

VI. Education

B. Secondary Education

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Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, September 18, 1858

Education.

The word *education* is not of Anglo-Saxon, but of Latin origin. It means *a leading out*. It consists in leading out or developing man's powers. Now man is a compound being, "a little less than the Angels," but far higher than the beasts. He is made up of soul and body, that is, of spirit and matter. His soul, though a simple being, may be and is rightly viewed under a two-fold aspect--that of intelligence, and that of will. From all which it follows that man's powers or faculties are of three classes--intellectual powers, powers of free will, and corporeal powers. Education consists in developing, in due subordination, these three classes of powers. Religion, science and gymnastics constitute the educational trinity. Religion develops the powers of free will. Science develops the powers of intellect, gymnastics develops the corporeal powers.

Free will is the noblest of all the faculties, it is their queen. Free will it is that works out man's destiny for weal or woe, for by it and it only can man merit or demerit. Of course then it is the chief thing to be attended to in the education of man. Free will has good instincts and bad instincts; the good come from God's inspirations, the bad come from the inspirations of the devil and of the passions of fallen human nature. To religion belongs the task of educating the good instincts of free will and of repressing those that are evil.

The education of the intellectual powers of man belongs to science. By science we mean *systematized* knowledge, knowledge reduced to unity by being traced up to first principles. Dr. Newman, in his Lectures on University Education, has truly remarked that science, not knowledge, constitutes power. Undigested, scattered information, is comparatively valueless, unless concentrated on a point, reduced to a principle. True generalship consists in bringing vast bodies of troops to act in harmony, as one man and for one purpose; so too true scholarship consists in collecting the thousand scattered rays of knowledge in a focus and in reflecting the concentrated blaze upon the dark places of the physical and moral worlds. Science is one in its origin, God; so too it must be one in its destiny or end. The circle is the emblem of eternity, of the divinity. The earth and all the orbs of heaven are more or less circular in form and movement.--Their point of ending is the point from which they started. Thus should it be with the powers of the intellect and of the free will: they should move in circles, beginning with God and ending with God. Or rather He should be the center around which they revolve, ever tending to rush to Him by the gravitation of Divine Love, yet kept at a distance from Him by the law of human life which He Himself

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established. The upshot of the whole matter is this, that as God is to be loved above all things so He is to be known above all things. He is the principle that is to give unity to knowledge and thus make it science. History, philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, geology, botany, belles lettres, etc., etc., are sciences only as far as they are informed by God, the principle of all sciences, and are used for His glory.

We come now to the education of man's corporeal powers, which is done by gymnastics. A sound mind and a virtuous heart in a sound body constitute the perfect man. We believe with Father Faber and other mystics, that certain sublime states of contemplation and passive union with God are incompatible with health, and of course that health is to be sacrificed at once and without hesitation for such a cause, or rather that it is made a sacrifice by God Himself, by reason of His sovereign dominion, when He raises the soul to such a state, but on the other hand, we just as firmly believe that the practice of these sublime states does not fall within the programme of university or collegiate education, but belongs exclusively to the school of the Holy Ghost, and therefore we make bold to assert that, for the generality of men, the corporeal powers ought to be developed, in subordination, however to the powers of the mind and heart. It is not a sin to be fat and stout, it is not a sin to have a quick, lively eye, a strong arm, a steady hand, a swift foot and a well knit frame. All these are good in themselves and may be used for good. The time which a boy spends, at school or college, in acquiring these bodily perfections, is well spent. He is out of mischief whilst he is so engaged, and he acquires a taste for manly outdoor sports, which may save him, in after life, from the temptations of the bar-room and the gambling table. With right then does gymnastics claim a place in the scheme of education.

321.

Address, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, July 30, 1859

Commencement Address at St. John's College, Fordham,

July 12, 1859, as reported in the *N.Y. Daily Times*

The address to the graduating class was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Rosecrans, of Cincinnati, Ohio, as follows:

The Catholics of the United States are assuming a new position. Their increased wealth and numbers begin to make their part in our nation's history more and more important. It is our boast that the Church fosters education, and is able to keep pace with all the improvements of the age. The present is a time which will try the truth of our assertions. Hitherto, although teachers have not been wanting, the education of Catholics, keeping pace with their social and political portion, has not been of that thorough and profound cast which characterizes the great institutions of the country. The majority of students have not been in the habit of entering college with the

intention of graduating; hence the Superiors were compelled to make the best of their short time, and to give them some idea of all the sciences, without having them master any one.

Now, however, that time is passed. Catholics must now aim at something more than a little Latin and Greek, a little Book-keeping and Mathematics, the nomenclature of Chemistry and Mechanics; they must aim at that completeness of intellectual development, which only a thorough education, a perfect familiarity with all that has been thought and written in Science, in Metaphysics, History and Literature alone can give.

I do not mean that the graduate of a Catholic school should have read all that has been written on these subjects; but he must have a general and accurate knowledge of all that has been thought before him, so as to begin the world above the danger of repeating any man's blunders, or groping in the dark over questions long since solved.

In the way of this thorough education of our youth lie certain obstacles which I will frankly discuss.

First. Catholic parents are, in the great majority, of the class who are architects of their own fortunes. Driven from their native land, they have adopted this new country of ours with enthusiasm, and by energy and industry they have achieved for their children a position which they themselves never thought to fill. By as much as their success, in what the age esteems, has been brilliant, by so much are they inclined to disregard, and perhaps contemn, the education without whose aid they won their position. Hence the slight esteem they have for what is called "the regular course" in colleges, and the small estimation they attach to the academic honors, so honorably won by these five graduates to-day.

Of what use, they say, is this Latin and Greek, this Mathematics, Geology, Chemistry, History, Poetry?

It is of no use, my friend, if the end of life be merely to accumulate money; but your sons have another work to do in this great country, besides, adding to the fortune you leave them. The mighty experiment of man's capacity for self-government is yet being tried by thirty millions of people; and it is the work—in great part, at least—of the Catholic educated young men, to make that experiment a success. It is theirs to wield the power of thought that shall sway the masses, and keep alive the love of virtue and veneration for honesty, which is the only safeguard of republican institutions.

They must come forth from college armed at all points for the battle of life—far ahead of the world in their knowledge of the great truths which religion reveals, and not at all behind it in any point of Science or Literature that fit one to act with prudence and power among his fellows.

We Catholics esteem education very highly—far more highly, perhaps, than those who vote money from the public treasure to build school-houses and pay teachers; but

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we do not esteem it as highly as we ought. We are in the habit of calling those who maintain children in colleges, the patrons of those colleges. The humility of the professor, of or the religious order, shrinks from disdaining the title, but in reality it is a perversion of ideas. Whoever is gifted by nature and cultivation with the power of teaching is immeasurably above all patronage; he can give to his pupil of the world that for which no amount of money can be equivalent.

The gorgeous palaces built by the Roman Cæsars have crumbled into dust, and their empire has perished, leaving scarce a trace. But the men of thought whom their munificence encouraged are still the masters of the civilized world, and their influence in the domain of mind is ever in imperishable youth. So now the wealth you accumulate will be scattered, and the houses you build will decay. But the work done by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus on you and your children, will never be lost, but will live on with them individually forever, and in society, through those they influence, until the end of time. The teacher sets in motion the waves on the sea of thought, and the vibrations, once commenced, are felt through all generations, wherever mind extends.

Look upon your teachers, therefore, not as your dependents but with veneration; and thank God for having given to your children learned and unselfish men, who ask but a field to labor, and in that are willing to spend their energies and their lives to fit them for the higher walks of life.

