

We are assembled this evening, my dear friends, to contemplate the greatest work of all the works that the Almighty God ever created—namely, THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH. (Applause.) In every work of God it has been well observed that the Creator's mind shows itself in the wonderful harmony that we behold in all His works.

head of the Church of Christ? Who is the ruler? Before I answer this question, my friends, I will ask you to rise, in imagination and thought, to the grandeur of the idea that fills the mind with the unfathomable wisdom of God, when He was laying the foundations and sinking them deeply into the earth—the foundations of His Church.

presence of the other eleven, and that there might be eleven witnesses to the privileges and the power of the one. Who was that one man? St. Peter. St. Peter was chosen among the Apostles. St. Peter, not up to that time the one that was most loved, for John was the disciple whom Jesus loved; St. Peter, whom more than any of the others, was reproved by his Lord, in the severest terms. St. Peter, who, almost more than any of the others, and more than any of the others who were faithful, showed his weakness until the confirming power of the Holy Ghost came upon him. Peter was the one chosen, and here are the three words which Christ spoke. First of all He said, "Thou art the rock upon whom I will build my Church." Christ heard the people speaking of Him, and He said, "Who do they say I am?" and the Apostles answered, "Lord, some of them say you are Jeremiah, and some of them say you are John the Baptist." Then Christ asked them solemnly, "Who do you say I am?" Down went Peter on his knees, and cried out, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God." Then Christ, our Lord, said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of John, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father, who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Cephas, and upon this rock I will build my Church." (Applause.) The man who denies to Peter the glorious and wonderful privilege of being the visible foundation underlying the church of God and upholding it, is untrue to Christ the head of the Church.

