

faith, and yet held it in a warning regard, "why do Papists trust so much to their priests, and pay so little attention to what so vastly concerns their eternal welfare?" His reply was characteristic. "We have," said he, "but little time to think about religion—and it is hard to know much about it—and we let the priest do the thing up for us, as he has nothing else to do—and then, when we come to die, we send for him to fix us up to meet God." Here is the whole matter revealed in a sentence. The priests transfer the merits of one man to another—they transfer the benefit of devotional exercises from one man to another—indeed, they are the hired proxies through whom the masses of the people seek to serve God. And they make the people believe that if they only cling to the Church of Rome, and leave all with them, all will be well. This, Sir, is what I mean by a vicarious religion, and through which Papal priests have ruined generations, and filled the world with the fame of their pious frauds.

In the great work, Sir, of saving the soul, neither you nor I can do anything by proxy nor by a priestly attorney. We sin for ourselves—none can sin for us; and the soul that sinneth, it shall die. So we must repent and believe for ourselves—none can repent or believe for us; and he that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved; he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall find mercy, and none the less readily if all the priests on earth were in Paradise or Purgatory.

Such, Sir, are my views, very briefly, but yet freely and frankly expressed to you on the importance of religion to national greatness—on the nature of true religion—on the nature of the Church of God—and on the tendency in human nature to a vicarious religion. I believe them worthy of your attention, and of that of all educated and influential minds of this land. If adopted by our people, they would extend the benign influence of true religion over them all—they would make all true believers in Christ to feel and act as brethren—they would destroy the trade of the priest, a result most devoutly to be desired—they would ex-