Another obstacle to a high order of education among Catholics is in the students themselves.

It is very hard to inspire the young men of this country with those lofty aims which alone can sustain one in the pursuit of profound knowledge. With many the problem in college is how to pass through with the least amount of study and labor. They are discouraged by the example of those who talk lightly of learning and intellectual effort. Almost unconsciously, they settle upon some end of life, such as pleasure or wealth, or low ambition, and accustom themselves to aspire after the diploma, rather than after the merit which the diploma evinces. They have no traditions to stimulate them to exertion, or to teach them history. In their homes there is no picture gallery, containing portraits of a line of ancestors whose renown must not diminish in them. In their walks they encounter no monuments of the historical past, to show them what their predecessors have done, and what the world has a right to expect from them. Their learning cannot be gathered from the gallery of paintings, or the marble monument; and the stimulus to study cannot come from the old castle and the rusted armor, commemorating the glories and the devotion of times gone by. The American student must learn everything from books; History, Philosophy, and higher Literature he must master by reading. When he mixes with society, he is not impressed with the necessity of deeper acquirements and more earnest study, but rather distracted

and turned away from his books. Hence to be successful he must to some extent estrange himself from social relations; he must live among his books.

But it is hard to convince young men of this necessity, and to persuade them to adopt this course.

You young gentlemen of the graduating class have appreciated the position of the American student--you have finished your course with honor.

You go forth now into the world. There are one or two points upon which I beg to offer you some advice.

Do not trust the world too much, nor expect too much from it. You throw yourselves generously into the world; but do not expect the world to thank you or reward you. Do not be disappointed or embittered when, instead of kindness and openness, you encounter hardship and treachery; nor ever allow the consciousness of right intentions or abused confidence reduce you into misanthropy. The world needs your services, but is not your paymaster.

Always bear yourselves with modesty. Leave the clamorous search after office and prominence to those who are semi-educated, and who see no higher aim for the scholar than for the gold hunter or the demagogue. When your work is ready you will be called upon to do it, until then wait patiently, modestly, fearlessly.

Cherish the love of country.

After all our exaggerated glorifications of our flag and freedom, after all the defects of our partyism and sectionality, our country is a grand country, worth working for, dying for. It is true we have great defects; but in a country so gigantic nothing can be small. And with all corruption of public morals, our impunity for crime, still here we are under these peaceful old trees, without a fear, while in the better regulated countries of the Old World, rivers are being dyed in human blood, wailing is heard in their homes.

322.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, May 1, 1858 (2)

Our Colleges.

We have abstained from any notice of the article on this subject in the late number of *Brownson's Review*. Our contemporaries have given some sneering remarks on it, without contradicting any statement made by the writer, or denying the existence of the defects of which he complains. We have only to say in reference to it, that if defects exist, it is full time they should be remedied. Two considerations urge this. The influence of colleges as centres of learning on the moral tone and intelligence of society, the position of its members, is too important to be neglected. The interest, the position of the Catholic community at present, demand institutions capable of giving a higher

and more comprehensive education than has been hitherto afforded. We find no fault with what has been done; but with growing resources there should be a corresponding improvement. One remedy for existing defects we would suggest, as necessary to precede all others, and to be the basis of all subsequent improvement, is, that the several departments in our colleges be filled by competent professors,--men educated of this age who are alive to its requirements, whose talents, acquirements, and character fit them for the important office of instructing an active, aspiring generation. We want something more than mere routine teaching and textbook recitation: we want the living-speaking scholar,--the living communication of knowledge by men who possess it, by men who can develop the minds of youth and impress upon them their own habits of thought and intellectual activity,--men who in their persons will exhibit the moral force and superiority of cultivated intellect. Mechanical routine, lifeless modes and forms, are not the means to resist the active, stirring, wrestling spirit at work around us. We want to see at length awakened in our colleges a spirit which will invade that monopoly in science and literature possessed by the non-Catholic colleges of the land, and convert them from nurses of unbelief and vehicles of calumny into ornaments of Christian life and knowledge. A spirit is wanted to grapple with the secular education of our time, such as in the early days of Christianity converted the renowned schools of pagan learning into seminaries of true light and knowledge. The secular learning of the present day has nothing in it antagonistic to faith. It is the apathy and indifference of the Catholic body that are at fault, in allowing it to be appropriated as a weapon by the enemy. Literature as an art, in common with all arts, and physical science as truth, in common with all truths, are in their essence Catholic, and will easily combine with the great current of Catholic truths, if human agency be applied to direct them. It is the want of this agency under the guidance of unerring faith that is felt in the perversion of literature and science in our day. Let it spring up in our colleges in the persons of men who are possessed of the scholarship, the intelligence, the energy, we wish to see diffused through the Catholic community, and the other defects of organization and discipline complained of will rapidly vanish. The rigors of discipline are too often the aids on which other deficiencies must lean for support. We are not opposed to due severity and restraint being exercised over the young; but when excessive rigor becomes the means of maintaining discipline in a college, it is evidence of the absence of the moral control which should belong to professors and superiors.

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Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, August 27, 1859

The Indwellers of Colleges.

The Metropolitan Catholic Almanac for 1859, published by Murphy & Co., Baltimore, contains a list of ninety-nine Catholic institutions of learning, male and female, in the United States. Of this number eighty-eight are under the direction of religious orders, nine under secular clergymen and two under laymen. It is easy to account for this fact. Education is a specialty of the great majority of the religious orders in this country; whilst those whose vocation is the contemplative life, or the active life of out-door charity, have been compelled, in many instances, to establish schools and academies, as a means of support.

The secular clergy, as a body, are not so directly called to participate, at least exclusively, in the work of education. Their peculiar sphere of action lies within the widely extended range of parochial duties. The wants of the American mission have immediately claimed the undivided service of nearly every individual priest who has come from abroad or who has been ordained from our own seminaries. Yet there is nothing in the nature of his priesthood, in the fact of his not being under religious vows, to prevent the secular priest from having, as an individual, a vocation to a professorial life. His happiness and his usefulness consist in following his vocation. "Every man to his trade," says the old adage; the missionary to the mission, the professor to the college. It is the duty of the ecclesiastic to whom the voice of God, speaking by the voice of his superiors, has assigned a share in the great work of clerical or secular education to devote exclusively his best energies to that work, to aspire to the perfection of a learned and zealous professor.

Catholic laymen as well as Catholic secular priests may have a vocation to a collegiate or university life, and it is the duty of the Catholic body to encourage them and afford them every opportunity for entering on and continuing in that profession to which their talents and tastes incline them. The voice of the highest ecclesiastical authority has sanctioned and blessed the labors of Catholic lay publicists, statesmen, editors and reviewers. The professor belongs to the same category.

So much for the teachers--now for the students. And here our remarks will be brief. The Catholic student should aim at pursuing, as far as possible, the entire *classical* course. Too many content themselves with getting a smattering of commercial knowledge, reading, writing, ciphering, a little grammar, a little geography, less history, and as much book-keeping as can be mastered in a year, for they intend to turn clerks and accountants as soon as they are tall enough to stand at a clerk's desk. The great aim of the teacher should be to communicate, of the student to acquire and retain a *taste* for scientific and literary investigation. Six or seven years of collegiate life will not store the

mind of a lad in his teens with large amount of positive information, but they will, if rightly spent, impart a proper tone and temper to his thoughts, and form his mental character. If the graduate carries away from peaceful academic retreats, nothing else but a love of books and study, he has not toiled in vain. His college course is complete, to use the language of Hon. C. Cushing, addressing an eastern graduating class, his education is beginning, and beginning under the fairest auspices.

