

12 Am

J. M. S.

S.P. on board the Aurania, March 4. 85

~~It is only four hours since we left~~

and scarcely two full days, since

I parted with our Beloved Notre Dame

Our precious inmates, young & old,

But it seems to me like 2 full weeks -

I never realized before, to the same

extent, what an attachment my 12

years of life residence has created in

the depth of my heart, for so many

loving souls, not alone at Notre Dame,

but all around, as in our dear City,

where I have so many worthy friends,

that I would not exchange my

happy home for the rest of the world.

I cannot express the joy I felt on

taking the train, after the few parting

visits I made, & when I received the

cheering assurance that our little

troubles were all over; & that the

immediate consequence of the recent trials

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would undoubtedly prove, as I thought
a blessing in disguise, ^{proving me better}
state of things than ever before,
making of South Bend, what I
always had so much at heart, for it
a Model City, whose uncommon
prosperity & general contentment
would draw multitudes of new
enterprises & countless additional
talents; where Capital & Labor, animated
wholly by true Christian principles,
would find their mutual advantage
in supporting each other, even in
the trying test of public stagna-
tion of commerce, & never allowing
any socialistic resorts, which God
Himself never blesses but always
punishes severely. The first blessing
with which our risen Saviour repe-
tently greeted His apostles, as the
most precious of all, was peace: Pax vobis,

To its preservation no reason or noble
 sacrifice is too great, his interest
 in our things better interest
 I speak from experience, I know what
 I write on this vital question.

But to judge soundly of what happens
 in our age, we must rise to a higher
 stand point. What we have seen
 at our doors is a small affair, compa-
 red to what is daily reported from
 various other parts of the world. It is
 the continuation of the endless struggle
 between good & evil, or the reign of
 God & that of Satan; or in other words,
 the fight of Infidelity against the Church
 of Christ. It commenced with the
 world, & shall end only with it.

Infidelity is spreading ^{every where.} our age,
 as all men of sound mind are
 forced to acknowledge it, is becoming
 more & more sensibly, an age of incredulity.

Preceding was the first weapon
 Satan employed against mankind.
 Had our first Mother firmly adhered
 to the Divine word "that the day they
 would eat of the forbidden fruit, they
 should die," she would have saved
 herself & all her posterity. The same deadly weapon
 has been resorted to with increasing ^{regular} frequency
 as at first in Eden,
 It begins with a doubt, & when
 the word of God has been on the
 subject of a doubt, faith, as a sa-
 ving element is destroyed; this a
 wreck with all its fatal consequences. Who a
 year has read the Sacred Book, has
 learned, first of all, the plain & most serious
 truth, "Sine fide impossibile est placere Deo"
 & again: "He who will not believe is already
 judged; & unjustly, & indispensably ^{is} it is to
 salvation, faith must be entire & without
 any mental reservation; no partial faith can save

Here is the evil of the day, the contagious pestilence, now spreading over the earth, as it never did before. We live in an age of progress & invention, none denies it; but the noticeable feature ^{of our times} is incredulity, the increasing denigration of Divine Revelation, as if Divine Revelation could not stand the test of science, the new untenable boast of our faithless Scientists. To this undeniable fact is to be assigned the actual disturbance of Society, not only in our U. States, but all over Europe.

The ~~short~~ absurd atheism of an Ingersoll et al. may create disgust in Christian souls; but, at large, who will deny the deleterious effects of a doctrine so directly favoring, sanctioning & flattering the worst passions of the human heart? But Ingersoll is only one among the

the countless legion of sworn
 enemies of Christian Faith. This, in
 one sense, is nothing new to one who
 has read history. 1600 years ago, one
 of the most cruel persecutors, among
 the Roman Emperors, probably announ-
 ced his long wished for triumph
 over Christianity: Christianis *lucrum*
delatu. But the date of the proud
 announcement proved to be an unprecedented
 humiliation to the blind enemies of the
 Crucified; on the morrow, appeared
 in the sky the glorious Tabernacle,
 "In hoc signo vinces". Constantine
 saw it, understood it, routed his enemies,
 & declared himself the staunch Protector
 of the Cross. Thus came, after 3 centuries
 of merciless persecutions, the first tri-
 umph of the Church, at the very moment
 Satan had apparently marked out for its ruin.

