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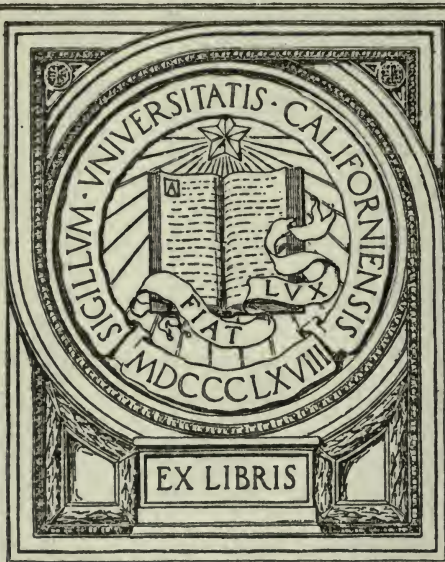
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# The World's Desire

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By REV. P. C. YORKE, D. D.

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AS FIRST DELIVERED AT THE PUBLIC  
MEETING OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE CATHOLIC BROADCASTING ASSOCI-  
ATION IN NEW ORLEANS, LA., JULY 3, 1912

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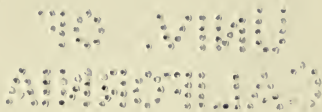
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*To the Most Reverend*  
*JAMES H. BLENK, S. M., D. D.,*  
*Archbishop of New Orleans,*  
*As a Slight Token of Gratitude and Respect.*

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Imprimatur

✠ P. G. RIORDAN, D. D.  
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# The World's Desire

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By REV. P. C. YORKE, D. D.

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**T**HE Convention which we bring to a close this evening has two aspects—one private, the other public. The National Catholic Educational Association is a purely voluntary society, and, therefore, has no right to speak formally in the name of the Catholic Church. But when we consider the quality of its membership, and the dignity of the auspices under which it has met here this year, as well as elsewhere in other years, we cannot look upon its deliberations and conclusions as those of a mere private body. We do not say too much when we call it an authentic index of the Catholic mind in America, and when we claim that it has not only

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## The Message of This Convention.

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useful counsel for those who are of the household of the faith, but also a serious message for those who are not of the fold.

During the past four days the managers and teachers of the Catholic schools have been discussing the technical details of their profession, exchanging ideas and comparing experiences. They have been criticising the old methods of instruction and examining the new. They have been seeking to eliminate waste in the class room and to increase efficiency. They have been striving to broaden the scope of their teaching without sacrificing its thoroughness. Above all, they have been taking counsel to maintain the old American tradition of academic liberty and to encourage and hearten one another in the pursuit of their sublime though arduous vocation of instructing many unto justice and of raising up a generation that will know how to fulfill with equal generosity the parallel duties of loving God and serving the commonwealth.

All those details, however, while they

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**For Catholics and Non-Catholics Alike.**

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are of the highest importance to the professional mind, hardly interest the Catholic laity or the public at large. Hence it has been the custom in all the conventions of this body to hold an open meeting at which may be discussed the general trend of Catholic education and its significance to this Republic. Such is the object of this gathering; and while I feel honored by the task that has been laid upon me, it is with much diffidence I address myself to it, both because of the importance of the subject and the character of the audience. For we have a message—a veritable message of life and death—not only for the members of the Catholic community but for every citizen of the United States.

But you may ask, What message can this convention have that it may claim so wide a hearing? What message can these humble and retiring men and women have for a world so self-sufficient and so noisy? Even in this great Catholic city their coming and going scarcely cause a ripple on the full tide of public life. The convention

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### The Same Message the Apostles Bore.

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of a third or even of a fourth political party would attract infinitely more attention, and the newspapers, with all the good will in the world, find it difficult to cull from its proceedings sufficient matter for the space they so generously allot to it. The people of the city notice only a few strangers of clerical aspect upon their streets, or with mild curiosity speculate on the unaccustomed religious uniforms of the Sisters who hurry silently from their convents to the meeting place. What message can these have for the great world that thunders heedless past their academic walls?

Yet here we have in these last days another example of the foolishness of preaching that marked the first days of the Church. The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. The Apostles were sent into a world not less noisy, not less self-sufficient. That world swept over the Apostles and apparently obliterated them; but that world is gone, with all its works and pomps, and the Apostles still remain.

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### Delivered With the Same Authority.

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The winds were strong and the waves ran high on the sea of Galilee what time the fishermen's boat carried Christ to the country of the Gadarenes, and the wise men of Capharnaum may have speculated concerning the sudden calm that fell upon the waters; but only the Apostles knew whose word had stilled the storm, and they alone marveled saying, "What manner of Man is this that the winds and the sea obey Him?"

So we come to you not as the representatives of great majorities or as the spokesmen of popular opinion, but as sent by Him to whom all authority is given in heaven and on earth. We come to you not with the ostentatious apparatus of material resources, but with the faith that moves mountains and the devotion that cannot be purchased by the treasuries of kings. This convention represents the most efficacious mechanism designed by the Church to meet modern conditions in carrying out the ancient commission to make disciples of all nations. And as of



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## To a World That Has Rejected Christ.