We have often wondered how grey-haired British statesmen of our own time could, amidst the turmoil of politics and the dry detail of official business, so thoroughly and successfully identify themselves with the triumphs of literature and art. The secret is explained, at least in part, by the influence exerted over their youthful minds by the great English universities. Oxford and Cambridge so deeply imbued them with a love of learning, of books and authors, that nothing has been able to eradicate that love from their hearts. We need but instance Lord Brougham, who, from the age of eighteen, when he contributed *Essays on Light and Speculative Mathematics* to the Royal Society of London, down to the present day, when he is in his eighty-first year, has, in spite of the pressure of legal and parliamentary business, found time to extend his researches into the field of physical science and general literature; Lord Campbell, author of *"Lives of the Lord Chancellors,"* equally distinguished as a writer and a lawyer; Lord Macaulay, the great Whig historian of England; Rt. Hon Benjamin D'Israeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the late Derby Ministry, and the Colonial Secretary, Sir E. L. Bulwer, two of the greatest of modern novelists; Hon. W. E. Gladstone Chancellor of the present cabinet, author of a critical work on Greek literature, the *"Homeric Studies";* George Grote, a London banker and member of parliament, whose *History of Greece* has given him rank with the greatest of modern historians; Rt. Hon. G. C. Lewis, whose researches into early Roman history may merit for him the title of the English Niebuhr. We might swell our list, but the names given suffice for our purpose. What we wish to impress is this--the necessity the student is under of acquiring an enthusiastic love of study. It will preserve him from a thousand dangers in after life; it will enable him fully to develop those talents with which God has blessed him; it will give him a place in that band of learned and devoted laymen whom God, in His providence, will, we trust, raise up to be ornaments and defenders of our Holy Faith in this country.

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News/Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, July 9, 1859

**Mt. St. Mary's of the West.
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES.**

Vacation, vacation, *dulcem dulcem domum!* was the shout of the boys; and home they have gone, leaving the benign mother to summer heat and silence. The wearied professor has hung up his gown, closeted his cap and turned himself to some other work than teaching. And all the college neighborhoods are quiet. Meek-eyed cows fear no young bipeds intrusive on the meadow; the polish is disappearing from the gymnasium bars; in a little while they will be gray with the dust of disuse: grass is already springing up in the beaten paths and the deserted play grounds: poor big Newfoundland Major wanders about, the picture of disconsolate laziness. When he sees you he comes up, puts his great paws on you, looks mournful into your eyes and says "Where are the boys?" You tell him they have all gone home, but he shakes his head and gives a low moan of dissatisfaction; he thought they were fixtures of the college as he is. Then he makes a feeble attempt at a gambol, asks you if you could not spare a few moments for a roll in the grass with him, or at least be kind enough to pull his tail. And if you refuse, he goes away, lies down in the shadow of a haystack and wishes that he were a reversed dormouse, for whom it might be possible to hibernate in summer.

And only last Thursday, everything was so active, so gay, so free of jocundity up there on the hill. A day of excitement to all; of cessation of labor for the youngster, of premium getting, of grand holiday, a day of greatest importance to six, who ceased to be schoolboys forever, and armed with testifying sheep skins make their leap into the battle of the world.

The solemn high Mass sung by the Rev. Superior of the Seminary, terminated with the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament and the Te Deum of gratitude for God's beneficence. Then came the bustle of preparation until half-past nine o'clock, and then the band summoned all together and the procession started for the scene of the commencement.

This was the beautiful grove near the college ground, cresting one of the hills which girdle Cincinnati; and for its use on this occasion, as well as for the general permission to enjoy it as a walking ground, both the faculty and students of Mt. St. Mary's are exceedingly indebted to Peter Neff, Esq.

A broad stage had been erected the day before, and now received the Most Rev. Archbishop, the Rev. President and faculty of the college, the Rev. clergy, and other guests. The concourse of parents, friends, seminarians, and collegians, were grouped in front under the maples, lindens and locusts.

After music, the exercises were begun by the Latin Salutatory, by Thomas M. Healy, of Cumberland, Maryland. His subject was the "*Energizing Power of Modern Pantheism.*" This was followed by "*Individual Influence,*" by M. D. J. Ryan, Cincinnati; by "*The Connection between Philosophical Theories and Popular Ideas,*" by M. J. J. Ahern, Cin.; "*Reverence,*" by James F. Callaghan, Cin.; "*Catholicity Necessary to the Stability of our Government,*" by Wm. Manly, Lebanon, Ky.; and, finally, by the touching and graceful Valedictory, with an oration on the "*Spirit of English Literature,*" by John Lancaster Spalding, of Lebanon, Ky. Between the orations a fine band filled the woods with melody.

Then came the faculty oration, by *A. P. Ward, Esq.,* of this city, and a more beautifully written, wise, careful and kind address, we have never heard; meriting, indeed the high eulogy given it by the Most Rev. Archbishop, at the close of the exercises. The graduating class have requested publication, and we hope it will soon be given.

Next followed the award of premiums to the various younger classes, and the honors were announced to the graduates. They were as follows:

Rhetorical Honor,		John L. Spalding
Greek	"	James F. Callaghan
Latin	"	Michl. D. J. Ryan
Science	"	Thomas M. Healy
Mathematical Honor,		William Manly
Historical	"	James F. Callaghan
Philosophical	"	Michl. J. J. Ahern

Then the Rev. President proceeded to confer the degree of Bachelor of Arts on the above-named gentlemen. And here it may be said, that as far as the experience of those conducting the examinations goes, no class has left the walls of any American literary institution more deserving of the title A.B., than the six young men who have now won it. In several instance they were kept from two hours and a half to three hours on a single branch of studies. Dr. H. E. Foot, Professor of Chemistry in the Medical College of Ohio, was kind enough to conduct the whole chemical examination of the class, and to be present at their lecture, with experiment, delivered on the afternoon of Wednesday, June 29th, in presence of the Most Rev. Archbishop, and a large audience. The subjects were oxygen, hydrogen, caloric and the steam engine, electro magnetism, carbon and chemical affinity.

So when the degree had been conferred, the Rev. President made a few remarks to the audience, and the Most Rev. Archbishop said a few words eloquent with kindness and the paternal joy which was visible in his look. He praised Mr. Ward as that gentleman certainly merited, noticed pleasantly the graduates' orations, and thanked God and the benefactors of the institution for their benefits.

325 - History—Why and How it should be Studied

The commencement morning was over, the band struck up a march, and the grove was emptied of the crowd. About forty guests sat down to dinner in the refectory, and many of them adjourned in the afternoon to the ever-hospitable house of the faithfulest and oldest of Mt. St. Mary's friends, where under the shade of the old locusts they finished the day in joyous converse.

May God guide the young men who have been thus introduced to real life, and keep safe the Mountain for the training of future classes which shall honor Him and His Blessed Mother, its patroness.

325.

Lecture, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, August 11, 1855

This address was delivered to the Students of St. Joseph's College near Somerset on July 4, 1855. The persecution of the Church of which he speaks was that of the Know-Nothings, who in 1854 and 1855 were at the height of their strength.

History—Why and How it should be Studied

Young Gentlemen of St. Joseph's.

In accepting the invitation to address you, kindly extended to me by your respected superiors, my only regret has been that neither my time nor my talents have permitted me to prepare such an elaborate and finished discourse as would comport with the annual celebration of a classical institution. I have been compelled to write out hastily a few observations which I hope may prove useful to you, on the importance of the study of history, and on the right manner of conducting it.

