

called his castle. Why? Because it is surrounded by a moat, or defended by a wall? No! It may be a straw-built hut; the wind may whistle through it; the rain may enter it; but the King cannot." In all English-speaking lands a man's house is *his own*, his against all Congresses and Parliaments, all Presidents and Kings. And shall I think less of my *mind* than of my *house*? While I say, even to the King himself, "Step not thy foot across my threshold," shall I surrender my mind to every petty priest and permit him to do with it as he pleases? Far be the miserable thought from me! Command the priest to step down from his tripod, deliver up his trident, and be, not your master or god, but your brother and your friend.

Don't be afraid of the priest. He can't hurt you, unless you yourself allow him to. The most that he can do is to hurl at you the sentence of Excommunication. But that won't hurt you. I never played a game of poker in my life; but I believe there is a poker term known as "bluffing." And what is bluffing? Well, it is something like this: You are playing for big stakes, and yet you hold a mighty poor hand and you are gone, unless you can scare the other fellows off. So, notwithstanding your miserable cards, you brace up and bet big, as though you had a crack hand; the rest of them are afraid to come to time, and the stakes are yours. Such is bluffing. Now, when you anger the priest, and he hurls his excommunication at you, he is simply bluffing—he is trying to make you believe that he holds four aces, when in reality he hasn't as much as a pair of deuces. Hold your ground for a season and he will cave in. Hold your ground, then. Stand up for the State against the Church, for Reason against Priestcraft, and for liberty against all the world!