Outside of the Cath. church, what
 do we see? M^r Ch^s Bonaparte
 has admirably described it, in his
 beautiful address to the members of
 the Plenary Council of Baltimore, on the
 20th of Nov. 1884. ^{Bonnet} In our day &
 country, two classes of thinking men
 contemplate the phases of life & thought
 portrayed in the manners of the times
 with ever increasing anxiety. Many see
 with alarm & distress fast deepening
 into silent despair, religious faith in
 themselves & others fading into a dim
 uncertainty, as to every thing beyond
 the world of sense. These men are
 involuntary skeptics. They would believe
 in a God, but they find only a possi-
 bility of His existence, in physical science,
 & His alleged Revelation as doubtful for
 critics, as Himself. They would believe

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in their own immortality; but they can
only hope it is real. They feel, too clearly
for their happiness, that with the funda-
mental doctrines of Christianity, they give
up the quickening spirit of modern civi-
lization, but the light which shows the
abyss at the brink of which they stand,
reveals no way of escape. They have seen
the religions they may still formally
profess, qualify & make meaningless
one tenet after another, concede this point,
silently abandon that, try & unity to compre-
mise over & over again with a constantly
advancing spirit of materialism & negation,
until the very idea that there can be any
fixed, immutable religious truth, has
become strange to them and while
they have lost so much, they have gained
nothing. The followers of Luther or Calvin
could believe in a Reformed Church; the
disciples of Voltaire or Rousseau

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 could believe in a regenerated Society,
 but modern Agnostics can believe
 nothing, nor even that they were wrong before.

Others look less below the surface
 of things; they are troubled by phenomena
 in which the 1st class recognize
 outward symptoms of the same

deep seated evil. On all sides they
 note in the American people a blunting
 of the sense of justice; a growing
 dimness of our moral sight; an inability
 to distinguish clearly between
 right & wrong; in short, a distortion
 & weakening of the national conscience.

To both classes we declare that
 which they elsewhere vainly seek. The
 creed of the Catholic Church is founded
 on no theory in physics or psychology.

She has no fear of the future, as all the
 speculations of idealist Metaphysicians

have never made one doubt for
 one moment the reality of his own
 existence or that of the visible universe,
 so no proof, however conclusive in seeming
 that our spiritual life is a dream, eternity
 a blank, the Gospel a myth, can touch her
 who lives & breathes, & has her being in
 the reality of Divine Truth. Her religion
 is no abstraction; it is a practical rule
 of life, founded on the ^{indestructible} rock which no wave
 or storm of human passion can ever shake.
 To deny the existence of God, Divine
 Providence, Revelation, the Soul with its
 immortal destinies for Heaven or for
 Hell, all, absolutely all, has become
 a matter of doubt, outside of the Church
 of Christ. But weakened as she appears
 by the withdrawal of all secular Power
 & the furious assaults of multiplying
 Legions, united only in one sense of

minor cast & blind hatred, the church
 remains a center of peace & calm,
 even among the fiercest tempests the
 world has ever known. She feels she
 will outlive this new test of her
 Divine Foundation, as she did all
 others; ^{God} is with her; & all her true
 children repeat, undisturbed: "If God
 is with us, ^{who is against us} ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~contradictions~~ & Happy
 the clear sighted & honest mind,
 & among these, happy the young
 students of Christian Institutions,
 whom the love of truth will turn
 away from the visible fallacies of
 such deceiving hollow systems, & carry them
 rejoicing into the saving arms of the
 Mother Church whose ultimate triumph
 will, this time, as ever, prove to be the
 lasting glory of pure & loving hearts, & the new
 confusion of the impious who say: Non est Deus

~~Our dear Bishop begs to
be very kindly remembered
& sends his Blessing to all
around you — J.S.~~