It is generally conceded, at the present time, that the study of history is very useful, indeed indispensable, to the scholar. We have an abundance of books called histories; and in almost every institution of learning they are among the text books. Still, I do not think that, as a general thing, those who commend the study of history are adequately aware of its importance, or know precisely for what reason it is so useful.

Before explaining what I consider to be the reason why history is of such importance, permit me to warn you young gentlemen not to think, I mean that *you* ought to drop other studies of your college course and betake yourselves to study it. When I say history is important to the scholar, I mean to the finished scholar, and not to the beginner. Your classical and scientific course is the alphabet of learning; Mathematics, Greek, Latin, Logic, Rhetoric, open the mind and school it to habits of thought, and prepare it for the study of history, philosophy and the professions. It would be as absurd in you to aspire to an accurate knowledge of history, without first mastering your college course, as it would be for a child who has not yet learned his letters, to practice only in reading lessons.

I. To be able to appreciate the importance of history you must call to mind that all knowledge is valuable not precisely in itself, but in so far as it is a guide and aid to right action. Our end, at least in the present life, is not so much to *know* as it is to *do*. Knowledge is not for its own sake, but for the sake of action—it is not our end, but the light shining over the path we must traverse to obtain our end.

Now, although your studies of languages, mathematics, logic, &c., accustoming you as they do to judge correctly, have a remote bearing on action, the knowledge of history is the only one that has immediate application to actual life. Other studies give habits of reasoning and general data, whence we can deduce practical conclusions. History, setting before us what others have done, in similar circumstances, and with what success, furnishes us a judgment ready formed of what we ought to do.

The reason of this is that despite the wild doctrine of progress, there are no circumstances in which we may be placed, no act we may be called upon to perform, no judgment we will have to pronounce, for which we may not find some precedent in the past.

The field of *our* labors is no untrodden field. The sentence of the wise man, "there is nothing new under the sun," applies to us, and our times, as to all times. What is happening now has happened before, and will happen again.

In this, the material is the image and likeness of the moral world.

The earth goes rolling round and round the circuit of its orbit, and the same unvarying succession of winter and ice, spring and flowers, summer and heat, autumn and fruits, is kept up year after year and century after century. The tides though ever ebbing and flowing, yet ever remain, within the limits of an unalterable law. The moon, taken by poets as a symbol of inconstancy, is yet constant in her never ending cycle of changes. Even those wayward and mysterious bodies, so long a terror to the nations, comets, have been discovered to go and come in stated and unvarying periods. Thus the almost boundless variety of motion and appearance in matter is woven together with a chain of harmony and unity, though sometimes lost to our eyes, forgotten, perhaps, does not cease to exist in multiplicity.

So in the moral world, in the world of human thought and action, of science and art, government and trade, there are appointed cycles, in which all the events that transpire forever run.

It has been said by a poet—that the course of time from the creation to the end is marked by a long procession of our race, ever rushing on, ever full—some springing up from the cradle, to fill the gap in the ranks made by others dropping off into the grave.

But this procession, if so we conceive the succession of the generations, is not one that moves in a right line, from point to point, ever breaking untrodden ground, and penetrating into virgin forests, but one that goes round and round a weary endless circle. As the earth, through which the children thread their life-way, is dotted white

with the monumental stones, and the ground they till is rich with the mouldered bodies of their fathers, so, in the world of thought do they go over the same field their fathers traversed, so do they but cherish again the aspirations, thrill with the loves, pine with the cares, sink under the disappointments of generations past. There is nothing new under the sun.

Leave out of the history of the world the *Incarnation of the Son of God*, with its antecedents and consequences, and there is nothing left but a repetition of substantially the same facts, with different names, times and places.

The history of every nation is the account of its rise by war, conquest, policy, treachery, its growth by tribute and trade, its decline through effeminacy and corruption, its fall by external invasion and subjugation. The history of science and arts points out an era of peace, a great master who taught, and disciples who gathered round him, refinement of the people, ending in effeminacy, the upheaving of the existing order, and a return of barbarism

The biography of individuals, records their birth, growth, loves, hatreds, plans, hopes, disappointments, death, and end.

These are general *formulae* which might be called, in mathematical language, the equation of the circle of political, scientific and personal events.

It was a foolish attempt made by certain German writers, in accordance with the theory of progress, to find some great fact that might serve, as it were, to bind together all the other facts of history, and show the meaning of that strange medley of rising and falling empires, of ever shifting civilization, of war and peace, of arts and barbarism it exhibits, and the good to which they have been constantly tending. The attempt was foolish, I said, because no such fact exists. The events of this world find, as their complement, so their explanation, only in eternity. The Cross of Christ is the first principle of the philosophy of history. Mount Calvary is the only point high enough to overlook the entire moral world, and looking out from there upon the generations, we behold them, age after age, running round and round the same petty circle of cupidity, ambition, pride, pleasure and vanity, not learning one jot of wisdom from their father's experience, nor advancing one step in any substantial excellence.

Nor is the doctrine of progress, in the sense of those writers, sustained by the instance of modern inventions and improvements and you will find that they are nothing more than, as Macaulay says, admiringly, so many means of promoting "human" (i.e. bodily) *comfort*. "The Baconian philosophy" says the *Scotch Reviewer*, "is the philosophy of *comfort*."

Now, the desire of bodily comfort existed in the world in every age, and that ours is more ingenious in promoting it, because more eager in desiring it, does not prove any real progress in true excellence. Indeed I am not sure that so much care bestowed on inventions of that kind is not a proof of a lower tone in our age than in former times.

The great men of antiquity would fall much in our estimation if their names had not been lost in forgetfulness, did we know them to have been engrossed in the pursuits that we so honor in those of our own day.

Thus, for example, Aristotle would be much less honored if, instead of grappling with the great personal, social and political mysteries that to the eye of the pagan surround humanity, he had employed his mighty genius in studying out improved cultivators and low pressure steam engines; and Plato would cease to command our admiration, as Plato, if, instead of reasoning on the origin, nature, and destiny of the human soul, he had spent his life in inventing revolving rifles and patent baby jumpers. We may multiply means of bodily enjoyment *ad infinitum*, if we please; we never get out of the old circle in which their cupidities and passions kept our fathers moving. The sentence of inspiration is verified by history: there is nothing new under the sun.

Now if such be the case—if the present is only a repetition of the past—the truth of what I said in the beginning, that history furnishes us judgments ready formed on practical matters, is manifest.

Whatever be our career in life we must encounter a thousand times perplexing circumstances; and if to unravel our perplexities we were left to grope in the twilight of theory, we might commit a hundred blunders for each one of our thousand perplexities. But with the light of experience we can proceed readily, calmly, unerringly through them all.

In illustration of this point I might adduce a thousand instances of gross blunders committed by those who had no history to guide them, but I will content myself with referring to but one or two.

1. The first example is of the blunder of a great party of men, in our own times—of those namely who imagine that there is something in the Catholic Church hostile to liberty.

The Catholic Church is a great fact of history. Her records are more copious and more open to the world than those of any other institution existing.

Those records, beginning from the time of Christ and His Apostles, uniformly declare that she brought into the world the two great doctrines of republicanism, that of the equality of men and the personal independence of each from the arbitrary control of the others; that she caused these doctrines to prevail, in public sentiment, over the teachings of Aristotle, the prejudices of the vulgar, the interests of the powerful; that she defended them by her martyrs against the tyranny of pagans, by the heroism of her Popes and religious orders, against unprincipled monarchs and savage feudal lords in the middle ages, until at last slavery was spontaneously abolished in Christendom, and responsibility of rulers to God and justice every where acknowledged.