For three hundred years Pepp had succeeded Pope. Peter had no sooner left the world than Linus took his sceptre and governed the Church of God. Though down in the catacombs, yet he governed the Church of God. Every bishop in the church, every power in the church recognized him and obeyed him as the representative of God—the living head, the earthly viceroy of the invisible, but real head—Jesus Christ. For three hundred years after Pope died, and sealed his faith in the Church of God with a martyr's blood, and then, after three hundred years of dire persecution the Church of God was free, and she walked the earth in all the majesty and purity of her beauty. In the fifth century the Roman Empire yet preserved the outward form of its majesty and power. All the nations of the earth bowed to Rome. All the conquered looked to Rome as their masters, and as the centre of the world, when, suddenly, from the forests and snows of the North, poured down the Huns, the Goths and Visigoths, in countless thousands and hundreds of thousands. The barbarian hordes sallied from their fastnesses and, led by their savage kings, broke to pieces the whole Roman Empire, and shattered the whole fabric of Roman civilization to atoms. They rode rough-shod over the Roman citizens and their rulers, burned their palaces and destroyed whole cities, leaving them a pile of smouldering ruins. Every vestige of ancient Pagan civilization and power, glory and art and science, went down and disappeared under the tramp of the horses of Attila. One power, alone, stood before those ruthless destroyers one power alone opened its arms to receive them, one power arrested them in their career of blood and victory, and that power was the Catholic Church. (Applause.) In that day, says a Protestant historian, the Catholic Church saved the world, and out of these rude elements formed the foundation of the civilization, the liberty and the joy which is our portion in this nineteenth century. (Applause.) In the meantime Rome was destroyed. The fairest provinces of Gaul, Spain, Italy and Germany were overrun by the barbarians and the people oppressed, fathers of families cut off, hearth-fires extinguished, and the blood of the young ravished maiden and of the weeping mother wantonly shed. The people in their agony cried out to the only man whom the barbarians revered and respected, whom the whole world recognized as something tinged with Divinity—the Pope of Rome—the cry of an anguished people went forth from end to end of Italy; and in that ninth century the cry was, Save us from ruin! Cover us with the mantle of your protection! Be thou our monarch and king! and then, and then only, can we expect to be saved! (Applause.) Then did the Pope of Rome clothe himself with a new power, independent of that which he had received already, and which was recognized from the beginning—namely, that temporal power and sovereignty, that crown of a monarch, that place at the council chambers of kings, that voice in the guidance of nations and in the influencing of the destinies of the material world which, for century after century, he exercised, but which we, in our day, have seen him deprived of by the hands of those who have plucked the kingly crown from his aged and venerable brow. How did he exercise that power? How did he wear that crown? What position does he hold, as his figure rises up before the historical vision of the student, looking back into the past and beholding him as he passes amongst the long file of kings and warriors of the earth? O, my friends, no sword dripping with blood is seen in the hand of the Pope—King but only the sceptre of justice and of law. No cries of suffering and afflicted people surround him, but only the blessings of peace and of a delighted and consoled world. No blood flows, flowing in the path of his progress. That path is strewn with the tears of those who wept with joy at his approach, and with the flowers of peace and of contentment. He used his power—and history bears me out when I say it—the power which was providentially put into his hands, by which he was made not only a king among kings, but the first recognized monarch in Christendom, and the king, highest among kings, and the man whose voice governed the kings of the earth, convened their councils, directed their course, reproved them in their errors, and restrained them from shedding the blood of their people, and from the commission of other injustices—all these powers he used for the good of God's people. He used that power for a thousand years for purposes of clemency, of law, of justice and of freedom. (Applause.) When Spain and Portugal, in the zenith of their power, each commanding mighty armies, were about to draw the sword and devastate the fair plains of Castile and Andalusia, the Pope came in and said, "Mighty kings though you be, I will not permit you to shed the blood of your people in an unnecessary war." When Philip Augustus, of France, at the height of his power and when he was the strongest king in Christendom, wished to repudiate his lawful wife and to take another one in her stead, the injured woman appealed to Rome, and from Rome came the voice of Rome's king, saying to him—"O monarch, great and mighty as thou art, if thou doest this injustice to thy married wife and scandalize the world by thy impurity, I will send the curse of God and of His Church upon you, and cut you off like a rotten branch from among the community of kings." (Applause.) When Henry VIII, of England, wished to put away from him the pure and high-minded and lawful mother of his children, because his licentious eyes had fallen upon a younger and fairer form than he, the Pope of Rome said to him: "If you commit this iniquity, if you repudiate your lawful wife if you set up the principle that because you are a king you can violate the law, if no power in your own country is able to bring you to account for it, my hand will come down upon you, and I will cut you off from the communion of the faithful, and fling you, with the curse of God upon you, out upon the world." (Applause.) And I say that in such facts as these—and I might multiply them by the hundred—the Pope of Rome used his temporal sovereignty and his kingly power among the nations in establishing the sacred cause of human liberty. (Applause.) I speak of human liberty—I speak of liberty. I thank my God that I am breathing an air in which a free man may speak the language of freedom. (Applause.) I have a right to speak of freedom, for I am the child of a race that for eight hundred years have been martyred in the sacred cause of freedom.—(Applause.) Never did a people love it, since the world was created, as the children of Ireland who enjoy it less than all the nations. (Applause.) I can speak this night, but rather with the faltering voice of an infant than with the full swelling tones of a man, for I have loved thee, oh, mother liberty. (Applause.) Thy fair face was veiled from mine eyes from the days of my childhood. I longed to see the glistening of thy pure eyes, O liberty. I never saw it until I set my foot upon the soil of glorious, young Columbia. (Applause.) And there, rising out of this great western ocean, like Aphrodite of old—like Venus from the foam of the rolling billows, I beheld the goddess in all her beauty, and as a priest, as well as an Irishman, I bow down to thee. (Applause.) But what is liberty? Does it consist in every man having a right to do as he likes? Why, if it does, it would remind one of the liberty that a man took with a friend of mine in Ireland. He took the liberty to go into the man's house, and to sit down without being asked. (Laughter.) And he took the liberty to make free with the victuals, and, at last, the man of the house was obliged to take the liberty of kicking him down stairs. (Laughter.) No, my friends, this is not liberty. The quietness of freedom lies not in the power of every man to do what he likes, but that quietness of freedom and liberty lies in every man having his rights clearly defined. No