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old time that same Church drew the wisest men of the Roman civilization to sit as learners at her feet, and tamed the fierce pride of the Northern barbarians to the service of the Cross, so we face the civilization of to-day, with all its pride and cold carelessness of God, confident that the arm of the Lord is not shortened and that He is able even of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Consider what a world it is to which we speak. The Apostles came to heal the corruption of Paganism; we are sent to heal the corruption of Christianity itself—if the salt lose its savor wherewith shall it be salted? The civilizations of Rome and Greece knew not the true God, though they hungered after Him; our civilization is disgusted with the supernatural, and having been cradled in the Gospel and fostered in the Church, would in its old age curse God and die. The Apostles planted in a virgin soil, that needed only the pruning knife; we labor with a land that hath drunk the rain that cometh oft upon it and beareth

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### **And Is Tortured With a Fierce Unrest.**

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but thorns and thistles and is therefore rejected and nigh unto a curse, whose end is to be burned. They dealt with the youth of the world and the fine high temper that recognized the sincerity of sacrifice and could receive the Apostles' challenge, "If Christ be not risen again then are we the most miserable of men;" we deal with the frozen and cynical heart of a disillusioned humanity that sneers at unselfishness and weighs the highest and holiest achievements in the huckster's scale.

Yet with all its cold cynicism it is a world of fierce unrest. The subsidized prophets of Carnegie in vain cry "peace, peace," and there is no peace. From end to end Europe is filled with armed camps, and every camp is pitched on ground honeycombed with the red fires of revolution. The long-sleeping millions of Asia are stirring as a giant in uneasy slumber, and what their awakening may portend no man can foresee. In our own country, what is the chief characteristic of public and private life? Here are no standing armies;

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## In Spite of the Prosperity of America.

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here are no hostile frontiers; the far rumors of wars are spent and die on our peaceful seas. Our cities are swept by no decimating plagues, no famine stalks our fields, our barns are bursting with abundance. In some of our great centers of population there is congestion, with consequent poverty and suffering; but it is a transplantation of Old World conditions, that rapidly wither and disappear before American enterprise and opportunity. Work is plentiful for those who want to work. Wages are good, and if they are not better it is because the workingmen will not use their privilege of organization, or use it badly. The cost of living, it is true, is high, but so is the American standard of living—the highest average in the world. Here are no robber dynasties, no vampire aristocracies; the evils of our politics are surface deep like the evils proper to a healthy democracy; every man is equal before the law, and more and more extension of the suffrage is associating every individual of age with the work of the Government.



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## Our People Also Are Vaguely Uneasy.

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Yet, even here in America, I ask again, What is the chief characteristic of the age? With singular unanimity all men skilled in reading the signs of the times answer, "Unrest." Every newspaper has its theory of discontent. Every street corner is vocal with remedies. Like a man sickening to a serious illness, the popular mind is feverish and uneasy. Doubt and suspicion impregnate the atmosphere; sudden gusts of passion and resentment sweep over the mob. This vague unrest has already split one great political party in twain, and will infallibly dismember the other. Not in politics alone does this formless doubt operate. Like the foolish seekers after buried treasure men are digging and prying at the very foundation stones of the State—careless of the inevitable ruin. In economics they throng after every Pied Piper that lures them with childish dreams of cure-alls for poverty and the patent revamping of the unfit. Divorce has shattered the family, and between free love and eugenics there would not be left of

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### While We Claim We Can Heal Ourselves.

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the breaking a shard wherein a little fire might be carried from the hearth or a little water be drawn from the cistern.

Yet concomitantly with all this uncertainty and uneasiness there is a vociferous insistence that we have in ourselves everything that is needed to regulate or cure our swift recurring evils and to confirm upon us prosperity and peace. When a man is sure of his ground and knows the extent of his resources he can afford to move confidently to his end and despise in silence those that would hamper or prevent him. But when a man is not sure of his ground and is doubtful of his resources he will naturally grow angry at opposition and will resort to brag and bluster in order to conceal the inadequacy of his equipment. So our age, feeling deep down in its soul its utter impotence to cope alone with the problems that press upon it, keeps up its courage with loud words and vainglorious boasts. It is impossible to read a page of our popular literature without meeting with sneers and gibes at the past and bril-

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### And Look to Science as Our Deliverer.

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liant prognostications of the future. The world is in travail and the supreme time-birth is at hand. No longer shall nature blunder and blind chance preside at this new Nativity, but Science shall assist as midwife and foster-mother, and, behold!—the Superman! Gone are the last traces of our brute ancestry! Surgery has eliminated sensuality, and legislation has suppressed lust. Suggestion has destroyed sloth, environment has eradicated gluttony, and abundance has torn up covetousness by the root. Perfect health has made anger impossible, and there is no room for envy where all are kings. The mock virtue of Christianity known as humility is driven out by a godlike pride, and man has completed the conquest of the world by assuming the mastery of his own destiny and enforcing the absolute supremacy of his own will.

Desperate as was the condition of the world to which the Apostles were sent, a long and varied experience had delivered it from this monstrous delusion. Ovid had

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**The Pagan World Learned by Experience.**

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summed up the history not only of individuals but of nations in the cynical verse:

“Video meliora proboque,  
“Deteriora sequor.”