This is the historical fact.

Now, in ignorance of this fact, you behold a multitude of men rise up, in this free

country, and demand proscription of the Catholic church in the name of that liberty and equality—of that liberty and equality which she brought into the world, which she caused to prevail over the colossal power of the Roman Empire, over the haughty sovereigns and slave owners of feudal times—which she defended against open violence and secret craft, while the forefathers, in sentiment, of those demagogues who now accuse her before the people, were fawning at the feet of Kings, and warning them against the democratic tendencies of Catholic doctrines!

This gross blunder of a large party, this crying injustice to faithful citizens of this republic owes its origin almost entirely to ignorance of history.

2. Another error that owes its prevalence to ignorance of history is the exaggerated idea our people have of progress.

The truth is, you know, that our progress has been all in the material order; but men, ignorant of its history, imagine that it has been also in the order of thought, philosophy, and true civilization. Hence the senseless sneers bestowed upon the apostolic times, and worse than senseless flippancy with which some refuse to believe God because He spoke to a past and, to them, rude and uncultivated age!

3. So again observe the enthusiasm, with which men of our times seize upon theories and projects of reform. Now if they knew history, if they had watched the weary struggle of the men of ages past to make a paradise of earth, and witnessed their humiliating failures, they would turn with contempt from their shallow delusions, and scorn to enter the unprofitable career in which so many have encountered invariable disappointment before them. I might, in this way, continue until night to adduce instances of delusions, errors, and absurdities, which never could have had any existence but for ignorance of history, but I hasten to discuss briefly the second point I have proposed, viz: the right manner of studying history.

II. History differs from annals or chronicles in that while the annalist aims only at a bare record of facts, in their chronological order, the historian after proposing the facts seeks to connect them together as cause and effect, and thus to give them a sort of moral unity.

Hence the student of history is exposed to the possibility of error in two ways:

1st. He may be deceived by a misstatement of facts on the part of the chronicler.

2nd. He may be deceived by a misunderstanding of facts on the part of the historian.

To guard against the first danger, viz.: that of being deceived by misstatement of facts, you must apply to the chronicler the general principles that guide all men in the acceptance or rejection of human testimony. If the witness or author was neither deceived nor wished to deceive, of course his testimony is valid, his annals to be trusted.

Now an obvious and useful inference results from this principle to which I call

your special attention is that no historian is of any value as authority for a fact of which he was not an eye-witness, or which he did not learn from prudent and veracious eye-witness of it.

It is a common custom now-a-days to quote Bancroft for what happened in the colonies two hundred years ago, Hume for facts in the history of England, and other modern writers for facts far remote from them. The absurdity of this custom is manifest from the fact that neither Bancroft nor Hume know more of the events than I or you do; and their assertions, unless backed by contemporaneous documents, are of no more value than yours or mine.

Should you ever be involved in controversy on a matter of history, do not, I pray you, cite what this or that modern writer has said on the subject, but refer at once to the documents from which he derives his information, and you will avoid an endless and unprofitable wrangle.

Two kinds of chronicles are unreliable, viz.: the ignorant and the malicious.

Many simple annalists of the middle ages, who travelled through the country, listening to legends, in every farm-house, and recording them with simple credulity, show to us how ignorance may obscure the past with unprofitable fabrications. Thus, for instance, Martin the Pole in the XI. Century heard the legend of a female Pope two centuries back, and without sense or judgment he wrote it down with all its incredible circumstances and contradictory adjuncts. This ignorance and credulity among annalists compelled the Popes to issue severe censures against the retailers of false miracles, and to require in the beatification of saints such a chain of testimony, that it has been said almost without exception, that a miracle is required to prove a miracle in Rome.

Fortunately for you, the past is not cumbered with these fantastic relations of the credulous and ignorant so much as formerly. The great Catholic critics that arose in the XV. and XVI. centuries and those who have come later have cleared the field of history to a great extent.

A very great number of modern writers furnish us a melancholy example of those works [that] are unreliable on account of malice.

In modern times, particularly during the past three hundred years, the spirit of party has been so rife that truth has been too often esteemed of but secondary importance to the success of a faction.

Notable instances of this are the works of the Madgeburg [sic] Centuriators, which Baronius confuted in his famous Annals; the "Book of Martyrs," by Fox; the History of England by Goldsmith, Hume, etc.; and the *History* of the Reformation by D'Aubigne, exploded by the Right Reverend Dr. Spalding of Louisville.

Before trusting, therefore, to any chronicler, it is necessary to ascertain by investigation of his character, his learning, his prudence, the party he belongs to,

whether he may have been deceived, or has had the will and interest to deceive.

In this investigation we may be aided by both external and internal evidences. From the work itself we may learn the author's opinions and biases, and from his contemporaries, his character for veracity and prudence.

2. But even with the true facts of history before us, there is yet possibility of error, from a misconception of their true nature. The historian may deceive as well as the chronicler; and like the chronicler, he may deceive both through ignorance and through malice.

How often are facts misconceived through ignorance, or misinterpreted through malice, even by contemporaries.

Thus, for instance, John Smith is seen at twilight walking slowly along some lonely road. If a friend sees him he reports that John was probably saying his rosary; if an enemy he thinks that John was lying in wait to rob somebody; if a credulous person he gives out that John is dead and his ghost is wandering uneasily up and down lonely places seeking rest and finding none; if a matter of fact man, he is sure that John is going over to his neighbor's to borrow a scythe or a whetstone. And in a word that one simple fact will admit of a hundred different interpretations.

So of all the facts of history; deeds may be so variously interpreted that between a knowledge of facts and an understanding of their meaning there is ample room for error and delusion. False systems of philosophy and religion, national or family prejudice, are the chief causes of error in the interpretation of facts.

I will give one example of this:

A few weeks ago I saw in a common newspaper a letter from some countryman, in which he stated that some priest had said Mass and preached in the court-house of his native village! It is probable that he preached after the Gospel and then finished Mass, and of course, at the communion consumed the contents of the chalice and the two ablutions. Now mark the countryman's interpretation of that fact. "After abusing the Protestants two hours," said he, "the old priest was so dry that he took three drinks of rum and water!"

Every writer is *co ipso* to be suspected of ignorance who pretends to write the history of an institution whose nature, of a people whose genius, of an individual whose position he evidently does not understand.

The ignorant, however, are not usually the originators, but only the propagators of historical falsehood.

Every now and then in the course of ages some writer of learning and without principle sets himself deliberately at work to distort and misrepresent the facts of history. Such men pass like comets athwart the sky of literature, spreading error and delusion through the world and disappearing, bequeath a heritage of falsehood to a host of second hand writers that come after them, for generations. The past century

was above all others fertile in these.

Bayle, in his Dictionary, Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, D'Alembert and the rest in the French Encyclopedist, Mosheim in his *Institutiones Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Hume in his "History of England," the ribald Voltaire, and his companions, so warped and misrepresented the facts of the past, that he scarcely exaggerated, who affirmed the history of the past three centuries to be one vast conspiracy against truth.

I will illustrate to what extent facts may be distorted by one or two examples.

Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, assays to prove that the ruin of Rome's colossal power was wrought by the introduction of the Christian religion.

