

and imitation) will carry them on thoughtlessly with the mass, and down the current; but—just as for the general movements of an army, or the “foreign affairs” of Turkey, you have to look to the Sultan or the General, so—here we have only to look to the Generalissimo, or his Staff, the government of the whole body. Now of the Papal Government, the sentiments have been already proved to you—they are indeed recorded, and are open for universal inspection—sentiments which may be compressed into two connected principles, exalt the Church, and depress its enemies; or, as the formula has it, extirpate heresy.—Indeed, if any court or ministry have the uncontrouled government of a subordinated body, as some one says in Hamlet, it requires “no ghost from the grave to tell us,” that self-interest will be the secret of its managements.—But if you wish for other proofs, you may find them in the priest’s oath—that maintains the canons, the vicarship and exclusive salvation—you may find them in the bishops’ oath—not forgetting a clause but very lately omitted, and which I shall not venture to translate—“*Hereticos,*” &c. “*persequar et impugnabo*”—a clause lately omitted for Irish bishops, on a petition intimating that it was an impediment to the exaltation of the Church in this country, but one that had been retained here for centuries, and is still retained elsewhere, and is thus good evidence for the “*animus imponentis*”—Look too, to the prayers I have quoted, and if you have inclination, to the dreadful canons of slavery and persecution, which still form a part of the *unalterable* Roman law—and to the terrific enforcements lastly, of these canons, which stain the annals of former times, and, even now, of countries in which Romanism controuls the legislature, over which matters I willingly throw a veil. Connect then the governing will with the power of the combination lay and clerical, that tries to give effect to that will, and you have a view—though from this description not near so decisive as the case would warrant—of the Romish system; one which, I am sorry to say, to my judgment contains within it the elements of danger and of national degradation as essentially, as an acorn contains the elements of an oak! elements which will be sure one day to appear, although an unfriendly soil like this might retard the progress of the branches and the foliage.

Ever then, since that system, planned by Hildebrand, and for ever unalterable, *except the civil authority interpose*—that system, I say, of canon law, of doctrine, and polity, has existed—the source of dangerous combination against freedom of conscience, and of action, has existed—and in all times and countries, its’ unhappy effects do exist, more or less, in proportion to the extent of Romanism and to its power over the Legislature, or Ruling Magistrate. A principle of combination, my Lord, always dangerous to civil and religious liberty, waiting, but for a leader, or an opportunity to start into physical existence, and restrained only from direct assault by the fear of inconvenient resistance.