Men had seen how human idealism had again and again taken up arms against human nature, and how human nature had always come out victorious. The stern asceticism of Sparta had failed as miserably as the beauty and laughter of Athens. Philosophy had assumed the management of men's lives, and a few years had made sophist a byword. The simple fare and manly sports of young Persia had degenerated into a luxury notorious even in the records of Asiatic effeminacy. The domestic and civic virtues of the Romans wilted under the sun of prosperity, and in the height of empire the satirist could declare that every cesspool of humanity emptied itself into the Tiber.

So we, if we will only clear our eyes of the moon-struck theories known as popular science, and look beyond the limits of our

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## Human Nature is Stronger Than Science.

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narrow experience, we, too, will find that with all our progress in knowledge and invention, and with all our mastery of physical forces, we have not altered an atom in our frame, and man is still man. The wires of telegraph and telephone tingle to the old tales of human joy, or sag beneath the old burden of human sorrow. The ships and trains that fly like gleaming shuttles to and fro over land and sea are weaving the ancient pattern of human hopes and human disappointments. As in the days of Noah men were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage, and as in the days of Lot they ate and they drank and they bought and they sold, they planted and they builded—so is it in our day. A woman still hath sorrow because she is in labor, but her sorrow is forgotten for joy that a man child is born into the world. The untraveled eyes still look wistfully on the green hills that are far away, and the untaught heart still hungers for the bitter sweet of love's young dream. Men still go high-spirited into the



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**We, Also, Are Men and Bear Men's Burdens.**

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battle of life though the many fall by the wayside and only the few bear the guerdon away. Willfulness and sin still stalk hand in hand boldly through the world; obedience and peace still seek the silent spaces and haunt the hidden paths. Aye, with all our far-trumpeted discoveries, all our serums and antitoxins and prophylactics, the rider on the pale horse still traverses the earth and the twang of his bow never ceases. Morning by morning the frequent processions issue from our gates, and though man's last home is narrow and the tombs are crowded close, the cemeteries are ever stretching out their lean arms and the cities of the dead constrict and incommode the cities of the living. What sentiment that ever stirred the human heart is alien to our hearts to-day? What burden, what responsibility that ever lay on the children of Adam from the beginning is absent from our shoulders now? What catastrophe of the human tragedy is strange to our times?

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**No Matter How Much We Boost and Boast.**

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“For men must work and women must  
weep,  
And there’s little to earn and many to  
keep;  
Though the harbor bar be moaning.”

These things are none the less true that here in America we do not give ourselves time to appreciate them. We are so busy boasting and boosting, advertising ourselves and all that belongs to us, that we forget that only one thing is necessary. But in spite of all our forgetfulness it will not be denied. Human nature will always assert itself, and there is nothing more human than our helplessness before the stern realities of life and the longing that will not down for something beyond the day and the evils thereof.

“The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow;  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow.”

The Greek poets fabled how Jove’s eagle ever fed on the heart of the Titan that first raised man above the level of the beast. In that they symbolized the truth that the

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### The Divine Discontent Eats Our Hearts.

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essential difference between man and beast lies in that divine discontent which postulates an immortal soul. The eye is not filled with seeing, neither is the ear filled with hearing.

Consider the commonplaces of life—those truisms that we depise because they are so familiar—and let us learn from them the lesson the fool will not see because his eyes are on the ends of the earth. Behold how eagerly men strive to satisfy their sensual appetites. No labor is too heavy, no vigil too long. Yet, when they have attained their hearts' desire, satiety robs them of pleasure and the dead sea fruit turns their soul to bitterness.

Even in the search for knowledge, the most spiritual of human aims, the same law reigns. The young and the unexperienced may boast of the finality of science, but years and study reveal to us the vast uncharted sea on which we are but a speck and the dim, receding horizon that ever mocks our pursuit. "I gave my heart," says Solomon, "to know prudence,



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**Love, Knowledge, Power Do Not Content.**

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and learning, and errors, and folly, and I have perceived that in these also is vanity and vexation of spirit.”

Observe the close of the two careers Americans choose in preference to all others, the pursuit of power and the pursuit of wealth. See how doggedly the devotee of ambition faces the steep ascent, and how in that gruelling climb everything that might hamper him is cast away—family, friends, health, principle, self-respect—aye, even God. Yet, when the lonely eminence is attained, and he stands ever on the alert while his enemies whisper and plot his ruin, how often do his thoughts turn to the lowly station from which he rose and he envies the peace and contentment of the hermit's cell:

L'ambition déplaît quand elle est assouvie,  
D'une contraire ardeur son ardeur est  
suivie ;  
Et comme notre esprit, jusqu' au dernier  
sourir,  
Toujours vers quelque objet pousse quelque  
désir,

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**Nor Yet Money. Men and Nations Alike.**

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Il se ramène en soi, n'ayant plus où se  
prendre,  
Et, monté sur le faite, il aspire à descendre.

Is there any need in these days to enlarge on the sordid cares, the coarse brutality, the cynical injustice, the cold indifference to human sorrow, the reckless waste of human lives which mark the accumulation of millions? Is there any need to expatiate on the crude luxury and the vulgar ostentation that accompany the spending of those millions or to heighten the colors of the swift succeeding pictures of wrecked homes and squalid divorce courts, of the criminal's dock and the doubtful mercy of the insane asylum? Grant these are aberrations of the few, yet the hour must arrive for all, perhaps at the very moment the race is swiftest and the prize most tempting, when the doctors stand helpless round the bed of the rich man, on whom all remedies and medicines and skill have been exhausted, for the sentence that lies equal on millionaire and pauper has gone forth, and dying he must surely die.

