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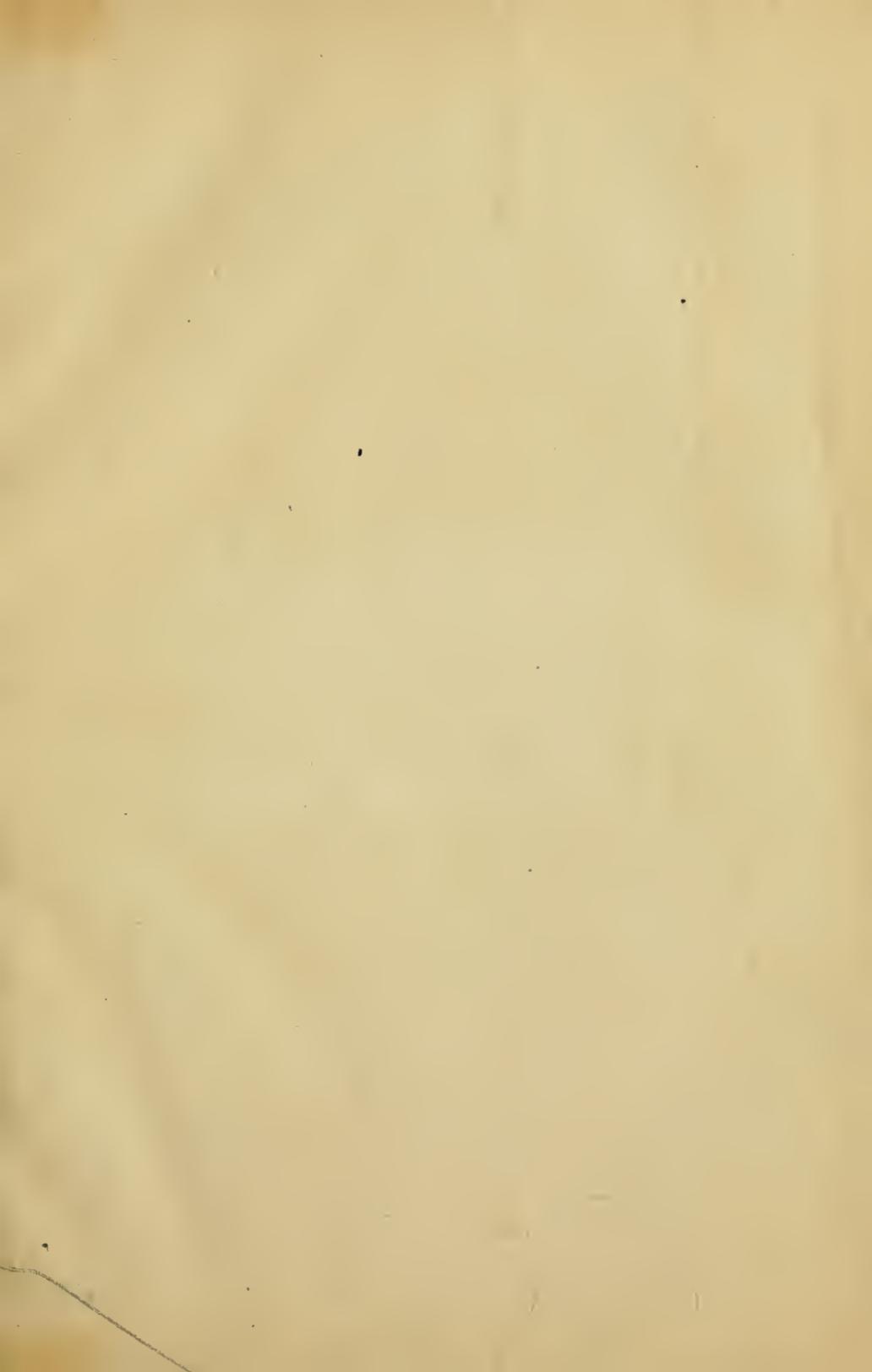
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THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

PROCEEDINGS AND ADDRESSES

— AT THE —

MASS MEETING, PIKE'S MUSIC HALL,

CINCINNATI,

Tuesday Evening, September 28, 1869;

— WITH —

A SKETCH OF THE ANTI-BIBLE MOVEMENT.

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF THE MEETING.

CINCINNATI:

GAZETTE STEAM BOOK AND JOB PRINTING HOUSE.

1869.

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THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS.

The following brief statement of the Constitution of the Board of Education of Cincinnati, and of the proceedings of the Board in regard to the exclusion of the Bible from the Public Schools of the city, will enable those not already familiar with the facts to consider intelligently the points at issue. The Board of Education of the City of Cincinnati is composed of forty members—two for each ward of the city. The Board for 1868-9 may be classified, as to the religious opinions of the members, as follows:

Jews.....	2
Protestants.....	18
Roman Catholics.....	10
Others.....	10
Total.....	40

On the 6th of September, 1869, at a regular meeting of the Board, Mr. Rauch (Catholic), from the Ninth Ward, under a suspension of the rules, offered the following resolutions:

“WHEREAS, There is a desire on the part of various members of the Catholic Church to unite certain schools, under the charge of the Church, with the Public Schools, and to place such schools under the control of the Board of Education; therefore,

“Resolved, That a Committee of Conference, consisting of five members, be appointed by the Chair, who shall report at an early day to this Board upon what basis said schools can be consolidated with the Public Schools. Also,

“Resolved, That the President and Vice President be added to this Committee.”

The resolution, having received a second, Mr. S. A. Miller, from the Seventeenth Ward, offered the following amendment; it was seconded by Mr. Joseph P. Carbery (Catholic), from the Sixth Ward :

“Resolved, That religious instruction, and the reading of religious books, including the Holy Bible, are prohibited in the Common Schools of Cincinnati, it being the true object and intent of this rule to allow the children of the parents of all sects and opinions, in matters of faith and worship, to enjoy alike the benefit of the Common School fund.

“Resolved, That so much of the regulations on the Course of Study and Text Books in the Intermediate and District Schools (page 213, annual report) as reads as follows: ‘The opening exercises in every department shall commence by reading a portion of the Bible, by or under the direction of the teacher, and appropriate singing by the pupils,’ be repealed.”

Mr. Francis Ferry (Protestant), from the Sixteenth Ward, offered the following amendment, which was seconded by Mr. John P. Story (Protestant) :

“Resolved, That the children of Catholic parents be invited to attend the public schools under the control of this Board.”

Upon motion, it was ordered that the resolution and amendments be printed, and made the special order for Monday evening, September 13th.

At the meeting of September 13th, the chamber of the City Council, in which the meetings of the Board are held, was crowded with citizens. The proceedings of the previous meeting having been published in the city papers, the following resolutions, adopted at the Clinton Street Reformed Presbyterian Church, on Sunday evening September 12th, and addressed to the Board, as a communication, were read by the Clerk :

“WHEREAS, The Bible is the revealed will of God to man, the light of the world, and the lamp that lights up the pathway of man through the tomb to heaven; and,

“WHEREAS, It is the basis of all just and pure laws; and,

“WHEREAS, Some members of the Board of Public Schools of Cincinnati, Ohio, have proposed a resolution, in their official action, for the prohibition of the reading of the Bible as a part of the means of Education in the Public Schools in the said city of Cincinnati; be it therefore

“Resolved, That the mover of that motion, and all those members of the said School Board who may have favored the same, are respectfully requested to resign their seats therein immediately.”

After discussion, it was voted that this communication be not received.

A communication was read from J. H. Feldwisch, of the German Reformed Church, corner of Elm and Fifteenth streets, stating that at a meeting of various Sabbath Schools, numbering about 2,500 children, it was unanimously resolved that the Board of Education be respectfully requested to make no change in the usage hitherto practiced in the Public Schools of Cincinnati; that the exercises of each day be commenced by the reading of the Holy Scripture, and by appropriate singing. On motion, the communication was received and filed.

The following communication was also read:

“CINCINNATI, 13th September, 1869.

“The undersigned, in the interests, as he believes, of justice, charity, and patriotism, will be most happy to meet in conference on the vexed school question a committee appointed by the School Board of this city. He is perfectly satisfied with the Catholic Schools as they now exist, but he thinks, as every honest man may, that it is unjust to impose restrictions, such as in conscience they and their natural guardians must ever resist, on the rights of Catholic children, to the benefits of the District Schools. He is quite prepared for a vote against the exclusion of Sectarianism from the Public Schools. The public will then see who are the exclusionists and the intolerant.

“Most respectfully,

“J. B. PURCELL,

“Archbishop of Cincinnati.”

The communication was, on motion, received and filed.

The following protests against the removal of the Bible from the Public Schools were, on motion of Mr. Vickers, received and placed on file:

First Ward—E. T. Carson and 383 others.

Second Ward—John D. Minor and 558 others.

Third Ward—John Shillito and 405 others.

Fourth Ward—John F. Torrence and 518 others.

Fifth Ward—Peter Neff and 406 others.

Sixth Ward—R. M. Bishop and 473 others.

Seventh Ward—C. W. Starbuck and 534 others.

Eighth Ward—W. R. Kidd and 267 others.

Ninth Ward—H. P. Deikmier and 279 others.

Tenth Ward—J. S. Gillespie and 294 others.

Eleventh Ward—Samuel Flickinger and 476 others.

Twelfth Ward—C. H. Taylor and 281 others.
 Thirteenth Ward—S. F. Covington and 505 others.
 Fourteenth Ward—L. Sheaff and 668 others.
 Fifteenth Ward—J. W. Wiley and 569 others.
 Sixteenth Ward—Theo. Baur and 448 others.
 Seventeenth Ward—B. F. Brannan and 535 others.
 Eighteenth Ward—Thomas H. Foulds and 557 others.
 Nineteenth Ward—W. F. Thoms and 464 others.
 Twentieth Ward—W. P. Beddle and 73 others.
 Total number of names, 8,713.

