

amply suffice to refute this calumny. It is to the Catholic Church that we must ascribe the merit of having propagated and defended Christian philosophy, without which the world would still be buried in the darkness of pagan superstitions and in the most abject barbarism. It has preserved and transmitted to all generations the precious treasure of literature and of the ancient sciences. It has opened the first schools for the people and crowded the universities which still exist, or whose glory is perpetuated even to our own days. It has inspired the loftiest, the purest and the most glorious literature, while it has gathered under its protection men whose genius in the arts has never been eclipsed.

The Church the enemy of liberty ! Ah, how they travesty the idea of liberty which has for its object one of the most precious of God's gifts when they make use of its name to justify its abuse and excess ! What do we mean by liberty ? Does it mean the exemption from all laws ; the deliverance from all restraint, and as a corollary, the right to take man's caprice as a guide in all our actions ? Such liberty the Church certainly reproves, and good and honest men reprove it likewise. But do they mean by liberty the rational faculty to do good, magnanimously, without check or hindrance and according to the rules which eternal justice has established ? That liberty which is the only liberty worthy of man, the only one useful to society, none favors or encourages or protects more than the church. By the force of its doctrine and the efficaciousness of its action the Church has freed humanity from the yoke of slavery in preaching to the world the great law of equality and human fraternity. In every age it has defended the feeble and the oppressed against the arrogant domination of the strong. It has demanded liberty of Christian conscience while pouring out in torrents the blood of its martyrs ; it has restored to the child and to the woman the dignity and the noble prerogatives of this nature in making them share by virtue of the same right that reverence and justice which is their due, and it has largely contributed both to introduce and maintain civil and political liberty in the heart of the nations.

The Church the usurper of the rights of the State ! The Church invading the political domain ! Why the Church knows and teaches that her Divine Founder has commanded us to give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's, and that He has thus sanctioned the immutable principle of an enduring distinction between those two powers which are both sovereign in their respective spheres, a distinction which is more pregnant in its consequences and eminently conducive to the development of Christian civilization. In its spirit of charity it is a stranger to every hostile design against the state. It aims only at making these two powers go side by side for the advancement of the same object, namely, for man and for human society, but by different ways and in conformity with the noble plan which has been assigned for its divine mission. Would to God that its action was received without mistrust and without suspicion. It could not fail to multiply the numberless benefits of which we have already spoken. To accuse the Church of ambitious views is only to repeat the ancient calumny, a calumny which its powerful enemies have more than once employed as a pretext to conceal their own purposes of oppression.

Far from oppressing the State, history clearly shows when it is read without prejudice, that the Church like its Divine Founder has been, on the contrary, most commonly the victim of oppression and injustice. The reason is that its power rests not on the force of arms but on the strength of thought and truth.

It is therefore assuredly with malignant purpose that they hurl against the Church accusations like those. It is a pernicious and disloyal work, in the pursuit of which above all others a certain sect of darkness is engaged, a sect which human society these many years carries within itself and which like a deadly poison destroys its gappiness, its fecundity and its life. Abiding personification of the revolution, it constitutes a sort of retrogressive society whose object is to exercise an occult suzerainty over the established order, and whose whole purpose is to make war against God and against His Church. There is no need of naming it, for all will recognize in these traits