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## Witness the Dreams of the 19th Century.

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What is true of the individual is true of the community. The nations also weary of the accomplished fact and forever hunger after some good they know not. In proof thereof we have no need to search the history of far-off ages. It is not necessary that we should sit with Marius weeping over the ruins of Carthage or sigh with Alexander for other worlds to conquer. We can find the evidence in our own times and in our own country. The nineteenth century was emphatically the century of great popular ideals. The dreams that once had been the perquisites of poets alone and the theories that once belonged exclusively to philosophers had been scattered broadcast through the world by the French Revolution. To this day we see them leavening lands the most distant and working amongst people the most diverse. But during the nineteenth century it was among the European races that their activity was most manifest. Every nation was seeing visions and dreaming dreams. The ideals of political independence, national

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### **Last State of Europe Worse Than First.**

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unity, popular government, military glory, commercial supremacy, universal education were in varying degrees but in every country set before the masses as the sure means for securing for all prosperity, content and happiness. The nations gave credit to their prophets, and spared nothing sacred or profane in the attempt to make the prophecies come true. Yet at the beginning of the twentieth century the last condition of Europe is worse than the first. Every step in advance has brought new and more difficult problems into view. Every hoary old abuse cut down has made place for a crop of young and sturdy ills. The new thought scorns the idea of Fatherland and claims that nothing less than the whole race forms a fit object for the love and devotion of humanity. The modern idealist curses the great armies that military glory demands and the ever-growing navies made necessary by the struggle for commercial supremacy. Too often have political independence and national unity piled up a load of taxation that has crushed out

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## America, Itself, Full of Disillusion.

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industry and driven millions from their ancestral homes. Republics have become the mock of their own citizens and the moral and intellectual uplift produced by universal education may be judged by the banality of popular literature and the almost universal degradation of the periodical press.

Is there a country in the world so favored by nature as our own? God has fed us with the fat of wheat and nourished us with honey from the rock, yet since the days the Israelites grew weary of the bread from heaven and loathed the meat the Lord had sent them, never was there a people so full of disillusion and discontent as the American people to-day. For nearly a century and a half we have pursued liberty with an ardor seldom displayed among men and with opportunities given to few nations. We have advocated device after device and made enactment after enactment; we have impressed the services of our wisest; we have not spared the blood of our bravest, and yet the cry rises to-day



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## Our Achievements Become Our Problems.

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more insistent than ever that popular sovereignty amongst us is but a sham, that the people's franchises are being filched from under their very eyes, and that every department of the government is prostituted to the emolument of the few.

Not in any age of which we have a record has mankind gained so great a mastery over the powers of nature or obtained such an insight into the secrets of the physical universe. To-day the common man has at his use means of locomotion and communication that no Caesar could command. The laborer sees on his table delicacies that even a few years ago princes could not afford, and he has in his home conveniences that olden kings might envy. His children are clad as well as the children of the rich in ancient times, and they receive opportunities of education and culture that within our own memory were the exclusive privileges of the great families of the land. Yet the very means that have made these things possible—the great corporations and the trusts—give rise to the

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### Our New Light Makes Darkness Visible.

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most dangerous problems that confront the economic and political worlds, and labor finds in its very luxuries additional causes for discontent.

In our day the old romantic quests have come to an end. We have discovered the Fountain of Youth in a pestilential marsh and the Golden Cities in the tawny desert cliffs. The secret of the Poles has at last been yielded up, and we have found it to be no secret—only the drifting ice floe of the north and the storm-scourged mountain shoulders of the farthest south. The tales of the ancient mythology have been made real, and men have emulated Daedalus in his flight only to meet the apparently inevitable Icarian disaster. The further science has advanced into the temple of nature the thicker has grown the darkness and the more unyielding the adamantine doors that guard her holy of holies.

It is the old, old story for the individual and the race; we are tormented by our longings and scourged by our fulfilled desires. So must it be, for after all there

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**Man Made for God; God Alone Can Satisfy.**

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is nothing in the race that is not in the individual. And as the real cause of the discontent in the individual is that he is but a stranger and a pilgrim here below, so the real cause of the discontent in the race is that here it has no abiding place. As St. Augustine, beginning the story of his long search for truth, writes at the head of his Confessions, "Thou, O Lord, hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts shall find no rest until they rest in Thee," so we can justly inscribe the same words on the scroll of human history: "Thou, O God, in the beginning didst make the peoples for Thy service, and they shall never know content until they acknowledge Thee the World's Desire and Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who is the Expectation of the Nations."

This then, let us acknowledge it, is the secret of human discontent. This is the main source of our unrest in America today. Let no man deceive you by saying that the people are uneasy because agitators are tampering with the constitution or because politicians are disturbing the



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## In America We Have Banished God.

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laws of economics. These things are merely symptoms, not causes. The truth is that agitators are abroad in the land and politicians are casting about for new policies because both they and the people are uneasy and they know not the reason why. Let publicists say what they will of a newly awakened civil consciousness, and prate what they please about broadening concepts of social service, or mouth unctuously of dynamic policies that make for progress—these are but catch-words and campaign cries usually empty of sense and always devoid of sincerity. The great primal cause remains: America has banished God from public life. On occasion it is true we pay Him lip service, but the heart of the political world, the heart of the economic world, the heart of the social world—aye, the heart of the whole people is far from Him. There has been no rancor in our motives for getting rid of Him. There has been no coarseness in our methods of banishing Him. In our churches we allow the widest latitude of opinion as

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### In Spite of All Religion Did for Us.