The Board went into Committee of the Whole, and Mr. Carbery moved that when the Committee rise it report in favor of adopting Mr. Rauch's resolutions, which provide for the appointment of a Committee of Conference.

After discussion, Mr. Vickers moved that the Committee rise and report in substance Mr. Carbery's resolution.

Mr. Frazer offered the following as an amendment:

"WHEREAS, It has been declared to the Board by certain members hereof, who represent themselves to be members of the Roman Catholic Church, that there is a desire on the part of various members of that Church to unite certain schools under its charge with the Public Schools, and to place such Church Schools under the control of the Board of Education; and,

"WHEREAS, The free institutions of this country can be perpetuated only by the suppression of all caste and exclusiveness, whether religious or otherwise; and,

"WHEREAS, Our Government has merely established and provided for a system of Public Schools in which children of all citizens may be educated, and, by thus commingling in infancy and growing up together to manhood, learn that mutual respect for and appreciation of each other which is essential in a government where all are practically free and equal;

"Resolved, That the Public Schools of this city, while under wise rules abstaining from all recognition of religious sect or training, do provide for the children of all religious persuasions in our midst, as well as those of no religion, and are now, as they always have been, accessible to all white children not less than six years of age, who may reside in the city.

"Resolved, That this Board earnestly desires that all children in the city be taught in the Public Schools, and that we will therefore most heartily welcome and provide for the children now belonging to any or all parochial or other schools, whether of Roman Catholics or others.

"Resolved, That the school houses and property belonging to

Roman Catholics, or others which may be needed and adapted for Public Schools, shall, when offered by the owners to this Board, be bought or leased at a fair valuation to be determined by five freeholders selected and appointed by the Superior Court of this city, which school houses and property, after they shall come into possession, shall be under the entire control of this Board, the same as all other of its school houses and property."

The motion that the Committee now rise was carried.

Mr. Frazer's amendment was then rejected by 22 to 12, and Mr. Rauch's original resolutions adopted by 25 yeas to 9 nays.

The President named as the Committee: Messrs. Rauch, Eckel, Carbery, Ballauf and Miller, and to these were added, by the terms of the second resolution, Messrs. Wehmer and Frazer, President and Vice-President of the Board.

At the meeting of the Board, Monday evening, September 20, a communication was received from the officers of a meeting of the American Protestant Association, inclosing a preamble and resolutions adopted at said meeting, asking the Board of Education to delay their action in regard to the exclusion of the Bible from the Public Schools of Cincinnati.

On motion, the communication was received and filed.

Mr. Frazer presented a remonstrance against the exclusion of the Bible, signed by Frank McCord and 1,011 others. Received and filed.

Mr. Frazer presented a remonstrance to the same effect from Rev. W. Grier and others. Received and filed.

The Committee on Conference, appointed at the last meeting of the Board, made the following report:

"CLERK'S OFFICE, CITY BUILDINGS, }
"CINCINNATI, September 20, 1869. }

"Your Committee, appointed to confer with Archbishop Purcell, with regard to taking such steps as may enable the children of Catholic parents to attend the Public Schools, beg to report the annexed as the present ultimatum of the Catholic authorities, and which is as follows, marked 'Paper No. 1.' He further states that he will use every effort, whilst in Rome, to procure such modification of the rule as may remove all obstacles to their attendance.

"By order of the Committee.

"JAS. P. CARBERY, Secretary."

“Your Committee, in view of the above facts, ask to be continued.

“F. W. RAUCH, -
 “H. ECKEL, -
 “S. A. MILLER,
 “H. L. WEHMER, -
 “A. L. FRAZER,
 “LOUIS BALLAUF.”

[Paper No. 1.]

“The entire government of public schools in which Catholic youth are educated can not be given over to the civil power.

“We, as Catholics, can not approve of that system of education for youth which is apart from instruction in the Catholic faith and the teaching of the Church.

“If the School Board can offer anything in conformity with these principles, as has been done in England, France, Canada, Prussia, and other countries where the rights of conscience in the matter of education have been fully recognized, I am prepared to give it respectful consideration.

“JOHN B. PURCELL, Archbishop of Cincinnati.

“CINCINNATI, September 18, 1869.”

It was, thereupon, moved that the report be accepted and the Committee continued, and, as an amendment, that the Committee be discharged. The amendment was adopted, and the report received, and the Committee discharged, by a vote of 22 yeas and 14 nays.

In the Cincinnati Commercial of Thursday, September 23, 1869, Mr. Carbery published a letter, dated September 22, in reply to certain attacks on him, contained in the Catholic Telegraph of September 15th, and of September 22d. He quoted from the issue of the 15th as follows :

“The remarks of Mr Carbery in last evening’s proceedings of the School Board, if correctly reported in Tuesday’s Commercial, deserve, and we think they will receive, the contempt of many of his colleagues, and of all good Catholics. We are far from agreeing with him, or any one else, that there are thousands of Catholic children anxious to avail themselves of the advantages of the Common Schools. All we Catholics want is our share of the public money. On this sure basis, all our difficulties could be promptly settled.”

He also referred to the article in the issue of the 22d, in which it was charged that he, being a Catholic, “sneered at authority, and criticised its acts in a gross and disrespectful man-

ner." Mr. Carbery then proceeded to set forth a few facts, to explain his course in the School Board, as follows :

"It will be necessary for me to go back a few weeks, when I first became aware that certain gentlemen of the Board, with the full approbation of the leading editor of the Telegraph, were negotiating for a basis on which the Catholic Schools might be turned over to the 'exclusive control of the Board of Education.' Mr. Kelley waited on me at my place of business, soliciting my signature. I pointed out to that gentleman, on the spot, certain leaders in the Telegraph on the subject of our Common Schools, in which the writer stigmatized them as 'preparations for Atheism and Infidelity,' and in strong general terms denounced the whole system. I enjoined him to be most careful in taking any steps without being in possession of the most satisfactory authority from the Catholic side.

"To these remarks he responded by stating that he had Father Edward Purell's signature, and that the latter gentleman was so anxious to consummate the transfer that he had proposed to make a present of the fee simple of the schools on the Board assuming their direction.

"These assurances, amazing as they were to me, decided me to sign the paper presented. That paper, in its very first article, provided for handing over all the schools to the control of the Board, on either lease or by purchase, on certain conditions, one of which was that,

"1. No religious instruction whatever should be given during school hours, nor should the reading of any religious book be permitted.

"2. That Catholic teachers should be employed to teach Catholic children.'

"There were others, but the above are the vital ones.

"The next fact in order of time and interest was a meeting arranged between fifteen members of the School Board and certain of the Catholic clergy. This meeting was held, Fathers Purell, Halley, Bonner and Gilmour—the latter then, and now, of Dayton—being present. On the part of the Board, the President, Mr. Eckel, Dr. Christin, Messrs. Theuerkauf, Wisniewski, Ricking, Brunsman, Rauch, Krieger, Kelley, Temple, myself, and perhaps others whom I forget. Mr. Wehmer was called to the Chair, and Mr. Ricking acted as Secretary. Mr. Eckel explained fully and clearly how far the Board could go under the law organizing the Common Schools of the State, and in discussing the propositions from the other side to appoint none but Catholic teachers for Catholic children, affirmed at once and decisively, that such an arrangement was impossible. Father Purell, there and then, withdrew this stipulation on his part, and said that the suspension of the Bible reading, etc., in the public schools, was such a step in a liberal direc-

tion that he was willing to meet the Board at once. To the proposition securing the use of the houses on Saturday and Sunday, there was a promise by the President, ratified by all the members present, to use every effort to have such an understanding carried out.

“From this whole arrangement Father Gilmour decidedly dissented, alleging that the Board was really conceding very little, whilst the Catholics appeared to be giving up everything. I took this ground myself, asking to be informed ‘If the old ground occupied by the Church on the school question was now relinquished.’ To these objections Father Purcell, being called upon, said in a few words that he was grateful to the gentlemen for their liberality, and had no doubt that the Archbishop (then absent) would approve of everything which he had done. Subsequently I was called upon to attend the Archbishop, and, together with Messrs. Rauch, O’Neil and Temple, saw and discussed the above propositions. The Archbishop stated then that he was willing to make the experiment with one boys’ school; and, with this assurance, we withdrew. All this is very tedious, but shows, I think, unmistakably, a desire of their natural and clerical guides to get the Catholic children into the public schools. It was this feeling on their parts, shown on all occasions when I came in contact with them, which so fully possessed me, and explains the eagerness with which I worked for a Committee of Conference.”

Tuesday evening, September 29, a mass meeting of citizens was held at Pike’s Opera House. Notice of the meeting had been given in all the Protestant churches of the city, on Sunday, and in the city papers. The meeting was the largest that had been held in the city since the war. At an early hour the seats were all filled. Still the people streamed in, until nearly every foot of standing room in the vast hall was occupied, and yet they came. It is estimated that fifteen hundred persons went away, unable even to gain admission. The Cincinnati Gazette of the 29th contained in its editorial columns the following reference to the meeting:

“No meeting of such significance as that of last night, at Pike’s Hall, has been held in this city since the great war. In numbers; in deep, intense feeling; in earnest, bounding enthusiasm, and, more than all, in character, it was one of the most remarkable that ever assembled in Cincinnati. It was inspired by the same spirit that used to be manifested in the early days of the rebellion, when Democrat and Republican lost all thought of old antagonism in their supreme devotion to the imperiled nation. Men forgot their ancient and their present differences, just as then, and they joined, hand in

hand, to testify to their appreciation of the importance to the Republic of the Bible. No one who was present and took note of the spirit of the meeting, and then of the standing and character of the audience, could possibly doubt how the city is feeling on this question."