Now it is a fact that the introduction of Christianity into the Empire, and the decline of its power are cotemporary events. But that the first was the cause of the second is so false that beyond question the ruin of the Roman [Empire] was greatly retarded by Christianity. Yet the assertion of Gibbon is received as truth among a host of small writers and his history, with notes to parry his threats at Christianity by directing them against Catholicity, is published in New York, and recommended as a textbook to youth, by learned divines of the reformed religion.

Again: Mosheim, the German ecclesiastical historian, is anxious to establish that the Popes of the middle ages were ambitious of temporal power, and meddlesome of this account in political affairs.

Now it is true that the Popes in the Middle Ages interested themselves in some political matters, but that they did so from any domineering, ambitious spirit cannot be shown.

On the contrary contemporary documents, such as letters of Gregory the Great in the seventh century, of Gregory VII. in the XII., of Innocent the Third in the XIII., show that when they meddled in temporal controversies, they did so reluctantly in defense of the rights of the Church, in the cause of the weak and oppressed, against tyrant kings, and savage feudal lords.

If they crowned Emperors, it was because Emperors, like Charlemagne and Pepin, asked for consecration at their hands and support from their authority.

If they marked the boundaries of kingdoms it was because the oppressed and harassed people implored their interposition, to be shielded from the vexation and trouble of continual warfare between petty lords. If they undertook political embassies, it was because they saw no other to whom the cause of the people could be confided. Thus in the fifth century, when the northern barbarians came pouring down like an avalanche on the plains of Italy, irresistible in their course of robbery, conflagration and murder, the great Pope St. Leo was induced by his charity for the affrighted and trembling people to meddle somewhat in temporal matters. He undertook a journey to the camp of the fierce Attila, self-styled the scourge of God, on the banks of Adda. You

know the story. He met the rude conqueror and persuaded him, according to some, by his eloquence, frightened him according to others, by a vision of St. Peter with angry countenance and a drawn sword, to turn back his savage hordes and leave awhile longer the mothers of southern Italy to enjoy the smiles of their babes, and families to sleep for a brief period still, securely in the shadow of their homes.

So it was ever when the Popes interfered in temporal matters; and what Mosheim tries to make appear a spirit of ambition was in reality the charity of Christ, the love of justice, the hatred of oppression, zeal for the interests of humanity.

Again; it is a common error which no one confuted systematically before the celebrated Balmes, that modern civilization and material progress, are fruits exclusively of the so called Reformation of the XVI. century.

Balmes shows conclusively that in every department of improvement, the negative and disorganizing doctrines of Protestantism have checked, retarded, and if prevalent, would have annihilated the immense impulse these improvements had received from the true author of civilization, the Catholic Church.

To sum up now what I have said: Believe no historical work whose author could not know the facts he relates, or who might have an interest in misstating them. Trust no man's reasoning who is writing the history of a government or institution he does not understand, or against which he is prejudiced, no one who is pledged to a false system of religion or philosophy.

Having now fixed the kind of history to be relied upon, I have but a word to say on the manner of studying it. I say studying, because to be profitable it must be studied, not read. He who reads it must have his map before him, and fix each name and date carefully in his memory, and each place accurately in his imagination.

Names, dates, places, are the bases of all reasoning in historical matters; without them you can no more know history than you can make a rope of sand.

It is idle to read Reviews and critiques without a knowledge of annals; the most brilliant of them are but senseless sounds, unless you are familiar with the facts they generalize and discuss.

In the selection of history, of course, the first is that of your own great country. Though brief, it is full of wisdom and stirring example.

Our Revolutionary struggle alone, which this day calls to mind, which this day is honored from Maine to Florida, from Washington to San Francisco, every city and village and hamlet pouring forth its population in glad procession, every passing breeze bearing the boom of a hundred thousand cannon, and the hurrahs of twenty-five million people—that Revolutionary struggle alone can teach us all our duties as citizens of a free Republic.

Read the annals of those dark times, and learn to sacrifice money, prejudice, passion, time, personal ease, and ambition, all but conscience and God, for the good of

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the nation.

See Washington and Lafayette fighting side by side, De Kalb, the Catholic, and Warren the Puritan mingling their blood with the earth, for the same cause, the names of Hancock and Adams along with that of Charles Carroll, on the Declaration of Independence, and learn that religious differences have nothing to do with party or national politics.

Observe the fate of Benedict Arnold, who accused Washington of endangering Protestantism by an alliance with the French and Canadian Catholics; see into what disgrace he fell, how his name is a byword of reproach and scorn, and doubt not but such shall be the fate of those who now, in the name of Protestantism, demand the extinction of our freedom.

Read those annals and learn from them to battle fearlessly and trustingly for truth. Error cannot overcome truth; it may obscure her for awhile, even crush and destroy her adherents, but herself can never be overcome.

Fear not therefore the difficulties now cast in our way, the obloquy with which we are now almost overwhelmed; or if you fear, fear not for truth but for your own constancy.

That truth, the heritage of the Church, will prevail even in this world, though her final and perfect triumph is reserved for the Last Day. She will prevail; and ages hence, our descendants, the heirs of our faith, will adduce, as we now adduce the failures of past persecutions, the abortive attempt made in the XIX. century, to overthrow the Church, in order to bring to reason new enemies of the Church, new adversaries of truth.

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Lecture, Sermon Book 1, No. 19

This is the draft of the lecture given on July 4, 1855 at St. Joseph's College near Somerset (item 325). A comparison with the final lecture, which apparently was taken down verbatim by the reporter, will give the reader a good feel of how these lectures and sermons changed between the drafts preserved in the Bishop's manuscripts and their final delivery.

The Utility and Manner of Studying History

It is generally conceded, at the present time, that the study of history is very useful, indeed, indispensable, to the scholar. We have plenty of books filled with dry names and dates, and in almost every institution of learning History is one of the studies pursued. Yet still I do not think the importance of its study is adequately esteemed, nor its nature clearly understood

In speaking of the importance of historical studies, I do not mean that they are

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important to young students, who are pursuing their classical and scientific course. I am very far from advising you to drop your Mathematics, Natural philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric, Greek and Latin, and betake yourselves to studying History. The study of these does not make you learned men, but they school your minds to thought, open them to understand what you read, and prepare you to study. They are the alphabet of learning and to leave them unmastered and go on to the study of history would be as foolish as it would be for a child that scarcely knows the difference between a and b to pass over into the reading lessons without learning the letters.

I mean to show the importance of history to scholars, to those who enter the great battle of life as professionals and who, assuming the place, ought to have the qualifications of leaders, directors, and benefactors of their kind. I wish to impress your minds, young gentlemen of St. Joseph's, that if you aspire to run worthily the career opened to you by your education here you must be students of history.

I. Before proposing any argument to demonstrate the utility of historical knowledge, I observe that all knowledge is valuable only as it is a guide and aid to right action. The notion sometimes held that knowledge is worthy of pursuit for its own sake, is founded on a false conception of our happiness, our end. Our end must be attained, our destiny carried out, by doing, not by knowing. Hence knowledge is not to be sought for itself but for action's sake, it is not an end but a means, it is not our happiness but the light that shines over the path leading to it. Now although all your studies of mathematics, languages, logic &c., by accustoming you to think calmly and judge correctly, have a remote bearing on action, the knowledge of history is the only knowledge with any direct and immediate application to practical life.

Science gives the data whence a calm reasoner may form a correct estimate of the goods and evils which encompass him and move him to action; but history, by setting before us what others have done in similar circumstances, and with what success, furnishes us a judgment already formed of what we had better do.