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to the proper manner of serving Him. Outside of the churches we gently but firmly refuse Him and His Word the slightest influence on our public program.

Such an attitude of mind is so "un-American," as they say, so opposed to our history and traditions, that at first hearing we are liable to grow indignant at the charge and to resent it as a calumny. After all, there never was a land in whose making religion played so great a part as this. It was the magic of the Crusades that tempted Columbus to seek the new route to the Indies, and the continent he discovered was named not unfittingly the Land of the Holy Cross. The great highway from the Atlantic into the heart of this country was opened by the missionaries and voyageurs, who, sailing up the St. Lawrence and through the Great Lakes, wrote a new and not the least worthy chapter of the *Gesta Dei per Francos*. It was the same intrepid soldiers of religion who, traversing forest and prairie, happened at last on the Father of Waters, and,

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### Country Rooted and Founded in Religion.

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descending its long course, marked the majestic crescent whereon was to rise this Gateway of the South that faces the isles of spice and palm and waits for the greater things to be when the dream of Columbus is realized and the Indies of the East and the Indies of the West shall find here their common meeting point.

When the swarming of the inhabitants of the British Isles and the maritime countries of Northern Europe sent out Puritan and Cavalier, Independent and Quaker, French Huguenot, Dutch Calvinist and Swedish Lutheran to our Atlantic seaboard, they, too, came in the name of religion, and in order that the old Church might not be absent it was the Catholics of Maryland who kindled the friendly beacon of religious toleration that lighted the feet of the fathers of this republic to that generous and humane liberty that has always been America's proudest boast.

The last great expedition inspired by Spanish enterprise—

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### The Spirit of the People Christian.

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“the dying glow of Spanish glory,  
The sunset dream and last,”

marched also under the banner of the Cross. From the end of Lower California to the Bay of San Francisco the Missions, like the towers of a long rampart, faced the Pacific, and under their protection a new Christian civilization was developed in peace. It is true that the circumstances were not propitious for its continuance, but the names of saint and angel on river and town and hill still bear testimony to the spirit that laid the foundations of California, and in spite of material temptations and the forgetfulness of prosperity still claims that imperial commonwealth for its own.

Although the semi-pagan ideas of revolutionary France had an undoubted hold on many of the men that framed our Constitution, the sober common sense of the majority and the strong religious feeling of the people at large neutralized their dangerous tendencies and gave their enactments an interpretation more in accordance

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### **Generously Devoted to Their Churches.**

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with Christian principles. The States followed the lead of the Federal Government in prohibiting an "Establishment of Religion," but the people none the less generously supported the churches, set up religious schools and founded colleges that they might have the services of a well-learned ministry. This was the work not of one denomination or two, but of every denomination, and it was a magnificent testimony to the inherent religiousness of the American people that in the fierce struggle with nature, in the appalling task of subduing a continent, amid besetting temptations to laxity and forgetfulness, in all their wanderings, they carried with them their fathers' God and in every new village and in every new city built them their tabernacles, in order that they might adore in the place in which they believed His feet had stood.

Yet even within our own experience a wonderful change has come over the spirit of the American people. For that change it is not my intention to apportion praise



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**Yet a Great Change Has Come Over Them.**

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or blame—I simply state the facts. Everybody acknowledges that the old American sense of religion is practically gone. The decay, of course, has not progressed with equal pace in all sections of the country. Here in the South, with your more conservative temper, much of the ancient spirit remains, but everywhere the same effects are visible. A universal cause is at work, and it is only a question of time when universal results will be attained.

The change to which I refer has worked out in two ways—first, in an actual disappearance of Christianity, and, secondly, in an altered conception of what Christianity really means. The single cause that accounts for these results is the lack of religious teaching.

Where Christianity has been handed down for generations from father to son, it becomes easy to ignore the fact that it is essentially a taught religion. The commission given the Apostles was that they should go into the whole world and teach all the nations. Faith, which is the foun-

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### Caused by Loss of Christian Schools.

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dation of all righteousness, is a virtue, not of the will, but of the intellect, and St. Paul asks: How can men believe unless they hear, and how can they hear without a preacher?

Hence, unless the Christian religion is taught in some way, it degenerates and finally disappears. Of course we know that teaching or preaching can be effected in more ways than one, and that the Christian teachers or preachers must accommodate themselves to the times and the people. The ancient Roman world had one method, the Middle Age another, and our day a third. This modern system of teaching makes almost exclusive use of the organization known as the school, college or university. Those bodies have existed, it is true, in every generation, but they have now, and especially in America, received such an extension as practically to monopolize all teaching.