The Daily Commercial said :

"A large and earnest meeting of citizens opposed to the proposition to exclude the Bible from the public schools was held last evening at Pike's Music Hall. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity. The main hall, both galleries, and all the aisles and lobbies were densely packed, the rush being so great that hundreds of people failed to gain even standing room. The audience was composed of all classes of society, rich and poor, high and low. Nearly every religious denomination was represented. It was one of the most substantial, intelligent and orderly meetings that has been held in this city for a long time. The stage was occupied by the ministers of the various churches of the city, prominent among whom was the venerable Bishop McIlvaine."

The Daily Enquirer spoke of the meeting as follows :

"The mass meeting of the friends of the Bible in Pike's Music Hall last night was a very large and enthusiastic assembly of earnest people, who seemed to have their whole hearts in what they believe to be the good work of protecting the Bible from the assaults of its enemies. Before eight o'clock the floor of the hall was filled with ladies and gentlemen, sitting and standing. Both the balcony and gallery were crowded to their utmost capacity, and many hundreds were turned away from the door for want of room. The stage was occupied by some of our most prominent citizens, including State and United States officials, Judges of the Courts, members of the bar, and many well-known business men."

The Evening Times said :

"Pike's Music Hall was over-crowded last night by the choicest of our citizens, who assembled to protest against the exclusion of the Bible from the public schools."

The Evening Chronicle prefaced its account of the meeting as follows :

"Pike's Music Hall was literally jammed with citizens last night, anxious to add their influence to that of the friends of the Bible to prevent the abolishment of that book from the public schools. Citizens of all classes and creeds were present, making one of the most intelligent and earnest audiences ever assembled in this city. On the stage were seated Bishop McIlvaine and a large number of other distinguished ministers

of the gospel, as well as leading business men and citizens of wealth."

Rufus King, of the Cincinnati Bar, and formerly President of the School Board, presided over the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. Wiley.

Addresses were then delivered by Messrs. Rufus King, Wm. M. Ramsey, Geo. R. Sage, and Rev. B. W. Chidlaw.

ADDRESS BY RUFUS KING, ESQ.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—You all know the purpose of this meeting, and it is unnecessary, therefore, to take time in opening or explaining it. The Bible—which for two hundred years has lain at the very foundation of that great American Institution—the Public School—the foundation of all modern civilization, and of all our hopes, present or future, has recently been assailed, as you are all aware, by a sudden and most extraordinary coalition which has taken place between opposite elements in the School Board of this city. I beg leave to return my thanks that, though unable, from recent illness, to say much, I am permitted to participate in this great demonstration of protest against that movement. And more than all, do I desire to express my rejoicing at the manifestation which I see before me here to-night, that the people of Cincinnati are waking up to the importance of the question which has been silently at work here, in one shape or another, for nearly thirty years.

I should not be afraid for one, my fellow citizens, even if education were the soulless thing, the mere one-sided polish of the intellect, which the philosophers now agitating this movement say it is, to meet them on their own ground. For, I would say to them, you may, if you please, sum up all the philosophy, and all the ethics, from the earliest age; you may take your Confucius, your Zoroaster, your Socrates and Plato—yes, and all the modern lights that assume to have eclipsed everything of the past; sum up their choicest sayings, and what are they altogether compared to that one fragment of the Gospel according to St. Matthew—the Sermon on the Mount. If I wanted to teach a child nothing but common honesty, I should select the precepts of the Bible beyond every book that ever was written.

Nay, more, my fellow citizens: I will go further, and I will say that if the object of these gentlemen is not to teach morality, if I wanted a book which contained lessons of the “purest English, undefiled,” I should take the Holy Bible as the best text book that can possibly be found for that study in our public schools.

I trust I shall be pardoned for this view of the question. I am, for the purpose of argument, laying aside for one moment that which you and I all believe—the sacred and divine character of the book. And if this measure takes effect, what a

spectacle will it be to your children—what a reproach! How will it be explained to them hereafter?

But, my fellow citizens, suffer me to go one step further, and I am done, when I say what I deem to be the real aspect of this question. If I am not mistaken in the signs, which I have had opportunities of observing in this matter, there is more than meets the eye; and the question here is not the mere superficial one, as some of our people, I am sorry to say—and among others a very influential journal—treat it; not the mere question whether the Bible shall continue to be used as a text book in our public schools—I tell you, my friends, that the real question at issue in this matter is, shall the public school system continue? What is the meaning of it? If this coalition which now seeks to expel the Bible from our public schools shall succeed in the real object which they are gradually coming at, *the crushing out of all religious instruction*, what will be the result? Who does not see that righteous men of all sects and creeds will then unite to tear down such a system. It will be far better, as one of the parties in this scheme proclaims, to have no public schools at all, than that they should be the “godless” institutions which they would thus become.

I hope that I shall be understood in regard to this point without taking further time to unfold it. It is my firm belief that the result of the measure now before the School Board, if it takes effect, will be to bring about a state of things which these gentlemen may not have contemplated; but I believe it will be just what I have stated.

Without trespassing further upon your time, therefore, in tracing out what I suppose to be the tendency of this scheme, if it succeeds, I say in conclusion, that as to that section of this combination who complain—and, certainly, it is a most extraordinary complaint—that their conscience is offended by the use of the Bible in the schools—that Bible which is the corner-stone of our American institutions, as every man knows who has ever read the Declaration of Independence, or even the Constitution of our own State, which, in so many words, avows that religion, morality and knowledge are essential to good government, and confesses that we are “grateful to Almighty God for our freedom.” I say, if these gentlemen are really offended in their consciences in regard to this matter, still it would be far wiser and better to listen to the counsel of a man whose proverbs have been celebrated as a law among our people—I mean Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who, though a liberal, refused to give countenance to Voltaire’s assaults upon religion, and put it upon the ground, which was rebuke enough to answer all upon this question, that if the world were bad as it is with religion, what would it be without it?

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I beg leave to introduce

some gentlemen who are prepared to address you in regard to this matter, and from whom, I presume, that we shall have the pleasure of hearing more precisely than I have stated to you, and, certainly, much better, the merits of the whole question.

At the close of Mr. King's address, Mr. A. E. Chamberlain moved that a committee of five be appointed on resolutions. The motion was agreed to, and the following gentlemen were appointed as the committee: A. E. Chamberlain, Dr. William Clendenin, W. S. Kennon, J. Y. Larkin, and C. W. Rowland.

ADDRESS BY WM. M. RAMSEY, ESQ.

The first recorded event in the history of this country was its dedication to Christianity. When Columbus beheld the shores of the New World, he called all hands about him, and, in great joy, with deep humility, offered "solemn thanks and supplication" to Almighty God. We do not learn that any of the sailors complained of this as an offer of violence to their conscience. The immortal navigator rejoiced in the belief that he was about to realize the hope by which he had been animated far more than by any mere motives of personal ambition—the hope that he might be the discoverer of a continent, and the founder of a nation that should be the chosen home of Christianity. But the time had not yet come in which the foundations of American nationality were to be laid. It was necessary that the men appointed to that great work should be trained in the school of the sixteenth century.

At the close of that eventful period—with vivid recollection of its history, and clear impression of its teaching, qualified thereby for their high mission—the founders of this nation came.

Their first act was to go upon the land, and, kneeling before high Heaven, dedicate it a second time to the Ruler of the Universe.

Do you doubt that these men *intended* to found a Christian nation? Every syllable of colonial history attests it. They sought for themselves and their posterity civil and religious liberty; they knew that they were the necessary attendants of each other—that one could not exist without the other—but it was *religious liberty* that was uppermost in their minds: it was religious liberty of which they had been deprived in the land of their nativity: it was religious liberty of which they experienced the greater need.

What did they mean by religious liberty? The conflicts of the sixteenth century were not between infidelity and Christianity, or between Christianity and paganism, but between different forms of Christian worship. That which our ances-

tors were intent upon making secure, therefore, was the right to worship God according to the dictates of the conscience of each individual worshipper, and not the right to those who had no conscience to blaspheme the name of God. Hence it was provided by legislative enactment in some of the colonies, that no man should be questioned or disturbed on account of his religion, provided always that his religion was the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. That was their idea upon the subject of religious freedom. And this was not a Protestant idea. This provision, in all its directness, was incorporated into the laws of Maryland in 1649, at the instance of the Roman Catholics in the colony, the Protestants graciously assenting, and neither Catholic nor Protestant dreaming that there was any third party that had any voice in the matter. What do you suppose would have been the answer of one of those sturdy men if a member of the Cincinnati School Board had been there to tell them that their laws were intolerant?

By religion, our ancestors did not mean Mohammedanism, Buddhism, or Free Thinkingism. They meant Christianity. "Our ancestors," said Mr. Webster, "established their system of Government on morality and religious sentiment. They were brought hither by their high veneration of the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light, and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate it with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influences through all their institutions, civil, political, social and educational."

A Christian nation was thus founded; and, although there is no direct recognition of Christianity in the organic law of the country, and although it has been judicially determined that it is not a part of the common law of the country, as it was a part of the common law of England, it has yet exercised a controlling influence in forming the character of our institutions, and in directing their administration. And although there have been present, at all times, unbelievers, and although a large part of the people of each succeeding generation have refused to yield practical obedience to its precepts, it has not hitherto been made the subject of attack. There have been no hostile acts of a public nature directed against it. Assaults upon it have been made by individuals acting alone and upon their own responsibility, and these have been harmless.