matter who he is, from the first to the last, from the humblest to the highest in the community, let every man know his own rights. Let him know what power he has and what privileges. Give him every reasonable freedom and liberty, and secure that to man's rights and defined them by law, make every man in the State, from the highest to the lowest, from the President down to the poorest, the greatest and the noblest, as well as the humblest and the meanest—let every man be obliged to bow down before the omnipotence of the law. (Applause.) A people that knows its rights, a people that has its rights thus defined, a people that is resolved to assert the omnipotence of those rights—that people can never be enslaved. (Applause.) Now, this being the definition of liberty—and I am sure that it comes home like conviction to every man in this house—what is freedom? That I know what rights I have, and that no man will be allowed to infringe them. Give me every reasonable right, and when I have these, secure them to me, and keep away from me every man that dares to impede me in the exercise of them that I may exercise them freely, and that I may be free as a bird that flies and wings its way through the air. Now I ask you, who is the father of this liberty that we enjoy to-day—who is the father of it, if not the man who stood before the barbarian, coming down to waste, with fire and sword—to abolish the government and destroy the people—the man that stood between him and the people and said: "Let us make laws, and you respect them, and I will get the people to respect them." That man was the Pope of Rome. (Applause.) Who was that man that, for a thousand years, as a crowned monarch, was the very impersonation of the principle of law but the Pope? Who was the man that was quickly ready to crush the poor man and the rich man, the king and the people—to crush them by the weight of his authority when they violated that law and refused to recognize that palladium of human liberty? It was the Pope of Rome. Who was the man whose genius inspired and whose ability contributed to the foundation and the very institutions of the Italian republics and of the ancient liberties of Spain in the early middle ages? Who was the man that protected them from the tyranny of the cruel barons, immersed in their castles? He was the man whose house was a sanctuary for the weak and persecuted, who surrounded that house with all the censures and vengeance of the Church against anyone who would violate its sanctity. Who labored, by degrees, patiently, for more than a thousand years, until he at length succeeded in elaborating the principles of modern freedom and modern society from out the chaotic ruin and confusion of these ages of barbarism? Who was he?—the father of civilization—the father of the world? History asserts, and asserts loudly, that he was the royal Pope of Rome.—(Applause.) And now the gratitude of the world has been to shake his ancient and time-honored throne, and to pluck the kingly crown from his brow in his old age; after seventy years of usefulness and of glory, and to confine him a prisoner, practically, in the Vatican Palace in Rome. A prisoner, I say, practically, for how can he be considered other than a prisoner, who cannot go out of his palace into the streets of the city, without hearing the ribaldry, the profanity, the obscenity and the blasphemy, to which his aged, pure and virgin ears had never lent themselves for a moment of his life. Yes—he is unthroned, but not dishonored; unthroned, but not dishonored; not unthroned by the wish of his own people, I assert, for I have lived for twelve years amidst them, and I know he never expressed them. He never drove them forth—the youth of his subjects—to be slaughtered on the battlefield, because he had some little enmity or jealousy against his fellow-monarch. He never loaded them with taxes nor oppressed them until life became too heavy to bear. Unthroned indeed, but not dishonored, though we behold him seated in the desolate halls of the once-glorious Vatican, abandoned by the human help, and by the sympathy of nearly all the world! But upon those aged brows there rests a crown—a triple crown, that no human hand can ever pluck from his brow, because that crown has been set on that head by the hand of Jesus Christ and by his church. (Applause.) That triple crown my friends, is the crown of spiritual supremacy, the crown of infallibility, and the crown of perpetuity. In the day when Christ said to Peter: "Confirm them; feed my lambs feed my sheep; to thee I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven"—in that day he made Peter supreme among the Apostles. His words meant this, or they meant nothing. Peter wielded that sceptre of supremacy, and nothing is more clearly pointed out in the subsequent inspired history of the church, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, than the fact that when Peter spoke every other man, Apostle or otherwise, was silent, and accepted Peter's word as the last decision, from which there was no appeal. Never, in the church of God, has Peter's successor ceased to assert broadly, emphatically and practically this primacy, never was a Council convened in the Catholic church except on the commands of the Pope. Never did a Council of Bishops presume to sit down and deliberate upon matters of faith and morals except under the guidance and in the presence of the Pope, either personally there, or there by his officers or legates. Never was a letter read at the opening of any Council, and they were constantly sent to each succeeding Council, but that the bishops of the church did not rise up and proclaim, "We hear the voice of the Pope, which is the voice of Peter, and Peter's voice is the echo of the voice of Jesus Christ." Never did any man in the church of God presume to appeal from the tribunal of the Pope, even to the church in council, without having the taint of heresy affixed upon him, and the curse of disobedience and schism put upon him. Now, for centuries it has been the recognized principle of the Catholic church that no man can lawfully appeal to any tribunal from the decision of the Pope in matters spiritual or in matters touching faith and morality, because there is no tribunal to appeal to above him save that of God. He represents, as the visible head of the church, the invisible head, who is no other than Jesus Christ. (Applause.) The consequence is that the church is a kingdom, like every other state, has its last grand tribunal, just like the House of Lords in England just like the Chief Justiceship in America, the High Court of Justice at Washington, from which there is no appeal. What follows from this? There is no appeal from the Pope's decision. There never has been. Is the church bound to abide by the decision? Most certainly, for history proves it in every age. Never has any man risen against the Pope's decisions without being branded as one tainted with heresy and cut off from the church. Is the church bound to abide by his decision? Certainly, because the church is bound in obedience to her head, and one man alone commands the obedience of the church and the duty of submission, and that man has been the Pope. He has always commanded it, and no one has dared to appeal from his decision, because, as I said before, he is the Vicary, the Visible Head of the Church, and in whom, officially, is the voice of Jesus Christ present with His church. (Applause.) Now what follows from this, my friends? If it be true that the church of God can never believe a lie, if it be true that she can never be called by a voice that she is bound to obey to accept a lie, if it be true that nothing false in doctrine or un sound in morality can ever be received by the church of God, or ever be imposed upon her—for he said, who founded her: "The gates of hell shall never prevail against my church"—then it follows, that if there be no appeal

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