

American society, are quite sufficient to show that the system in question is at least a fair subject for criticism if not for censure. Judged by its results we cannot well see how any honest educator can advise the adoption or sustainment of the United States method of education, and we cannot understand why those results should be quoted except to sustain an irresistible argument against non-sectarian education. It is a striking fact in connection with this momentous subject, that no religious body, as a whole, has boldly opposed the effort to exclude religious teaching from the schools except the Church of Rome. This we suppose is mainly attributable to what is to a certain extent true, that the Protestant denominations have a community of sentiment, and do not disagree so much the one with the other, as they disagree, in the aggregate, with the Roman Catholics. Hence, we presume, they are enabled to foresee a remote prospect of an introduction into the secular schools of a broad system of Religion, which will not be sectarian with regard to many Protestants, and which they falsely presume will supply the place of denominational teaching. It is also very certain that many members of the Protestant religious bodies see in the non-sectarian system a grand opportunity for breaking down the barriers and gradually undermining the structure of the Church of Rome, by educating its members to such a degree, and in such a manner, that they will at length depend rather upon their individual knowledge of right and wrong than upon her dogmatic teachings. To such persons we would reply in the words of the truly Protestant, but also truly liberal, Edmund Burke: "That were it possible to dispute, rail, and persecute the Roman Catholics out of their prejudices, it is not probable that they would take refuge in ours, but rather in an indifference to all religion; and that were the Catholic religion destroyed by infidels, it is absurd to suppose that the Protestant Church could long endure."*

If a law were enacted compelling all citizens to contribute to a general dinner of roast beef on Good Friday, it would be manifestly unfair to the Roman Catholics, who are compelled, by the rules of their Church, to fast upon that day. It is equally unfair to compel them to support schools to which they cannot in conscience send their children; and it is at the same time most insulting and most untrue to say that their conduct in this matter

* Burke's *Life*. By James Prior, Fifth London Edition, 1867, p. 413.