And this leads me to say, that it is because the proposition to exclude the Bible from the Common Schools of Cincinnati comes from a spirit of hostility to the Bible itself, and is only to be regarded, therefore, as an open, public act of aggression upon it, that those who love the Bible have been startled into the most profound attention to the subject.

Am I justified in the assertion that the motive of this proposition is only one of hostility to the Bible itself? Let us see. In the outset we are called upon to contemplate a singular

coincidence—if it be a mere coincidence—that a large number of gentlemen have found their way into the School Board who have been endowed by their Creator—whoever they may conceive that to be—with that superior degree of intellect which enables them to discover that the Bible is a cheat and a delusion—the same Bible that deceived Milton and Sir Wm. Jones; that Walter Scott pronounced “the Book;” that Benjamin Franklin and Sir Isaac Newton believed in; that John Harvard and Jonathan Edwards revered as the word of God—although it has deceived nearly all the master minds of past ages, it can not deceive them. I remark that the number of these gentlemen in the School Board is in singular disproportion to their number in the community, as compared with the number of those who accept the Bible as the word of God.

A little scrutiny of the actual proceedings of the School Board, touching this matter, discloses another coincidence. It is suggested that a large body of children and youth, the offspring of a particular denomination of Christians, is excluded from the public schools, and that measures ought to be taken to secure their attendance; and measures looking to that end are proposed. Simultaneously the proposition to exclude the Bible from the schools is made; and although the propositions are entirely distinct from and independent of each other, they go out to the public as parts of one whole. The impression is created in the public mind that the Bible in the schools is an obstacle to the entrance of this body of children and youth, and that, for that reason, the change is sought. It goes out, therefore, as a question of conscience, and it is advocated as a measure demanded by that principle of liberal toleration which has always been so fully recognized in this country, as between different religious bodies.

What a transparent cheat is here! What Catholic authority in this city has uttered a syllable that would afford any ground for the conclusion that should this measure be adopted, a single Catholic child would thereby be enabled to enter the schools? On the contrary, how could the declaration of their recognized authority be made more distinct and unequivocal to the effect that it would operate no change in their position? “We can not,” says the Archbishop of Cincinnati, with a frankness that clears him of any suspicion of complicity in the deception, “We can not recognize any system of education of which religious instruction is not a part.” And the Catholic journal published in this city has uniformly declared that its people ask neither more nor less than the division of the school fund, to the end that they may conduct their own schools.

No, my friends, this proposition does not come from the Catholics. It comes from those who class the Bible with the Koran and the Vedas—and who bear a hostility to the Bible

that they would not feel to the Book of the Moor, or that of the Brahmin.

There is here, then, no question of freedom of conscience. These gentlemen make it their boast, as I understand it, that they have no conscience—relying entirely upon their superior intellectual endowments for guidance in all the affairs of life, even as they have no faith, except faith in themselves, with which they are happily supplied in abundance.

I do not hesitate to say, that if Roman Catholic parents should bring their children to the doors of the school houses, and say that they desired admission, and that, while they adhered to the religion of Jesus Christ, they differed with other denominations as to the authenticity of certain parts of the Bible in use in the schools, and that a suspension of the reading of the Bible in the schools would enable their children to enter them, a very different question would be presented than the one with which we are now dealing. But that question will never arise. The division of the school fund is the *ultimatum* of the Catholics—and I may remark, in parenthesis, that such division will never be made.

Having ascertained the source from whence the proposition to exclude the Bible from the schools comes, and having ascertained that it comes from the infidel, the discussion might well end.

At all events, he ought to be called upon to give such reasons for the change as would address themselves to the enlightened conscience of the people of a Christian community. Are any such reasons offered?

It is always incumbent upon the party proposing a change to point out the old evil which is to be removed, or the new good which is to be attained. Is it shown that any person has been injured in mind, body or estate, by the presence of the Bible in the schools? Many of you, my friends, are in the habit of visiting the poor, the sick and the imprisoned. Have you ever been told by any wretched man or woman that Bible-reading or Bible-teaching brought him or her to destitution and disease? Have you ever been told by the poor criminal, immured within the gloomy walls of the prison-house, that it was Bible-reading and Bible-teaching that made him first an outlaw, and then a captive in chains? Nay, rather, has he not told you that it was the want of these? Nor have the opponents of the Bible cited any such instances.

Only yesterday, the daily journals contained accounts of a startling deed of blood, perpetrated in the streets of this city on the evening previous. At the conclusion of some account of the individual who had wielded the knife with such terrible effect, the solution of the whole transaction was inadvertently given; the unfortunate man had spent the early part of the evening in attendance upon the meeting at Greenwood Hall. There was no Bible there.

I do not understand that they challenge its literary excellence, or question the purity of its moral precepts. It enforces the obligations of the domestic, social and political relations of mankind by the highest sanctions. Conjugal love and duty are upheld, parental affection and care, with filial reverence and obedience, are enjoined; love for the neighbor, and regard for his interests, with charity for all men, are clearly taught. The duties of citizenship, the careful rendition to Cæsar of that which belongs to him, obedience to law, participation in the public defense, and the payment of taxes, are here directed. Are any of these precepts pernicious, or are they so regarded by any part of our people? We have heard no such complaint.

We have seen, then, that the claim put forth in behalf of the Catholic is without his authority; that there is no question of conscience involved, and that no evil proceeds from reading the Bible in the schools. We may safely conclude, therefore, that it is proper to continue to read it.

Do not misunderstand me, however. It is because the Bible is the Word of God that I would have it read in the schools as elsewhere; and let us have no disguises about it, that is the reason it is read there. And speaking of intolerance, it seems to me it is the infidel who is here giving an exhibition of intolerance. He refuses to tolerate even the presence of the Bible, without assigning any other reason than that it is the Bible.

But we are told that the Constitution of the State forbids the reading of the Bible in the schools, and the seventh section of the First Article is cited and relied upon. Now, I belong to a political party that is peculiarly sensitive upon the subject of Constitutional infractions, and with that sensitiveness I am in the fullest sympathy; because a constitution once made is to be obeyed, until it is amended or abolished. I have, therefore, examined this section with some care. It is as follows:

“All men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience. No person shall be compelled to attend, erect or support any place of worship, or attend any form of worship, against his consent; and no preference shall be given by law to any religious society, nor shall any interference with the rights of conscience be permitted. No religious test shall be required as a qualification for office, nor shall any person be incompetent as a witness on account of his religious belief. Religion, morality and knowledge, however, being essential to good government, it shall be the duty of the General Assembly to pass suitable laws to protect every religious denomination in the peaceable enjoyment of its own mode of public worship, and to encourage schools and the means of instruction.”

It might be suggested that this objection comes very late. The principle embodied in the section which I have read is as old as the history of the country. It was incorporated into

the Federal Constitution, by way of amendment, in 1789; the Constitution of Ohio, in force from 1802 to 1851, contained a similar provision, and the Bible has been read in the public schools from the date of their establishment; and it is not until September, 1869, that we are admonished that it is in violation of the organic law. This is a singular circumstance, but it does not determine the question.

It might be suggested, also, that if this regulation is in violation of the Constitution, and an invasion of private right, any person aggrieved can go into the Courts and obtain redress, in the form of a perpetual injunction against it; and, if any doubt exists upon the subject, it should be determined by the Courts; because, if the Bible is unconstitutional in Ohio, the sooner we find it out the better, and we will at once have the Constitution amended.

But I am unable to perceive the difficulty here that so disturbs our friends in the School Board. Let us glance at the seventh section:

1. It is claimed that reading the Scriptures in the schools converts the schools into places of public worship, maintained at public expense; and,

2. That reading a version of the Bible which is not the version which is recognized by some sects, is giving a preference to the denominations that do recognize the version read as the true one.

The second objection is scarcely worthy of attention. The provision which forbids the giving of a preference to any sect is in terms a restriction upon legislative action. No such preference is to be given by law. If it had proceeded further, and declared that no such preference should be given by any person or body corporate, and if it could then be shown that the reading of the Bible was, in the contemplation of the Constitution, giving a preference to a religious sect, the argument would be complete.

It is only the first objection that can be made to appear even plausible. And it is only necessary to apply to it the most familiar rules of interpretation in order to dispose of it.

First—The construction must be a *reasonable one*. And is it reasonable to infer that the people of Ohio, at the date of the present Constitution, intended to frame a constitution that would bear the construction here claimed for it? What is there in the history of the State that would justify the opinion that the Bible has been regarded in the State as the property of any sect? What is there in the history of the State, the public utterances of her statesmen, or the known opinions of her people, that would justify the opinion that they were capable of prohibiting even a simple recognition of Christianity in the schools, or elsewhere? What declarations were made in the Constitutional Convention itself that bear upon the subject?

Why, on the third day of the Convention, before it had completed its preliminary business, it resolved, by an overwhelming majority, to have its daily sessions opened with prayer; and, when it had completed its labors, it did not deem it proper to adjourn until, at the request of the President, the Rev. James Prestley, a Christian minister, invoked God's blessing upon their labors.

And this very seventh section sets out with the familiar declaration, that it is the privilege of man to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, and concludes with the announcement of the truth, that religion is essential to good government, and that it is, therefore, to be fostered. Such a Convention, representing such a constituency, entertaining such individual sentiments, never could have adopted such a provision as this, if it will bear the construction claimed for it.