The reason of this is that despite the wild doctrine of progress, there are no circumstances in which we can be placed, no act we can be called upon to perform, no judgment to pronounce, for which we may not find a precedent in the past. The field we will be called upon to tread has been trodden a thousand times before. There is deep meaning in that sentence of Solomon, "There is nothing new under the sun;" what is happening now has happened before and will happen again.

In this, the material is the image and likeness of the moral world.

In the material world, the earth goes on rolling on in the thousand times repeated circuit of its orbit, and the same unvarying succession of winter and ice, spring and flowers, summer and heat, autumn and fruits, is kept up year after year and century after century. The tides are ever ebbing and flowing, according to an unalterable law. The moon, taken by poets for a symbol of inconstancy is yet constant

in her never ending cycle of changes. Even the wayward comets come and go with a longer but not less constant succession of appearings and disappearings than the other planets of heaven. Thus the boundless variety of motion and appearance in matter is girt about with harmony and sameness, [that] though forgotten perhaps, does not cease to exist in multiplicity.

So in the moral world, in the world of human thought and action, of science and government, and trade, there are appropriate cycles in which all the events that transpire forever run.

It has [been] beautifully said that all time is marked by a long procession of our race starting from Paradise in the beginning and ending with the day of universal wreck, a procession always pouring on, always filled, receiving new members and new ranks from the cradle as old ones tottered off into the grave. Yet to be accurate, this similitude must not represent the procession of the generations as marching in a straight line, from the past towards the future, but round and round in a circle. For as the children tread upon and till the soil enriched by their fathers' mouldered bones, so do they in thought and hope and desire but go over and over again the plans, schemes, and delusions of generations past. There is nothing new under the sun. In fact, leaving out the great supernatural event, the Incarnation of the Son of God and the other events that were forerunners and consequences of it, what is the history of the world, but a repetition age after age and generation after generation, of the same facts, with different names, places, and times?

In the higher mathematics, as you are aware, numbers are represented by letters, and the operations indicated by signs, in order that general formulae may be established, which will be applicable to and true for each particular case of its class. So, me thinks, with a little study and care we might arrange general formulae for every class of facts in history, and we would find them true, for every generation and every clime of the world.

The history of nations is a record of their rise, growth, decline, decay; and the causes which produced them will be found nearly the same in every instance. The biography of an individual is that he was born; grew, ate and slept; loved, hated, laughed, wept, deceived, was deceived, died, was buried and forgotten.

It was a foolish attempt of some modern German writers in their philosophies of history, and it is the absurd belief of modern progressists, to find out some great fact that would bind together all the facts of history and show their meaning strange medley of rising and falling empires, of coming and going and shifting civilizations, of war & peace, of arts and barbarism, which it exhibits, and show the good to which these things were tending in this world. It was foolish because there is no such fact. The events of this world find their explanation in those of the next world. The Cross of Christ is the philosophy of history, and it shows that the children of men have been, generation after

generation, running around in the little circle of cupidity and ambition and pride, making advance neither in wisdom nor in any other excellence. Nor can the doctrine of progress be established by the instance of modern inventions and improvement so often adduced. Take all those improvements and classify them, you will find them to be only so many means of promoting bodily comfort and making money. Now the desire of bodily comfort is as old as the world; and that this age is more ingenious in promoting because more eager in desiring it, does not redound greatly to its credit. Indeed I am not sure but that so much care bestowed on inventions and improvements of that kind is a proof of a lower tone, than that of former ages.

I am not sure that our respect for the great men of other times would be assured, if we had shown them to be devoted to the pursuit of those things that engross the minds of men nowadays. Aristotle, I think, would be less in our estimation if, instead of grappling with the great personal and social and political mysteries that to the eye of the pagan surround humanity, he had employed his mighty genius in the invention of patent cultivators; and Plato would cease to be Plato if instead of reasoning on the nature, origin and destiny of the soul, he had sent his life in inventing revolving rifles and patent baby-jumpers. We may multiply means of bodily enjoyment ad infinitum, if we please; the invention of those means can never ennoble our age, can never take us out of the old circle, round which their cupidities and passions kept our fathers ever moving.

The sentence of inspiration is this--the expression of experience. There is nothing new under the sun.

Now if such be the case, if the present is but a repetition of the past, the truth of what I said, that history furnishes us judgment, already formed, is manifest. Whatever be our career in life, we must encounter a thousand times perplexing circumstances; and if to unravel these perplexities we were left to grope in the twilight of theory, we might commit a hundred blunders for each one of our thousand perplexities. But with the light of experience, even of the experience of others, we can proceed readily, calmly, unerringly through them all.

This general argument, meagrely as I have developed it, will I think convince you of the immense importance of historical knowledge. If I sought to adduce special arguments, from the actual blunders that we see committed, the absurdities entertained, the trouble caused by ignorance of history, you would readily perceive that the benefit of historical research is very practical, and very frequently called for.

I ask your indulgence while I instance one or two of these.

1. The Catholic Church is a great fact of history. Her records are more copious and more open to the world than those of any other institution existing. These records declare that she brought into the world the doctrine of the equality of men and of the right of every man to yield to God, alone, in whatever may be demanded it, the homage

of the soul. These doctrines she proclaimed to the world, at a time when Aristotle's doctrine that some men were born to be slaves was practically and theoretically in vogue. Everywhere these doctrines she defended by her martyrs in the first centuries against pagans, by her popes against unprincipled monarchs through the Middle Ages, until at last she had them fixed in the public mind, so that slavery was abolished in Europe, and the responsibility of rulers to God was everywhere acknowledged. This is a fact.

Now in the face of this fact, you see a mighty party rise up in this free country and ignorantly demand the proscription of the Catholic Church in the name of that liberty and equality which she brought into the world, which she caused to prevail over the colossal power of the Roman Empire, over the savage lords of and slave owners of feudal times, which she defended against even violence and hidden craft, while the forefathers in sentiment of those who now oppose her were fawning at the feet of kings, and warning them of the antiregal tendencies of the Roman Church!

The ignorance of these rightly named individuals, how soon it would be dissipated by a little history, and the blunders they commit, the absurdities they credit, how soon would they vanish, were not the past a sealed book to them!

2. Another gross error of our times that history would correct, if known, is the exaggerated idea we have of progress. People ignorant of the history of progress, not knowing that it has been all in the material order, fall into the mistake of supposing that it has been in the order of thought, philosophy and true civilization. Hence you find men unwilling to believe the revelation of God Himself, because it was made in the past. How soon would this senseless babbling about the ignorance of past times, this oftentimes impious declamation of the inferiority of the race when Christ appeared, [cease] if the verdict that history pronounces could be heard through the clamor.

3. So again observe the enthusiasm with which men of one idea seize upon theories and schemes of reform, the fanaticism with which they try [to] secure for them favor and adoption. Now if these men but knew history, if they had watched the weary struggles of the men of past times to make a paradise of Earth, and witnessed their humiliating failure, they would turn with contempt from their shallow delusions, and scorn to enter the unprofitable career which so many have with bitter disappointment tried before them.

I might in this way advance a thousand instances of common delusions, errors and even absurdities, which with a knowledge of history never could have place; but I hasten to the second point I have proposed viz: the right manner of studying history.

II. This point I will endeavor to make as brief and as practical as possible.

History differs from annals or chronicles, in that while the annalist aims only at a bare record of facts, in their chronological order, the historian endeavors to give the meanings of those facts, to show how some grew out of the others, how they were

connected together as cause and effect.

The chronicler therefore is before the historian, and furnishes him the basis for his superstructure of reasoning and his collocation of facts. Hence the first thing to be done in studying history is to ascertain the facts. Now of course you are aware that we get our knowledge of facts from testimony of our senses for the facts of which we are witnesses: of God for revelation, of men for the ordinary facts of history.

