

ANTI-CATHOLIC CALUMNIES OF FORMER TIMES

Forged documents, false decrees, and fabricated oaths, are as old as the art of deception and imposture (comments *Truth*). The Catholic Church, long before the age of Protestantism, suffered by the publication of false papal bulls and briefs.

The historian Pastor mentions the severe punishment meted out to a Roman official in the twelfth century for forging a papal bull authorizing the clergy of Norway to say Mass without wine.

The laws of the Church grew very precise and stringent respecting the style and form of ecclesiastical documents, and the tests which should be met in producing and proving the same. Yet as late as 1873, a forged papal bull, purporting to bear the signature of Pius IX., and making new regulations for papal elections, was published in Germany, with the connivance of some of Bismarck's officials; and as late as 1905, another forged document authorising the clergy of South America to marry, was put forth and widely circulated; without, however, working any material deception.

It would not be strange if, among those bitterly opposed to the Catholic Church, some were found unscrupulous enough to forge papal documents calculated, by the contents thereof, to engender prejudice.

The Bloody Bull.

In 1893, while the A.P.A. movement was troubling the people, an alleged "Papal Encyclical" was published in a Detroit weekly paper (April 8, 1893), its supposed author, an official of the anti-Catholic organisation.

This weird document ordered a massacre of all Protestants within the jurisdiction of the United States, "on the feast of St. Ignatius," next ensuing—July 31, 1893. We have testimony at the time (by Elbert Hubbard, in the *Arena*, June, 1894), of the widespread fear this fake encyclical produced. The Protestant ministers of Columbus issued a joint letter to their people, intended to allay such apprehension. An anti-Catholic paper (the *American Citizen*), of Boston, afterwards declared that "many good people took stock in the bogus document, among them, we are sorry to say, nearly every A.P.A. editor in this country."

What Ignatius Donnelly said, in the course of his discussion with "Prof." Sims, a leading lecturer of the A.P.A. (March, 1894), is worth noting in this connection: "I want to say, my friends, that I do not believe in some of the authorities quoted by the professor [Sims]. I doubt their authenticity. When he comes up here and admits that the A.P.A. organisation sent out an encyclical of the Pope that was bogus, and published documents that were forgeries, he cast doubt on every document he may produce. *False in one thing, false in all.*"

Among similar methods of influencing the more ignorant of those who fear "political Romanism" is the fabrication of bogus oaths, sometimes attributed to cardinals, again to the Jesuits, and recently even to lay Catholic fraternal or insurance orders.

Some of these "oaths" date back to the time of the famous "Popish Plot" and the cock and bull stories of the notorious Titus Oates. One of the famous "curses" of the Pope has been traced, verbatim, to that written as fiction by the famous English humorist, Laurence Sterne, in his best known book, *Tristram Shandy*.

The Jesuit "Oath."

The *American Citizen*, an anti-Catholic paper, said (February 17, 1912): "Nearly twenty years ago the *Toronto Mail* printed the so-called Jesuit oath. The paper was sued for slander. Court after court, as it was appealed, declared against *The Mail*. . . . It cost *The Mail* an immense amount of money to fight the case, and they could not prove that it was a genuine "Jesuit oath."

The Pope and the Confederacy.

Agents of the Southern Confederacy appeared at all the capitals of Europe, after the outbreak of the

rebellion, soliciting "recognition." We know that they were somewhat successful in London and Paris.

In the interchange of some diplomatic correspondence, Pope Pius IX. politely addressed Jefferson Davis by the official title that gentleman claimed to possess as president of the Confederate States. This simple act of civility is all there is in the allegation that Pius IX. "recognised the Southern Confederacy."

The "Southern Confederacy" itself did not so take it. Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State in President Davis's Cabinet, writing under date of February 1, 1864, to Mr. Dudley Mann, his diplomatic agent at Rome, said:

"As a recognition of the Confederate States, we cannot attach to it (the Pope's letter) the same value that you do; a mere inferential recognition, unconnected with political action or the regular establishment of diplomatic relations, possessing none of the moral weight required for awakening the people of the United States from their delusion that these States still remain members of the old Union.

"Nothing will end this war but the utter exhaustion of the belligerents, unless, by the action of some of the leading powers of Europe in entering into formal relations with us, the United States are made to perceive that we are in the eyes of the world a separate nation, and that the war now waged by them is foreign, not an internecine or civil war, as it is termed by the Pope.

"This phase of his letter shows that his address to the president as 'president of the Confederate States' is a formula of politeness to his correspondent, not a political recognition of the fact. None of our political journals treat the letter as a recognition in the sense you attach to it."

This incident is fully discussed by John Bigelow, ex-Minister of the United States to France, in *The North American Review* for October, 1893. Mr. Bigelow sees no more reason why the Pope's civility in addressing Davis as "President, etc.," should be construed as a "recognition of the Southern Confederacy," than his addressing the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury by that gentleman's official title would "recognise the Established Church of England."

Another related anti-Catholic fable of the civil war period (attributed to one Norman M. Romaine), is that 72 per cent. of the deserters from the Union Army were Irish-Catholics, and they began to desert "after the Pope's recognition of the Confederacy."

Let the editor of *The National Tribune*, G. A. R. paper, published at Washington, D.C., speak. Hear what he says:

"This is one of the absurd libels concerning the soldiers of the war, which has been given entirely too much currency. There is absolutely no official basis for the slander. In the first place, the Pope of Rome never recognised the Southern Confederacy. In the next place, there has never been any collation of the deserters from the United States army by nativity, religion or otherwise.

"The statement is the greatest possible slander to probably 100,000 as fine soldiers as ever carried a musket, and who were born in Ireland. These men served bravely and faithfully through the war and allowed no men of any nationality, religion, or other classification to surpass them in gallantry, fidelity, and fortitude. Thousands of them had been brought to this country when children, and grew up among us as thoroughly American as those who were born here; and those who came later in life speedily assimilated with the Americans and had no superiors in their patriotic spirit and devotion to the country."

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