Second—Another familiar and valuable rule of interpretation leads us to inquire, when we would construe a prohibitory law, "What is the evil sought to be avoided?" And this gives us the whole meaning of this seventh section. The evil which the framers had in view, and against which they here provided, was the evil of an established church. It is the same provision that is made by the First Article of the Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, although couched in different language. The language of that instrument is as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Precisely what is embodied in this expression has always been well understood.

Does the reading of the Bible, in simple, decent recognition of its divine authority—reading it without note or comment—transform the school house into a church? Does it make the school house a place of worship? It costs nothing. It imposes no additional burdens upon the people. It takes the teacher's time, do you say? So did prayer take the time of the Constitutional Convention. Was the Constitutional Convention a place of worship maintained at the public expense at the moment it was enacting the seventh section? Is the State House at Columbus a place of worship? The deliberations of the Legislature are preceded by prayer daily. Each regiment of your army is provided with a chaplain, as well since as before the adoption of the Constitution. Is your camp or your barracks a place of worship maintained at public expense? The exemption of church property from taxation has always prevailed unchallenged, and to that extent is the burden of public support shifted to the general property of the State.

It is no answer to this to say that all sects are alike favored in this respect, because there are owners of taxable property who belong to no sect. The existence of these things, as a part of the recognized policy of the State and Nation, reduces to absurdity the claim which is put forth with reference to this section.

It is simply an attempt to enlarge its operation by a strained construction, unwarranted by its language, and contradicted by its history, and the general history of the State and nation.

And, in this connection, I would ask those Christian men and women who are indifferent to the subject now immediately before us, or deem it of secondary importance, if they are willing that the removal of the Bible from the schools shall be the inauguration of a system of change that shall include in its operation the banishment of the chaplain from our Legislature and from the army—the denial of the right to hold religious services in prison-houses and reformatory institutions—that shall exclude all sacred literature from public libraries—that shall stifle the voice of prayer in public assemblies—that shall place church property upon the tax duplicate—thus putting institutions purely benevolent in their character upon the same footing with commercial enterprises? If you are not prepared for these changes, and others of like character, resist the first assault! Stand fast upon the out-post, for there must the real defense of the citadel be made!

I would respectfully call the attention of the School Board to the fact that they are acting in a representative capacity; that they are considering a proposition that was not in issue before the people at the date of their election, and that until an expression of public opinion at the polls can be had, affirmative action ought not to be taken upon it.

I will hazard another suggestion. There ought to be no system of education dissociated from religious instruction. In this respect the Archbishop is right. I do not know whether those who propose the exclusion of the Bible are the enemies of the public school system or not. It would, perhaps, be uncharitable to admit the suspicion; but I do not hesitate to say, that the hour that shall witness the final banishment of the Bible from the public schools—if such an hour shall come—will also witness the end of the system itself.

This is a Christian land; ours is a Christian civilization. Whatever is valuable in our form of Government, or commendable in our social state, is due to the influence of the religion of Jesus Christ. Our seminaries of learning, our hospitals of mercy, our asylums for the distressed and the unfortunate, our common schools, are its offsprings and its monuments.

God forbid that infidelity shall cast its blight over this fair land, and alienate it from His care! In such an event, our fate may be read in the history of a republic that was subjected to such an experience.

“Open the annals of the French nation,” said Lamartine, “and listen to the last words of the political actors of the drama of our liberties. One would think that His name was unknown in the language. The republic of these men without a God has been quickly stranded. The liberty won by so much heroism

and so much genius has not found in France a conscience to shelter it, a God to avenge it, a people to defend it against the atheism which is called glory. All ended in a soldier. An atheistic republic can not be heroic."

ADDRESS BY GEORGE R. SAGE, ESQ.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—The movement to exclude the Bible from the Common Schools of the city of Cincinnati was set on foot by resolutions offered in the School Board on the 6th day of September, 1869, which read as follows:

Resolved, That religious instruction, and the reading of religious books, including the Holy Bible, are prohibited in the Common Schools of Cincinnati, it being the true object and intent of this rule to allow the children of the parents of all sects and opinions in matters of faith and worship to enjoy alike the benefit of the Common School Fund.

Resolved, That so much of the regulations on the Course of Study and Text Books in the Intermediate and District Schools (page 213, Annual Report) as reads as follows: 'The opening exercises in every department shall commence by reading a portion of the Bible by, or under the direction of, the teacher, and appropriate singing by the pupils,' be repealed.'

The entire rule which it is proposed to repeal is not given in the resolutions offered. There is an addition, which I will read from the report of last year:

"The pupils of the Common Schools may read such version of the Sacred Scripture as their parents or guardians may prefer, provided, that such preference of any version, except the one now in use, be communicated by the parents or guardians to the principal teachers, and that no notes or marginal readings be allowed in the schools, or comments made by the teachers on the text of any version that is or may be introduced."

When, and under what circumstances, at whose suggestion, and upon what assurances this provision was adopted by the School Board of Cincinnati, we shall presently see. You will observe that the rule provides that any parent may direct what portion of the Scriptures shall be read by his children. If he be a Catholic, and prefer the Douay version, all that is required is that he so signify. If he be a Jew, and prefer the Old Testament, all that is required is that he so state. Now, it is proposed to wipe out these provisions, and at the same time to exclude, not merely the Bible—because the proposition is broader than that—

from the Common Schools of Cincinnati, but to prohibit religious instruction and the reading of religious books, including the Bible, so as to accommodate the schools to all sects and opinions.

Now, what does this mean? It means, as I said, not merely the exclusion of the Bible, but the expurgation, from every text book in the Common Schools, of every religious sentiment. It means the abolition, from the text books of the schools of Cincinnati, of every recognition of Christianity, or God Almighty, or conscience, or of accountability to the Supreme Being. It means—to put it in a single sentence—to make the schools of Cincinnati schools of atheism. And I say, my fellow citizens, that it is the most outrageous and damnable proposition that has ever been made in respect to our Common Schools.

I have been requested to speak here to-night as a lawyer, upon the points at issue in this controversy, and I propose to speak, therefore, after the fashion of lawyers, which is to prove what they say as they go on, and not ask anybody to credit anything which they may utter unless made clear by argument, or verified by authority.

I can best introduce what I have to say by referring to some facts in the history of the administration of the Common School department of this city, and calling your attention to some very curious deductions from those facts.

The first general law for the maintenance of Common Schools in the State of Ohio was passed on the 5th of February, 1825. It was framed by Nathan Guilford, of this city, and to Cincinnati is due the honor and the credit of the parentage of the Common School system of Ohio. I trust it may not be that here the first black, damning disgrace upon the system shall fall.

The schools of Cincinnati were not set on foot upon any permanent basis until the year 1829. I have here a volume containing the reports of the School Board from the year 1833 to the year 1857. I find that in the Fifth Annual Report for the year ending on the 30th of June, 1834, a full list of the text books used in the schools appears, and among these books is the Holy Bible. It is printed in the report, "The Bible or the Testament, without notes."

In the Tenth Annual Report, for the year ending June 30th, 1839, the Board, Elam P. Langdon, President, says:

"The Bible and New Testament, without notes or comment, are read in all the schools, and their moral precepts inculcated as principles of conduct and duty. No sectarian teachings are permitted, and no requisitions are made of the pupils that come in conflict with the religious tenets of their parents, or of any religious sect or denomination."

The same year the Committee of the City Council on Common Schools reported (Tenth Annual Report, page 20):

"Knowledge being power, it should be directed to useful purposes, to insure which the mind must be under the influence of religious principles,

as fully as the body is under the influence of the mind. *These principles, being derived from the Bible, it should be a school book, not to be opened and read in a gloomy, careless and indifferent manner, but as the word of God, presented to the minds of the children in its truly endearing sublimity, that they may see it as the spirit of wisdom, directing to order, obedience and true freedom."*

In the Thirteenth Annual Report, for the year ending June 30, 1842,—Edward D. Mansfield, Acting President,—on page 7, may be found the following :

"The reading of the Bible, without comment, continues to be part of our instruction; we may add *that no difference of opinion has hindered this practice, or interfered with those who would drink at that pure fountain of truth and knowledge."*

Here it appears that for thirteen years—from 1829, when the schools were established, until 1842—the Bible was read in the public schools of the city without objection from any quarter. And yet during all that time, all the sects and opinions that now exist here had their adherents in Cincinnati, and the schools, as appears also from the report of 1842, were attended by a very large proportion of the whole number of children in the city. What are we to infer from this significant acquiescence for so long a time,—what can we infer, but the recognition, by all sects and classes, of both the right and propriety of a practice, which, we shall presently see, dates from the foundation of the Common School system? And we shall see, also, that such and so long continued recognition, is of great value in construing the right when disputed.

But shortly after this report was published, sectarian objections to the text books used in the schools, and to books in the district libraries, were made. They came from the highest authority of the Catholic Church.

My brother Ramsey has put the responsibility of the present movement upon the infidels in the School Board. I am not disposed to lift one particle of it from their shoulders. All that he has said I indorse, and I may perhaps have something to add to it before I sit down. But I am not disposed to limit the responsibility to the infidels in the School Board. I think it proper to assign to the authorities of the Catholic Church their share of responsibility in the matter. When I see the representatives of any church, in or out of the School Board, in close alliance with the champions of infidelity against the Bible, I will not overlook the fact. I prefer to recognize the relation which they have voluntarily assumed, and give them the full benefit of their association;—just as I should if I found a professed clergyman wearing the uniform of the devil, judge him by that fact, and not by his title or professions.

I find that on the 29th day of August, 1842, Mr. Perkins, the President of the Board, stated that the authorities of the Cath-

olic Church had personally informed him that certain objections existed on the part of the Catholics, both to the English and German Common Schools of Cincinnati, viz: First, that the books used contained obnoxious passages; second, that the Catholic children were required to read the Protestant Bible and Testament; and, third, that the district libraries contained objectionable works, to which the Catholic children had access without the knowledge of their parents.

