

culous phenomena, will always attribute their existence to supernatural causes. The forms and much of the belief of the Roman Catholic religion do appeal, most unquestionably, to the imagination; hence it is but natural that the clergy of such a religion should exert themselves to the utmost to keep alive the spirit by which such faith is nourished, and as a well diffused education would scorn such childish superstition and weaken the power of the Church, it becomes a matter of the first importance to keep the mind of the public in absolute ignorance. When one sees such barbarous displays as are of constant occurrence in Brazil, of priests attaching the prayers of the people to a rocket, in order that it may ascend to God's Kingdom, and propagating the idea that such will actually be the case, it cannot be doubted that to the thresholds of such mischief-workers will the burden of the sin come back.

The very clergy are an unlettered, dissolute and selfish class of men, with unbounded influence. They have immense power to do good, and yet they advance evil. They have no institutions of learning, no profound scholarship, no other thought than that of personal advancement. Then they aspire to political preferment, and there arises that most pernicious evil of a union betwixt Church and State. To maintain this double power—ecclesiastical and political—the priests annihilate their holy calling and become fawning slaves, obedient to the command of the Government. This latter protects the union to strengthen its own dominion and power. Thus, as the power of wealth, learning and position rest with

the Church, its influence becomes infinite, and, while such connection lasts, there can never be any progression in civilization; for that which would cause the advance would destroy the power of the Church. To attain temporal power, the priest forfeits his honesty and becomes a hypocrite. With one hand he scorches with the most burning anathemas of the Church the heretical poor man, at the same time that he outstretches his other to bless the ruler ten-fold worse in his heresy.

Such are some of the reasons which have led me to believe that the Roman Catholic religion is one the most ill-suited for a national civilization, particularly when such civilization is in its infancy.

In closing this article I most earnestly disclaim any intention of conveying erroneous impressions in regard to the universal ignorance which I have briefly noticed. There are some exceptions in this case, as, indeed, there always are, to every general rule. There are many good and noble men in Brazil, who recognize the evils by which they are surrounded, and who are bravely giving daily battle against them. At their head stands the Emperor—a man of large liberality and great scientific attainments—a sovereign who embodies in himself all that is most ennobling in human nature. But the struggle being an unequal one, there can result no ultimate good. These men scarcely serve to illumine the gloom in which they move, and, by their own efforts, can accomplish nothing; but they may sow productive seed, which future generations will nurse with care, and which, some day, may ripen into the full harvest of universal good and advancement.