But, as a matter of fact, and here again I am not apportioning praise or blame, but merely calling attention to what you

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### **School Has Gained Monopoly of Teaching.**

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all know to be true, for three-quarters of a century the teaching of religion has been barred from the schools. It is not necessary now to inquire why it was barred; all we need do is to bear in mind the fact. The subject of religion was left entirely outside of the great modern machinery of teaching and relegated to the family or the Church. Now, when we find any one agency for obtaining a particular end ousting all other agencies for the same purpose, we naturally conclude that it possesses a special fitness for the circumstances in which it works. When we see, therefore, the school vindicating for itself a practical monopoly of education in our day, as against the older means of the family or the Church, we come to the conclusion that modern conditions are such as to render the work of family or Church inefficacious when compared with the work of the school. How true this conclusion is your daily experience will show. The members of the modern American family are so occupied with toil that there is little



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### Neither Home Nor Church Can Compete.

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opportunity and less energy left for instruction. The father comes home worn out with the strenuous labor of head or hand. The mother herself must also seek employment abroad or else she is burdened with that work which is never done, the duties of her household. The children as they grow up are quickly conscripted to the tread mill, so that if the little ones are to be taught any subject, religious or secular, they must be taught it by some agency other than the family.

The Church, too, is as handicapped as the home. Owing to modern industrial conditions, her formal teaching work is confined now to one day in the week and to a short period during that day. The necessity of recreation and the allurements of pleasure have emptied the Protestant pews and have concentrated the Catholic attendance on the early Masses. An enormous amount of thought and money has been expended, especially among Protestants, on the organization and upkeep of the Sunday school, and there may be places

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## **Religion Not Taught, Degenerates and Dies.**

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where good results have been obtained, but as far as the ordinary teacher in the ordinary Sunday school is concerned, what results can he expect out of forty-five minutes of disorder?

Hence it has come to pass that among the Protestant denominations the teaching of religion in an effective manner has ceased. Year by year the momentum of traditional Christianity has been steadily slackening. According to all accounts, the country districts are reverting to paganism, and in the cities vast multitudes are out of touch with any form of religious worship or belief.

The changed conception of religion, which is now almost universal among those who are affiliated with the Protestant denominations, arises also from the fact that Christianity has ceased to be regarded as a religion that is to be taught. Christ came upon earth to bear witness to the truth. He commissioned His Apostles to carry that truth to the end of the earth. He established His Church to preserve that

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## The Idea of Dogma Also Has Been Lost.

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truth to the consummation of the ages. If truth is to be taught, it must be formulated; if it is to be kept free from error, it must be defined. Truth authoritatively formulated and defined we call dogma, and dogma therefore is, as it were, the steel framework of Christianity.

In the sixteenth century, when the Protestants rejected the authority of the Pope, they did not reject the idea of dogma. They simply asserted their own right to formulate and teach the truth as they saw it, and they were in their way far more dogmatic than the Holy See. The origin of the various sects is to be found in this fact. The differences between them were in the main differences in dogma or in what they believed to be the teaching of Holy Writ.

The lack of religious teaching, however, has confused in the minds of Protestants the idea of dogma. Judging by their own experience, they take it to be individual opinion unduly stressed. Remembering the sects, the divisions, the hatreds aroused

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### Hence, Rise of Non-Dogmatic Religions.

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by it, they consider it an evil well rid of. They do not realize that what they know is dogma run riot, not dogma regulated by competent authority. Moreover, they are deeply sensible of the scandals of disunion, and knowing that now in the bankruptcy of religious education it is not religious ideas that are keeping the people divided, they are anxious to throw all their creeds into the lumber room and seek for some ethical program in which all can unite.

That program has two main divisions. The first is the legitimate result of the old Puritan passion for regulation, and consists in the pursuit of the deadly cigarette, the war against the demon rum, the eradication of immorality by acts of Congress and the spread of devotion to that curious combination of grape juice and French dinners which is liable to destroy more digestions than all the Bourbon that ever came out of Kentucky.

The second division is more modern, and apparently promises larger returns. It finds the church existing as an organiza-

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### Social Service Is Now New Gospel.

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tion with its business gone. It would give it new work to do. The church should take charge of the culture of the people and the culture of the fields. There is settlement work to be carried on in the slums of the city; there is scientific farming to be taught in the country. The schools should be made more efficient, recreation centers should be provided and supervised, public life should be disinfected and politicians should march to office only to the tune of "Onward, Christian Soldiers." The peculiar cant that characterized the so-called Progressive outbreak last year had its origin in these modernist conceptions of the church and the church's duty. It is the new patch that rends the old garment, the new wine seething in the old and torn skins.

Such, without exaggeration, is the condition of the majority of the people of this country to-day. They are not opposed to religion; they simply know nothing about it. Except on social occasions, they never see the inside of a church, and while they call themselves Christians, and are gener-



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**But Does Not Satisfy Longing for God.**

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ous toward Christian enterprises, they have cut themselves off completely from the Christian fellowship that common worship involves. If they conceive an intellectual curiosity about religion, it is almost impossible to gratify it from the materials at hand. They do not take kindly to the old-time theological warfare and the thought of the modern clergy is too misty to satisfy men who in the ordinary walks of life are accustomed to think clearly and to formulate their conclusions with almost mathematical exactitude. Of course the old Church never enters into their minds, because they think it is like Protestantism, only more so. When they are seized with that uneasiness of spirit which is God's voice speaking to the natural heart, either they misinterpret it and seek relief in every quarter except the right quarter, or, if they do go to the churches, they find little relief in preachers that preach only themselves or in creeds that have substituted a sentimental and hazy humanitarianism in the place of God.