Now, you will observe that there is nothing said there about the exclusion of the Bible from the schools. What did the Board do? They resolved, immediately and unanimously:

“First—That the President of this Board be requested to inform Bishop Purcell that he is invited by the Board to examine the books used in the English Common Schools and the German Common Schools, or to cause them to be examined, and have all the obnoxious passages pointed out.

“Second—That no pupil of the Common Schools be required to read the Testament or Bible if his parent or guardian desire that he may be excused from that exercise.

“Third—That no child be allowed to take books from the district libraries unless his parent or guardian, at the beginning of each session, make the request, in writing or in person, that he may have that privilege.” Report for 1843, page 25.

Could anything have been more fair or complete than this action of the Board? Did it not fully and entirely meet every objection which had been presented?

We shall find, presently, that although twenty-seven years have elapsed, not one single obnoxious passage has ever been pointed out by Bishop Purcell, or by any one on his behalf.

In the Twentieth Annual Report, for the year 1849, there is this reference to the reading of the Bible in the schools:

“The reading of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, is required as a daily exercise in our schools. In the present condition of the world, when vast political and moral changes are constantly occurring, the principles of the Bible can be the only reliance for the safety of the individual, as well as the masses; they alone can infuse strength and power into the social system, fully expand the intellect, and teach, as no other code of ethics ever taught, or can teach, that we have alone fulfilled our mission on earth when we have learned that by elevating the minds of our fellow men, we have in the highest sense exalted our own.”

That report was signed by Judge Storer, then President of the Board of Trustees. And the next year I find another report by Judge Storer:

“As heretofore, the Holy Scriptures are daily read, and in the higher sections the Bible is a class book. While every sectarian feeling is rebuked, and no interference, even remotely, permitted with the rights of conscience, the ethics of the Bible, the manly spirit it encourages, the freedom of thought it maintains, are not only enforced, but, we believe, are illustrated by the personal character of the teachers.”

Now it has come to pass that the Bible, and every religious sentiment, are attacked and denounced as "sectarian," and the latter-day Solons of the Cincinnati School Board have discovered, in their wisdom, that atheism alone is countenanced by the Constitution, and is alone consistent with public policy and public education. Have we so soon forgotten the teachings of those who founded our Common School system, and made it what it is?

Appended to the Report for this year is the report to the City Council of the Committee on Common Schools, in which occurs this paragraph :

"The Bible is used as a text book in all the schools. This we esteem right and proper; any government based upon the precepts of the Bible can not be very far wrong; and aside from its religious teachings, it contains, we think, the best code of laws ever published. It is read without note or comment, thus leaving the pupil free to make up his own opinion, without any sectarian influences whatever; we conceive it a matter of little consequence what religious creed the pupils may adopt in riper years; the only object of their instructors is to make them good men and women, and useful members of society."

So said the City Council in 1850, by adopting this report.

Now we come to the Twenty-second Annual Report of the Board for the year ending June 30, 1851. This report also was made by Judge Storer, and it closes with this paragraph, to which I call your special attention, in connection with what occurred in 1852:

"In all the schools the Bible is a class book. In the opinion of the Board it never can be dispensed with in the education of the young; and while the right of private judgment is freely admitted, and inviolably preserved, the volume that teaches us our responsibilities here and our destinies hereafter, can not but be regarded as Heaven's best gift to man." Report, June 30, 1851, page 11.

Passing on to June, 1852, we find that Dr. Jerome Mudd was a member of the School Board. He was also a member of the Catholic Church, and he introduced certain resolutions in regard to the Holy Bible. Now, remember, that in the year 1842, the Bishop of the Catholic Church of this Diocese had been requested to point out the obnoxious passages of which he complained,—that every other objection he had then made had been met with perfectly satisfactory and complete action by the Board,—that he had not pointed out one passage, or one syllable of one of the obnoxious passages to which he referred. Now, in 1852, what was the next move? It was this. Dr. Mudd came in with these resolutions:

"Resolved, 1. That as it is the opinion of this Board that the Bible never can be dispensed with in the education of the young (see Report, June 30, 1851, page 11), the existing rule requiring the edition of the 'American Bible Society' be so altered and amended as to authorize the introduction of the edition of the Bible used by the Catholics, as also that preferred by the Jews.

"*Resolved*, 2. That, from and after the commencement of the next scholastic year, all such children as are by law entitled to the benefits of the Common School Fund instruction of said city, be and are hereby authorized to take to the public schools, and read the edition of the Bible selected by their parents or guardians.

"*Resolved*, 3. That the professors and teachers in said schools shall be, and are hereby authorized to read before their classes, such edition of the Bible, and without reciting the notes or comments, as may comport with their views of religion."

That was what was then offered by the representative of the Catholic Church.

The matter was referred to a committee, and the committee presented a report, signed by every member but Dr. Mudd, against the resolution. The doctor presented a minority report. Nevertheless, the Board adopted the resolutions offered by Dr. Mudd, upon assurances which were deemed authoritative,—as Rufus King, then President of the Board, states in his annual report for that year,—that thereby all differences would be removed, and the children of all denominations could, without objection, or any sacrifice of principle, attend the public schools. A rule was then made that each child might read such version of the Scriptures as its parents or guardian preferred,—precisely the rule in word and letter that it is now proposed to repeal by the votes of most, if not all, the Catholic members of the Board, and this, too, although that rule was adopted, as I have said, upon the solicitation of the only Catholic member of the Board, in 1852.

It is especially noteworthy, that in the resolutions then offered on behalf of the Catholics, the Bible is expressly recognized as indispensable in the education of the young. It is another fact worthy of mention, in this connection, that from the date of the adoption of the rule to this day, the Douay version of the Bible has, but in one instance, been introduced in any of the Common Schools of the city.

Now, what does the President of the School Board for that year, my honored friend, Rufus King, say officially upon this subject? Here is his statement, to be found on page 11, of the Twenty-fourth Annual Report:

"So long ago as August, 1842, upon a representation to the School Board that objections were held by the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church of this Diocese, to certain text books and library books used in the public schools, he was invited, by a formal vote of the Board, to examine the text books and point out all that was obnoxious in them, and it was ordered that no pupil should be permitted to read the Bible, or use the district libraries, if such should be the request of the parent. It is understood that this invitation, meant in good faith, received no response or attention from the Bishop, now Archbishop Purcell.

"Early in the past year, a concession in another form, to those who were offended by the exclusive use in school of the version of the Bible published by the American Bible Society, was moved, providing in effect that pupils may use *any* version of the sacred Scriptures which may be pre-

ferred by the parent or guardian. Coming from a quarter such as to induce a considerable majority of the Board to expect that by its adoption they might effect a happy termination of all past differences, and a return of a large class of pupils who have gradually been withdrawn from the public schools, this motion was adopted, notwithstanding the adverse report of a large majority of the committee to whom it had been referred.

"All ground of complaints being thus removed, or a way opened under the vote of August, 1842, for completely removing them, it was hoped that dissatisfaction would end, and that the children of all denominations of our people would be re-united in the open common halls of our public schools. Such, however, was not the result.

"No such re-union has taken place, nor has any mode or opportunity been afforded to this Board for correcting objections, if any there be, to the text books, libraries, or system of instruction used in our schools. These proffers, on the contrary, were followed, last spring, by assaults and misrepresentations more violent and unjustifiable than any heretofore made upon our schools. We are, therefore, constrained to infer that no union of action or system is intended or desired by the assailants of the public schools upon any terms but such as are incompatible with the principles and usages which thus far have sustained and governed the free schools of this country. If a large portion of the children of this city are deprived of the blessing of a free education in our District and High Schools, it can not be said that the fault rests upon the schools themselves, or upon the school authorities."

Thus, we see, twice every concession asked by the Catholic Church was granted by the School Board of Cincinnati; but instead of the result being what was expected, the attacks upon the Board were more violent and unjustifiable than ever before, and the very next year movements were made to establish Catholic schools.

Now, after the lapse of some seventeen years, we have another proposition, which comes in its first shape with a suggestion that the Catholic authorities would lease their school houses to the Board five days in the week, reserving the right to occupy them on Saturday and Sunday, for the religious instruction of their children. When it appeared probable that this proposition, offered by Rev. Edward Purcell, would be accepted, the Archbishop, his brother, stepped in and interposed his veto. Then came the *ultimatum* of the Catholic Church, that the education of their children can not be trusted entirely to the civil authorities, that it must be conducted under the control of the Church, and their proposition is, that a portion of the school fund—they say "their share," of the school fund—but I tell you, my fellow citizens, that they have no "share," in the sense in which they use the term,—that a portion of the public fund shall be transmitted to them, to be placed under their control, for the education of their children in the faith of the Catholic Church. Now, I have not one word to say against the faith of the Catholic Church, or any other church. I am willing to concede, for the sake of the argument, that they are all equally good and sound. It makes no difference in the discussion of the question; but this I have to say, when the Catholic, or any other church, plants itself against

any American institution—when it proposes that we shall recast or remold our institutions, or our Constitution, to serve its purposes, then I say, “Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.” And whenever the Pope of Rome, who, we have been informed, is to be consulted in this matter, shall presume or attempt to dictate upon what terms popular education shall be conducted in the State of Ohio, we will see whether that is constitutional.