Whether we are to receive the testimony of any witness or not is easily determined. Unless we have reason to believe that the witness is deceived himself or wishes to deceive others, we are bound to believe what he says.

The first danger to which the student of history is exposed is the danger of learning false statements of facts. You are not to suppose that every book which pretends to be a history contains nothing but facts, unfortunately. There have been many who scrupled not to write and publish for facts the most glaring fabrications. These are of two classes. First, simple, credulous old chroniclers, who had but to hear a story from any old housewife in the land to believe and chronicle, or who from want of general information mistake the purport of what they hear and read, and give in their account a very false impression. Second, a class of men who for malicious purposes undertake to deceive.

Of the first class are many of the old chroniclers of the Middle Ages, in some of their legends of miracles and other wonderful events, among whom I may instance Martin the Pole who heard and chronicled the foolish fable of the female Pope Joan. And many modern writers who mistake for facts their interpretation of facts.

Of the second class almost the entire body of modern writers, particularly on church history, among whom the instances of Centurators of Magdeburg, of Fox, in his book of martyrs, Goldsmith's England, D'Abigne's Reformation are no doubt familiar to you already.

When therefore you pick up a book with the intention of reading it, the first question you have to ask is, now is this author deceived or does he wish to deceive? If you perceive that he draws his statement of facts from writers contemporary with the facts, you may conclude that he is in all probability not deceived. And if you find him stating facts adverse to the opinions he holds or dishonorable to the sect or nation or family to which he is evidently attached, you are safe in saying he does not wish to deceive. Thus where we find St. John the Evangelist relating the ignominies of the Savior to whose glory he was so much attached, you cannot resist the conviction that he is aiming to tell the truth.

2. A second danger to the student of history, and a more subtle one, is the danger of learning facts, not in their true bearing but in a false light, that is to say facts may be misrepresented by the historian as well as misstated by the chronicler. This misrepresentation just as the misstatement may come either from ignorance or malice.

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From ignorance: facts are often misunderstood. In our daily intercourse with men how often do we mistake the meaning or what they do and say, how often do we attribute to a wrong motive and imagine they are aiming at what perhaps they never dreamed of! So in the history of nations, that is often attributed to policy which was the result of accident, to ambition what was dictated by self-defense and vice versa; in the biography of men, how often does eulogy follow to the grave those who went down there laden with crime, and obloquy enshroud those whom virtue approved. And this without any intention on the part of historians to deceive but because they misunderstood.

Prejudice, religious, national, political, or social, joined with general ignorance is the cause of misunderstanding. One example of this I encountered a few days ago. In an anti-Catholic paper I saw a letter from some country describing the advent of some priest who said Mass and preached in the Courthouse. The countryman of course heard the sermon; and when afterwards he watched through the solemn ceremony with which the mystic sacrifice is offered up, he concluded, and said so in his letter, that the old priest was dry after preaching two hours and without any sense of shame took three drinks of rum!

In order to guard against error from the misrepresentations of the ignorant, it is necessary to see whether the writer understands the nature of the institution, the genius of the people, the position of the individual concerning whom he writes. We must distinguish the facts he states from the causes and consequences he ascribes to them, and when we have found in any one instance that his facts do not warrant his inferences, may even warrant contrary inferences, we may look upon all his opinions with suspicion and even reject them as unsound.

But in all matters of history, the errors of the ignorant arise from the misrepresentations of the malicious. Every now and then in the course of ages, some writer of learning and without principle arises and, passing like a comet over the sky of literature, spreads error and death over the world, bequeathing as he disappears a heritage of falsehood to a host of second hand writers and students and through them to many people.

The last century abounded in these. Bagle, in his dictionary, Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, D'Alembert, and the rest in the French *Encyclopedia*, Mosheim, [and] Hume so warped, misstated, and distorted the facts of the past that almost without exaggeration it could be said the history of the past three centuries has been one gigantic conspiracy against truth. This conspiracy has been carried on not so much by false statements with regard to facts, as by false reasoning on true or garbled facts.

I will illustrate with one or two examples, taken at random from the writers whom I have mentioned. The thesis of Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall* is that the ruin of

the Roman Empire was effected by the Christian religion. Now there is this much of truth in his assertion, that the Roman Empire began to decline at the same time that by the preaching of the Apostles and their successors began to prevail. But to say that the Christian religion was the cause of that decline is false and absurd. Yet this assertion is received as truth among a multitude of small writers; and Gibbon's history, with notes to parry his thrusts at Christianity by directing them against Catholicity, is published in New York and highly recommended to the young by eminent divines of the Reformed religion.

Again, Mosheim, the German ecclesiastical historian, is anxious to establish that the popes of the Middle Ages were ambitious, domineering, [and] fond of meddling in political affairs. Now the truth is, the popes of the Middle Ages did meddle with temporal matters; but that they did so with any ambitious domineering spirit cannot be shown. On the contrary, cotemporary documents, such as the letters of Gregory the Great, in the VII. century of Gregory VII., of Innocent III., show that they entered reluctantly, in defense of the rights of the Church, of the weak and oppressed, against tyrant kings and savage feudal lords. If they crowned emperors and marked the boundaries of kingdoms, it was because the people asked them to do so, having none other in the barbarism, violence, and corruption that surrounded them in whom they might confide. In the V. century, when the northern barbarians came pouring down like an avalanche on the plains of Italy, irresistible in their course of robbery, conflagration, and murder, the great Pope St. Leo was obliged by his charity to meddle in temporal matters. He undertook a journey to the camp of the fierce Attila, the Scourge of God, on the banks of the Adda. You know the story. He met the rude conqueror and persuaded him according to some by his eloquence, frightened him according to others by a miraculous vision of the Apostle St. Peter with an angry countenance and a drawn sword, into retiring and leaving the Roman mothers to enjoy a while longer the smiles of their children, the security of their home.

So it was always when the popes interfered with politics and what Mosheim tries to make appear a spirit of ambition was in reality the charity of Christ, the love of justice, the hatred of oppression, and zeal for the interests of humanity.

Again it is a common error, which no one confuted systematically before Balmes, that modern civilization and material progress owes much to the miscalled Reformation. The Reformation and progress are nearly cotemporaneous events. But Balmes shows conclusively that the courses of civilization were at work long before the Reformation, that the wonderful development of science [and] art in European society was checked [and] crippled and, had the Reformation been more general, would have altogether stopped.

These examples will show you how great errors may be inculcated even by those who state truly, but not fairly, the facts of history.

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To sum up now, what [I] have said: believe no historical work whose author could not know the facts or who might have an interest in misstating them. Trust no man's reasoning who is writing the history of a government, an institution, a nation, an individual, he does not understand or against which he is prejudiced, no one who is pledged to a false system of religion or philosophy.

Having fixed the kind of histories that you may rely upon, I have but a word to say on the manner of reading them.

History to be profitable must be studied, not read. He who reads should read with the map before him, and should fix each name and date carefully in his memory, and each place accurately in his imagination. Names, dates, and places are as nails, on which to hang the chains of reasoning. Without them you can no more know history than you can make a rope of sand.

The reading of reviews and critiques is very good, when you are acquainted with the facts upon which those reviews and critiques are written; but the idea of gathering correct notions of history even from the most accurate review is preposterous.

Finally, the histories that you are to select. ----

Our own Country

[The draft ends here. See the printed version of this lecture, above, for the histories chosen.]