

The Life and Catholic Journalism  
OF THE LATE  
**JAMES A. McMASTER,**

Editor of the *New York Freeman's Journal* and  
*Catholic Register.*

Edited by VERY REV. MARK S. GROSS.  
For the *Carmelite Review.*

## CHAPTER V.



CONTINUED.

**GAIN**, we are indebted to Catholics for all the republics which ever existed in Christian times, down to the year 1776; for those of Switzerland, Venice, Genoa, Andorra, San Marino, and a host of minor free commonwealths, which sprang up in the "dark ages." Some of these republics still exist, proud monuments and unanswerable evidences of Catholic devotion to freedom. They are acknowledged by Protestants, no less than by Catholics. I subjoin the testimony of an able writer in the *New York Tribune*, believed to be Bayard Taylor. This distinguished traveler—a staunch Protestant—appeals to history, and speaks from personal observation. He writes:

"Truth compels us to add that the oldest republic now existing is that of San Marino, not only Catholic, but wholly surrounded by the especial dominion of the Popes, who might have crushed it like an egg-shell at any time these last thousand years—but they didn't. The only republic we ever traveled in, besides our own, is Switzerland, half of its cantons or states entirely Catholic, yet never, that we have heard of, unfaithful to the cause of freedom. We never heard the Catholics of Hungary accused of backwardness in the late glorious struggle of their country for freedom, though its leaders were Protestants, fighting against a leading Catholic power, avowedly in favor of religious as well as civil liberty. And chivalric, unhappy Poland, almost wholly Catholic, has made as gallant struggles for freedom as any other nation; while of the three despotisms that crushed her, but one was Catholic."

"Let us bring the subject home to our own times and country. Who, I would ask, first reared in triumph the broad banner of universal freedom on this North American continent? Who first proclaimed in this new world a truth too wide and expansive to enter into the head of, or to be comprehended by, a narrow-minded bigot—a truth that every man should be free to worship God according to the dictates of his

conscience? Who first proclaimed, on this broad continent, the glorious principles of universal freedom? Read Bancroft, read Goodrich, read Frost, read every Protestant historian of our country, and you will see there inscribed, on the historic page, a fact which reflects immortal honor on our American Catholic ancestry—that Lord Baltimore and his Catholic colonists of Maryland were the first to proclaim universal liberty, civil and religious; the first to announce, as the basis of their legislation, the great and noble principle that no man's faith and conscience should be a bar to his holding any office, or enjoying any civil privilege of the community.

"What American can forget the names of Rochambeau, De Grasse, De Kalb, Pulaski, LaFayette, Kosciuszko? Without the aid of these noble Catholic heroes, and of the brave troops whom they led on to victory, would we have succeeded at all in our great revolutionary contest? Men of the clearest heads, and of the greatest political forecast, living at that time, thought not; at least they deemed the result exceedingly doubtful.

"And during the whole war of the Revolution, who ever heard of a Catholic coward, or of a Catholic traitor? When the Protestant General Gates fled from the battlefield of Camden and the Protestant militia of North Carolina and Virginia, who but Catholics stood firm at their posts, and fought and died with the brave old Catholic hero, De Kalb? the veteran who, when others nervously fled, seized his good sword, and cried out to the brave old Maryland and Pennsylvania lines, 'Stand firm, for I am too old to fly!' Who ever heard of a Catholic Arrold? And who has not heard of the brave Irish and German soldiers who, at a somewhat later period, mainly composed the invincible army of the impetuous 'Mad Anthony' Wayne, and constituted the great backbone of our defence against the savage invasions which threatened our whole northwestern frontier with devastation and ruin?

"All these facts, and many more of a similar kind which might be alleged, cannot have passed away, as yet, from the memory of our American citizens. Americans cannot have forgotten, as yet, that the man who perished most in signing the Declaration of Independence was a Roman Catholic, and that when Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, put his name to that instrument, Benjamin Franklin observed, 'There goes a cool million in support of the cause!'

"And when our energies were exhausted, and the stoutest heart entertained the most gloomy forebodings as to the final issue, Catholic France stepped gallantly forth to the rescue of our infant freedom, almost crushed by an overwhelming English tyranny! Catholic Spain also subsequently lent us her aid against England,