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## The People Are Looking for Leaders.

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It is evident at once that this state of affairs constitutes a most serious danger to the republic. A vast multitude, uneasy and expectant, is waiting for leaders. The conditions strangely resemble those described by our Lord as characteristic of the last days when the troubled nations shall look for the false Christs and false prophets and the rumors shall run among them of mighty signs and wonders wrought in the deserts or in the secret chambers of the house. Whence shall their leaders come and what shall be their message? In a country of universal education and in a scientific age we naturally expect them to be educated men bringing the latest remedies of science to the solution of our problems and the settlement of our discontent.

But here precisely it is that the danger is imminent. The suppression of religious instruction was begun in the common schools, but has now spread to the colleges and the universities. As I have said, these institutions of the higher learning were originally denominational seminaries

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### But Universities Now Are Godless.

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for the education of the ministry. For a long time they kept their religious character, taught a definite religious creed, and maintained their own religious worship. But the time-spirit has been too strong for them. Great wealth soon made the universities, as they say, non-sectarian. The colleges, aping the universities, immediately fell into line. Such a development, indeed, was natural, and, though the intentions of the founders were not respected, there was nothing mean or dishonorable in the motives for the change; but since the day Judas sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver there has been no more disgraceful exhibition of unprincipled greed than the action of those denominational colleges that have banished the faith of their fathers from the curriculum in order to share in the bloodstained money of Andrew Carnegie.

Now, the banishment of religion from the high school and college automatically insures that the educated classes—the men of light and leading in the country—shall

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### The Educated Are Materialists.

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not be Christians. Even when he comes from a God-fearing family, the youth is handicapped as regards his faith the moment he enters such institutions of the higher learning. He goes in with a boy's equipment in religion and proceeds to acquire a man's equipment in secular and too often agnostic science. What chance has his immature Christianity under such conditions? Here and there the churches try to supplement the earlier training by special institutions adapted to the student's needs; but the process is at work in every high school, and in all places it is so intimately the result of a lop-sided culture that even the most enthusiastic of those who would combat it feel that they are as men beating the air.

Hence it is that an increasing number of educated men are assuming the attitude of frank materialism. But even a materialist must believe in something. The things to be hoped for and the things unseen demand their tribute also from an empty heart. If men will not have a religion they must have

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### Given to the Superstition of Socialism.

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a superstition; and that is the real reason why the superstition of Socialism has taken such a hold on our college men and women, that is the real reason why so many newspapers are simply pulpits for the preaching of socialistic doctrines, and that is the real reason why those who wish to be considered in the front rank of progress advocate so many socialistic measures.

Of course, when I say Socialism I do not mean the Socialism of the soap-box orator or of the street corner fanatic. Those unfortunates have no idea of what Socialism really is. They have only a confused notion that in some way it is a step to a good time, with little or no work. I mean the scientific Socialism that places man's destiny here below and makes the whole duty of man consist in bettering the conditions of his bodily life.

This kind of Socialism is indeed the legitimate result and term of the apostacy from Christianity, using the word in its widest sense of a revealed religion. The history of our civilization is the history of

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### **Socialism Means the Pagan State.**

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a long series of devices to balance the rights of the individual and the rights of the State. The pendulum has swung from one side to the other, but never in Christendom has authority succeeded in making itself absolute. Even in their most servile days the Christian churches have stood for the value of the individual. All true freedom rests on the answer to the question, What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Hence, no matter to what degree the pretensions of the State have been pushed, there have never been wanting in the Christian commonwealth those who were able to resist Pharaoh as seeing Him who is invisible.

For we must remember that there are only two logical conceptions of the State, the one Christian and the other pagan. The Christian looks upon the State as one of the great natural means given by God to enable him to attain his last end. In the Christian system the State exists for the individual, not the individual for the State. The pagan, having no hope beyond this



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## The Pagan State Not a Free State.

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world, looks upon the State as the last end for which the individual exists. The common weal is supreme, and to this common weal the individual weal must give way. His sole destiny consists in contributing to the welfare of the community. The first conception of the State is unthinkable without Christianity. Therefore when a people abandons Christianity there is nothing for it but the pagan self-sufficient and omnipotent State.

Here, then, is the danger that confronts us. In America to-day we are rapidly moving to the establishment of the pagan State. As Christian ideas are losing their hold on our leaders, the supremacy of the State looms larger and larger. Once upon a time this country was the home of individualism. For the privilege of calling their souls their own millions fled over the rough rude sea and buried themselves in the wilderness. It was individual initiative that made America. Lonely pioneer and solitary trapper thrived the forests and sought the treasures of mother earth. Of



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## America Was the Land of Individualism.

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course their methods were wasteful, but so are nature's methods; she is now, as she has always been, the greatest prodigal of us all. Family by family they founded cities and built up States whose history glows with the records of individual loyalty and individual courage. But how are the mighty fallen! The new thought would strip the American of the last vestiges of his boasted self-reliance. His way would lie between a high and thorny hedge of do's and don'ts. From the cradle to the grave he is to be warned, watched, and conserved. His most spontaneous actions are to be directed and supervised. His pleasures are to be regulated, his home systematized, his business inspected, his food certified, his family standardized, his reading censored, and most likely he will not be allowed to die in peace save and except according to the manner by the law provided.

