and helpless victims torture under the name of penance. Fifty years ago there were but two colleges in Great Britain for the training of Roman Catholic priests – i.e. of men bound by oath to act in England as the agents of a foreign power, the one great object of which is avowed to be the dismemberment of our empire and the ruin of our influence in the world; now there are twenty-nine such schools.

And, strangest of all, England, which once abolished monasteries, and appropriated to national use the ill-gotten gains of Rome, is now actually endowing Romanism in her empire to the extent of over five million dollars per annum." (The exact amount is L.1,052,657.)

The chief result of Home Rule is to be the extirpation of Protestantism in Ireland. *Catholic Progress* says: "The woes of Ireland are due to one single cause – the existence of Protestantism in Ireland. The remedy can only be found in the removal of that which causes the evil. Would that every Protestant meeting-house were swept from the land! Then would Ireland recover himself, and outrages be unknown."

That this attempt would be made is not to be questioned. Cardinal Manning insists that it is a sin, and even "insanity," to hold that men have an inalienable right to liberty of conscience and of worship, or to deny that Rome has the right to repress by force all religious observances save her own, or teach that Protestants in a Catholic country should be allowed the exercise of their religion. "Catholicism," says a Roman magazine, "is the most intolerant of creeds; it is intolerance itself. The impiety of religious liberty is only equaled by its absurdity."

A most important point to be borne in mind in consideration of this question is, that Romanism is not a religion merely, but a political system. We are of course bound to allow to Roman Catholics the liberty of conscience which we claim for ourselves; but we are not bound by any law, human or divine, to allow them the right of conspiring for the overthrow of our liberties, government, and empire. Adam Smith well says: "The constitution of the Church of Rome may be considered the most formidable combination that was ever formed against the authority and security of civil government, as well as against the liberty, reason, and happiness of mankind."