Right here, let me refer again to the report of Mr. King, and read his admirable statement of objections to the proposition to parcel out the school fund, which was in 1859 before the public, but was first presented to the School Board in 1869, by the response of the Archbishop to the Committee of Conference:

“But the right of conscience and equality, secured by our laws, do not contemplate that every sect or party is to dictate its own terms of participating with others in the common privileges, but merely that each may have and enjoy the same privileges and immunities which are granted to others. The general good requires, and no principle of liberality forbids, that our public schools should have a strong infusion of the moral and religious element in their course. And there can be no doubt that enough, and the most essential part of this element is common ground to all, so clear and distinct from sectarianism on every side, as that by easy precautions it may be introduced and taught in our public schools without offense to any, who mean to be pleased at all. There is ample room above and beyond all sectarianism for the best moral and religious training. Those who refuse to meet upon this common ground, and would sever and divide the system, in order that every segment may teach its peculiar tenets at the public expense, surely produce, if they do not aim at, the subversion of the whole system of education.”

It is said that no mistakes are made by the authorities of the Catholic Church. I beg to differ. They have made the most terrible mistake in dealing with the question of the Bible in the schools in the city of Cincinnati, in this year of our Lord 1869, that they have ever made. They will come to understand, in due time, that there are citizens and electors in the great State of Ohio, outside of the city of Cincinnati, whose voice will be heard and votes cast in this matter, with no uncertain result. I don't stand here to-night to beg any favors at their hands. I do stand here to say that the men of the School Board, who are supporting the Bible exclusion movement, are acting against the known wishes of their constituents, and they will be called upon, if they persist, to answer to their constituents. There may be bad men enough in the Board, bold and defiant enough to deliberately, knowingly and wilfully misrepresent their constituents by putting this measure through; but let them remember that since the lowering of the flag at Sumter, we have learned that a temporary advantage does not by any means indicate final success.

When Dr. Mudd offered his resolution for the introduction of different versions of the Scriptures in the schools, the committee reported against it. Dr. John A. Warder, Chairman of the committee, seems to have been gifted with more foresight than

any other member of the Board. After speaking of the impracticability of using different versions, he said, "The next thing we shall hear will be an objection to reading the ordinary version of the Bible in the hearing of Catholic children, and at last it will even be alleged that it is unconstitutional to read the Bible at all in the schools." The Dr. evidently thought that was reducing the proposition to an absurdity, for such a thing never had been heard of. But, my friends, the world moves, and constitutional discoveries are wonderfully abundant in these latter days. As my Brother Ramsey says, it has been found of late that the Holy Bible is unconstitutional in the State of Ohio. Judge Storer and Rufus King had been members of the Board, and Judge O. M. Spencer had been one of the Visiting Committee. They were all in their day, and in their plain way, good common law and constitutional lawyers; but what they failed to perceive or understand, has been vouchsafed to the great modern constitutional expounder of the School Board. Now, it is proclaimed that it is not only against policy, but directly in the teeth of the constitution, to read to the children of the Republic the Holy Bible,—the very charter of our liberties,—our great Christian constitution. I do not propose to-night to defend the Bible. I believe it, as the inspired revelation of Almighty God to man; and this audience believes it, and this nation believes it. But this I say:

First—That the suppression of the Bible is the destruction of religious liberty, and that religious liberty is the only sure foundation of civil liberty.

Second—That the exclusion of the Bible from the public schools is the first step toward the suppression of the Bible.

Third—That it is in exact accordance with the spirit and true meaning of the constitution that the Bible shall be read in the Common Schools; and,

Fourth—That it is against the true meaning and spirit of the constitution to exclude it from the schools.

The provision of the Constitution of the United States, which is supposed to bear upon this question, is as follows:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

This is the first of ten amendments proposed at the first session of the first Congress, and finally ratified by the constitutional number of States on the 15th of Dec., 1791. The Constitution itself was adopted Sept. 27th, 1787.

What is an establishment of religion which is here prohibited? I cannot better answer than in the words of Mr. Meachem, in his report from the Committee on the Judiciary to the House of Representatives, at Washington, March 27th, 1854, against the

abolition of the office of chaplain, wherever it existed by authority of the United States,—a much stronger case than the use of the Bible in the schools as a text book. He says an establishment of religion “must have a creed, defining what a man must believe; it must have rites and ordinances, which believers must observe; it must have ministers of defined qualifications to teach the doctrines and administer the rites; it must have tests for the submissive, and penalties for the non-conformists. There never was an established religion without all of these.” How perfectly absurd to claim that that provision is infringed by the reading of the Bible in the Common Schools. The other phrase of that clause, which prevents Congress from making any law prohibiting the free exercise of religion, is simply a barrier against infidelity and intolerance, and it was inspired by reverence for the Christian religion and the Holy Bible upon which it rests.

Now, it is a recognized rule of construction, that in giving to a constitutional clause its meaning,—as the Supreme Court has decided in the case of the State of Rhode Island *vs.* the State of Massachusetts, in 12 Peter’s Reports, Supreme Court of the United States,—we must look to the history of the times and examine the state of things existing when it was framed and adopted. That proposition has been affirmed over and over again, until it is no longer open to be questioned.

What, then, was the state of fact when the Constitution was framed? The common schools of America had been founded more than 125 years before the Declaration of Independence, and we find that universally the reading of the Bible and religious instruction formed a part of the system of education therein. We find that the old Continental Congress, which had charge of our affairs during the Revolution, provided that there should be imported from Great Britain at the public expense, for distribution among the citizens of this land, 20,000 copies of the Bible. We find that the first act of the first Continental Congress, was to provide for the appointment of a chaplain, and he came in the next morning and read that magnificent thirty-first Psalm of David, beginning,—

“In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Thy righteousness;” and ending, “Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord;” and then, in prayer, invoked the blessing of Almighty God upon the labors of that assembly. We find that every regiment of the American army of the Revolution was provided with a chaplain, at the public expense. We find, that when George Washington was inaugurated first President, as he took the oath of office, he reverently bowed his head and kissed the Holy Book, which these men in the School Board of Cincinnati propose to exclude from the schools as unworthy to be read in the hearing of our children. And when the official ceremonies of the inauguration were concluded, he proceeded, with his Cabinet, to the

church, to recognize the dependence of himself and his counselors, and the nation, upon Almighty God. We find that almost immediately afterward, Congress, by a unanimous vote, passed a resolution requesting the President to issue a proclamation of thanksgiving to Almighty God; and that Washington, in his proclamation, issued in accordance with that resolution, declared that no people on the face of the earth had more occasion to recognize the guiding care of the Almighty than the American people. We find, in a word, that all through the struggle for our liberties, the Bible was recognized, and Christianity was recognized, as a part of our governmental system—not any particular sect, not any particular construction of the Bible—but Christianity, in its broad, comprehensive sense, embracing and comprising all sects and all denominations.

Now, let me say right here, that there are only two classes of nations—those that are Christian, and those that are heathen or infidel; and the heathen and the infidel belong together. There is no neutral or middle ground. It will not do to say that this nation has nothing to do with religion or Christianity. It is either Christian or infidel, and we know it is not infidel. And the man who proposes to make infidelity the rule and Christianity the exception, in the affairs of this nation, is a more deadly enemy to the government than the vilest rebel who attempted by force of arms to destroy it.

Six years after the adoption of our Constitution, in France was tried the experiment of a republic founded on infidelity. The historian tells us that the leaders of the municipality of Paris expressed their determination to dethrone the King of Heaven as well as the monarchs of earth. It was announced that God did not exist, and that the worship of Reason was to be substituted in His stead. The services of religion were universally abandoned, pulpits were deserted, the burial service was no longer heard—the sick received no communion, the dying no consolation. The Sabbath was obliterated—the village bells were silent. Infancy entered the world without a blessing—old age left it without a hope. On all the public cemeteries the inscription was placed, "Death is an Eternal Sleep." France was red with blood; murder and death were everywhere, and infidelity rioted in the full fruits of its terrible teachings.

Now, let us take the construction of the Constitution which has been placed upon it by another lawyer, who was at one time Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States—Judge Story—whose works are quoted, upon the other side of the water as well as this, as high authority in matters of law. In his commentaries upon the Constitution, in regard to this right of conscience, or the establishment of religion, he says:

"The promulgation of the great doctrines of religion; the being, and attributes, and providence of one Almighty God; the responsibility to Him for all our actions, founded upon moral freedom and accountability; a fu-

ture state of rewards and punishments; the cultivation of all the personal, social and benevolent virtues,—these never can be a matter of indifference in any well-ordered community. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how any civilized society can well exist without them. And, at all events, it is impossible for those who believe in the truth of Christianity, as a divine revelation, to doubt that it is the special duty of Government to foster and encourage it among all the citizens and subjects. This is a point wholly distinct from that of the right of private judgment in matters of religion, and of the freedom of public worship according to the dictates of one's own conscience." Section 986.

How does this comport with a proposition to carefully exclude the Bible, and all religious instruction, and the reading of religious books, from the public instruction of the youth of the nation?

In section 991, Judge Story says :

"The real object of the amendment was, not to countenance, much less to advance Mohammedanism, or Judaism, or infidelity, by prostrating Christianity; but to exclude all rivalry among Christian sects, and to prevent any national ecclesiastical establishment, which should give to a hierarchy the exclusive patronage of the National Government."

That is to say, the object of that provision of the Constitution was to prevent the recognition by the State of any church as the authorized ecclesiastical establishment of the State. All were to stand upon a perfect level and equality. But the Government, then, as now, from first to last, recognizes the churches all combined, representing the grand, comprehensive system of Christianity, upon which our government is founded, as the great representatives of Christianity, and a proper and essential part of the State.