But here is the rub. Who will watch the watchers and supervise the supervisors? "Quis custodes custodiet ipsos?" In our popular form of government, with short

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## Socialism Destroys Individuality.

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terms of office and frequent reversals of policy, it is difficult enough to keep the ordinary machinery of government going; how could the elaborate organization demanded by the new thought be expected to function in such conditions? Already we hear the cry of "efficiency" as against "politics." The whole trend of the theory of government of late amongst us has been away from popular control and towards "one man power." The untrained politician is to be succeeded by the expert. We are willing to sacrifice our franchises to save our fads. The commission form of government for cities and for States, the short ballot and the enlargement of the appointing power, the proposed abolition of the legislatures, all demanded in the name of efficiency, are as so many degrees marking our descent toward despotism. That the "one man" is to be elected does not alter the situation. Empires also are created by plebiscites.

Such is the end towards which we move. We cannot have the fruits of Christianity

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## American People Do Not See Trend.

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where the root of Christianity has perished. We cannot have freedom as the fathers knew it if we apostatize from the fathers' God. And the pity of it all is that we are not sinning as a nation against the light, but through ignorance. We know not what we do. Hence this unrest, this uneasiness, this blind groping for a remedy. I am firmly convinced that if the American people could be made to realize even now what is happening among them they would rise up as one man and return to the old paths. As God was banished by the schools they would bring Him back by the schools. But they will not listen to us. Religion is the last thing they are thinking of as a remedy for their ills. The message of this convention to them falls on unheeding or suspicious ears. Oh that there were some voice to which the nation would give heed to turn the minds of Americans from the ephemeral trifles of politics and business and pleasure to the one thing necessary! Oh for another Isaias to smite their sealed hearts, "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear,

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**But We Do, and Put Our Trust in Schools.**

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O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have brought up children and exalted them; but they have despised Me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib; but Israel hath not known Me and My people hath not understood."

As for ourselves, let us bear in mind that the message is for us, too. The supreme work before the Catholic Church in America to-day is the work of Christian education. Before it all the other works of mercy fade into insignificance; without it the very fire shall die down upon the altar and the sacrifice and the oblation shall cease. Thank God, His Holy Spirit long ago inspired the hearts of our leaders with a sense of the need of religious schools. It was a daring program they set before a feeble folk and few. But our people never doubted. Outsiders might slander and oppose, but they held their way. The few teachers of a century ago have grown into a great army whose members have given their lives to the cause, not for fee or reward, but in order that they may have

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**This the Greatest Work Before the Church.**

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the privilege of bringing Christ's little children to His blessed feet. This, to my mind, is the most compelling feature of the Church in America to-day—not the soaring cathedrals, not the crowded churches, not our material prosperity and closely knit organization, but the spectacle of a great system of Christian schools supported by the sacrifices of the Catholic people and made possible by the devotion of men and women who serve their Master in the religious life.

This, too, is one of the most auspicious signs of the times that, in spite of the keen competition and the limitless resources of other systems, the souls of the Catholic people are daily drawn closer to their schools. The principles which underlie the Catholic position are commending themselves more and more to their judgment and experience. A meeting such as this, a paper such as that read by the learned gentleman who preceded me, in which the characteristic eloquence of the South beautifies the clear thinking of the lawyer, your generous ap-



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### The Burden That is Laid on the Laity.

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preciation—all are evidence that the Catholic schools are not imposed on you by the sole authority of the Church. That similar meetings have been crowded in every city where this convention has been held, and that in any city of this country it would be possible to duplicate this gathering, are facts which should awaken our courage when the prospect looks drear. After all, you, too, and your brethren in the faith are Americans. You and they have a share in the moulding of public opinion; you and they have a part in guiding the destinies of the country. You and they know why this land is troubled. You and they know that the only cure is to bring God back to His own. You and they know that the only efficacious way to bring Him back is by Christian education.

But it is you, Catholic lay men and women, that must undertake this task. We priests and religious are not numbered with the tribes of Israel; our work is done apart. You come and go among your brethren, and when they will not listen to



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**Not Numbers, But Earnestness, Needed.**

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us they will listen and discourse with you. See that you know the principles which lie back of your devotion to Christian education. After all, they are not very recondite or hard to explain. The world has forgot all the Catechism, and we have to begin again with the first question, What is man? On the answer to that question hang all our policies and all our philosophies, and to you it has been given as it was given to the Apostles of old to be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth, that man is made in God's image and likeness and destined to be happy with Him forever.

And do not be cast down even if the overwhelming majority of the nation to-day thinks differently from you. This is the work of God, and, contrary to the sneer of the skeptic, God has no need of the big battalions. When He sent Elias to restore His name in Israel and the prophet lamented the universal apostacy of the nation He said, "I have yet left Me seven thousand men in Israel who have not bent the

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**In God Alone is Fulfilled the World's Desire.**

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knee to Baal." When Gideon went out against Madian with a great multitude the Lord tried them and sifted them till there remained but three hundred, and by the three hundred He wrought deliverance for the harassed land. It is not numbers that count, but the truth and the courage to maintain it. And I have no fear that here in America the Catholic laity will be unworthy of the great name of their fathers or that they will ever grow ashamed of the Cross of Christ. In that cross and in it alone is the healing of the nations. Only in the blessed vision of its precious burden shall be fulfilled the World's Desire.





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