Now, let us pass to the ordinance of 1787, for the government of the territories lying north-west of the Ohio river, adopted on the 13th day of July, nearly three months before the Constitution itself:

The eighth act of the first Congress was to re-enact the ordinance, having modified it to make it conform to the Constitution, but not changing the portion which I shall quote. There was but one vote in the negative upon the adoption, and that negative was not to Article 3, to which I call your attention. It reads as follows:

"Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

Will any one undertake to deny that the Christian religion is here meant? And, keeping in view the fact that for more than one hundred and twenty-five years the Bible had been used as a text book in the Common Schools, does it require argument to prove that the reading of the Bible, and the inculcation of the fundamental truths of Christianity, as a part of a public system

of education, were intended, by classing religion, morality and education together, as necessary to good government, and as an all-sufficient reason why schools should be encouraged? Yet Thomas Jefferson, whom the free-thinkers claim as one of their number, was the father of that ordinance, and he recognized the duty of the Government to see that religion should be fostered and protected as a saving power in the State. And think you that that first Congress, when it adopted that ordinance, did not understand the meaning of the Constitution? Madison, Ellsworth, and Sherman passed directly from the hall of the Convention to the hall of Congress. Did they not know what was constitutional?

The Constitution of Ohio, of 1802, contained the provision of the ordinance above quoted, word for word, and so does the Constitution of 1851, which is now in force; but the Constitution of 1802 provides against interfering with the rights of conscience; and, by the Constitution of 1851, it is made the duty of the General Assembly to pass suitable laws to protect every religious denomination in the peaceable enjoyment of its own mode of public worship, and to encourage schools and the means of instruction; but as to these provisions, it is sufficient to refer to the remarks of Judge Story, already cited.

But there are other provisions of the Constitution of Ohio, which it is claimed are against the use of the Bible as a text book in the schools. They are contained in the same section as the provisions above referred to (Section 7, Article 1), and are as follows:

"All men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience. No person shall be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain any form of worship against his consent; and no preference shall be given by law to any religious society; nor shall any interference with the rights of conscience be permitted."

Now, no other than a Christian nation would ever make these provisions a part of the organic law. The declaration in this solemn form, of the right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, implies not only that that worship is proper, but that its unrestrained exercise is of the highest importance to the State. But what is the true construction of this right of conscience? Let us refer to history again. Its assertion grew out of two conditions of fact which existed in the Old World before the settlement of the New. In certain countries of Europe, called Catholic, where the Pope, by his Bishops, stood behind the throne and directed the affairs of the State, it was made unlawful for any person to read or construe for himself the Holy Scriptures. The interpretation of priests and monks was to be accepted by the people in place of the sacred text itself; and even to be in possession of the Bible was counted a more flagrant offence than to have in hand

counterfeit coin of the realm. In other countries, called Protestant, the subject was permitted, it is true, to read the Bible, but if he ventured to give to its teachings an interpretation at variance with that prescribed by the recognized church establishment, he must seal his temerity with the blood of martyrdom. The Catholic and the Protestant—one as bad as the other—alternately waged the most unrelenting warfare upon each other, and upon all unbelievers. One of the results was that the Puritans were driven to the shores of New England; and even their history, says Judge Story, “has furnished a chapter as full of dark bigotry and intolerance as any that could be found to disgrace the pages of foreign annals.” Roger Williams, with a little band of followers, was driven to the wilderness, and, establishing the little colony of Rhode Island, declared as a fundamental and essential principle of liberty, that every man had the right to read and interpret the Bible for himself, and to act upon his interpretation, without molestation by the Government or any individual. That is what liberty of conscience means. It means the very right to read the Bible which members of the School Board of Cincinnati say it is unconstitutional to read.

But it is said that our Supreme Court has decided that, “under the provisions of our Constitution, neither Christianity nor any other system of religion is a part of the law of this State.” Very well. It was so decided, and the decision is sound law. But what does it mean? The question was, whether a contract entered into on Sunday was therefore void. It was held that the Statute of Ohio which prohibits hunting, fishing, common labor, etc., on Sunday, did not invalidate the contract, and that it was not void at common law, nor could it be declared void because contrary to the teachings of Christianity. That is what the decision means, and that is all it means. It has nothing whatever to do with the subject in hand, and I venture the assertion, that no one would be more surprised at the use made of that decision in the School Board than Judge Thurman himself, who pronounced it. Nobody pretends that a recovery could be had in any of our Courts for an injury resulting from the violation of a right depending upon the Golden Rule or the Sermon on the Mount, unless also a statutory provision or a recognized proposition of the common law could be produced in support of the action.

But are you going to compel the hearing of the Bible by the children of those who object from conscientious promptings? In answer, the resolution of the 29th of August, 1842, excusing any pupil, if its parent or guardian desire, never has been rescinded, and is in force now as fully as when adopted.

And now, in what shape is the question presented? The infidels propose to make our schools schools of atheism—to banish all religion and religious teachings—which is to establish atheism. The Catholics propose to strike the Bible from the list of text

books in the public schools at which the Protestant children are educated, and then to continue their own schools, and draw from the common fund "their share"—as they phrase it—and educate their children in the Catholic religion at the public expense. Do you not see precisely what that would result in? The Catholic religion would be taught in this State of Ohio and in this city of Cincinnati at the public expense, and no other religion would be taught at all in the public schools! That is to say, the Catholic Church is proposing to incorporate into our system of public schools here precisely the dogmas of the Old World, against which we fought the battles of the Revolution.

Well, now, what would be the result of this, if it could be accomplished? It will not do to say that the Catholic may take his share of the public fund and educate his children, and not say that the Presbyterian may take his share, and the Episcopalian, the Methodist and Baptist each his share, and so of the other sects. More than that. It will not do to say that the infidel may not take his share, and teach infidelity at the public expense. If we grant one, we must grant all the rest. What would be the result? The school fund would be broken into fragments. Instead of that magnificent system, which is the pride and glory of the State of Ohio, we would have the ruins of a system broken into fragments and destroyed. And I charge that that is really the ultimate object and intent of these men. That is what it means, and they have sense enough to know the natural consequence of their own acts. It is proper, therefore, that they should be held accountable for them.

Now, I say that we can not afford to give up this Common School system, and we are not going to give it up. Next to the Bible, it is the stronghold of this nation. The churches in the cities, in the villages, and in the country places, and the school houses, and the colleges, are the fortresses of our country. The children in the public schools are the children of the Republic, and it is the right and the duty of the State and of the citizens to see that they there learn, by seeing the Bible before them, and hearing it read every day, that it is a free book in every nook and corner of the Republic.

I do not propose to occupy your time by dwelling upon the value of the Common School system; but if you will turn to the last chapter of the Life of General Francis Marion, of South Carolina—one of the great captains of the Revolution,—a little book written by his comrade, General Horry, edited by Weems, and published in 1824—you will find one of the most remarkable tributes on record to the value and importance of common schools. Shortly after the termination of the war, the idea of establishing schools at the public cost in South Carolina was abandoned on account of the expense and consequent unpopularity of the measure. General Marion, when he was informed in advance of this probable result, with great earnestness declared

his belief that the chastisement of the Almighty would be visited upon that people if they neglected to provide for the instruction of the masses. After contrasting the toryism in the Southern Colonies—which he charged to their ignorance, and, but for which he declared it was generally believed the war would have terminated shortly after the surrender of Burgoyne—with the unflinching patriotism of New England, the land of free schools, he uttered the prediction, that, if the means of education were not freely bestowed by the Government, ambitious demagogues would rise, and the people, through ignorance and love of change, would follow them,—that vast armies would be formed, bloody battles fought, and the country devastated with all the horrors of civil war. The Southern States did fail to provide popular education, and the history of the last ten years has brought upon the nation the most terrible and literal fulfillment of this prophecy, at a cost of two million lives and thousands of millions of dollars. And it is emphatically true, that the ignorance of the masses enabled the bad leaders of the South to bring upon the country the horrors of civil war.

I say, then, we can not afford to do without this system of free schools, nor can we afford any thing that will in the least impair its strength or efficiency. It becomes us to see that it be preserved in all its integrity. I said that these men had made a mistake, and I repeat it. Two years hence we shall be called upon to revise our State Constitution. If there be any possible doubt about the constitutionality of the use of the Bible in the schools, which we do not for one moment admit, the people of the State of Ohio will then be heard from. They are already aroused, and will fully protect themselves and their children from the threatened invasion of their rights. Cincinnati is not alone in this struggle. She has the sympathy of the people of the entire State; and, thank God! this noble State of Ohio, first-born of the ordinance of '87, never yet has proved false to the teachings of the Fathers or the institutions of the Republic, and the time has not yet come when she will. If it become necessary for the electors of the State to pass upon this question, we will see that by the votes of the freemen, and, if need be, by the Protestant freemen, of the State of Ohio, any proposition to change our system, or to have it recast to suit ideas not recognized by the founders of the Republic,—whether that proposition come from Catholic or Protestant, Jew or infidel,—will be driven like chaff before the whirlwind, or consumed as stubble before the fire.

Rev. B. W. Chidlaw was then introduced to the audience, and made a very brief, but effective speech, of which we have no report.

A. E. Chamberlain, from the Committee on Resolutions, reported the following, which were unanimously adopted, amid the greatest enthusiasm:

Resolved, 1. That the attempt to exclude the Bible from the Common Schools of our city, deserves the unqualified disapprobation of this meeting.

"2. That we regard the attempt as a disturbing blow at the most precious and vital elements of our civilization, a gratuitous assault upon the inspired source of all religion and morality.

"3. That we earnestly protest against any action of the School Board on this important question, until it shall first have been submitted to the people at the next spring election of the members of that Board."

The meeting then adjourned.

