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"AMERICA FOR AMERICANS."—We hold that all men are Americans who swear Allegiance to the United States without a mental reservation.

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MARGARET L. SHEPHERD.

A Few Thoughts Gleaned From Her Lecture to Men Only at Washington Hall Last Monday Evening.

Roman Catholic Priests Characterized as the Scavengers of Satan--Children, Maids and Wives Placed on the Road to Hell.

Margaret L. Shepherd has agreed to return to Omaha and give three more lectures in Washington hall. She will speak to men and women Sunday evening, to women Monday afternoon and to men Monday night.

Her lectures last Sunday night, Monday afternoon and Monday evening were certainly a success—the hall being filled, and the audiences applauding her arraignment of the vile and corrupting tendency of the questions propounded by unmarried men to girls, young women and even to married women in the confessional of the Roman Catholic church.

The subjects she discussed were of such a character that, because of the stringent rules governing the transmission of printed matter through the mails, we cannot report the extracts she quoted from standard theological works of the Roman Catholic church and be certain of the paper ever reaching the subscribers; although Mrs. Shepherd, let it be understood, used exceedingly chaste language to convey the ideas that were laid down in Rome's text books in the grossest, most immoral, indecent and licentious words and sentences.

She began her lecture to men only by characterizing the Roman Catholic priest as the scavenger of Satan. She said that when a politician desired some dirty work done he always looked around among his friends to find whom he had least regard for and then sent for that one and paid him to do the work—(A voice—"By gosh, you're right;" laughter.)—"You've done that, have you?" (Applause.)—well, the devil, when he wanted a dirty institution like the confessional of the Roman Catholic church established, looked among his friends and concluded that the priest of that church was the fellow he had least respect for, so he had him do the work and put him in charge.

Oh, you men; you fathers, and husbands, and brothers, how long shall this blot on moral purity, this stain on morality, be permitted to exist on American soil?

I dislike to talk of the vileness, the immorality, the soul-damning influence that wraps the confessional box about, but it is a duty that I owe you, it is a duty I owe Christianity, to lay bare, to unmask, the terrible things that are done in the name of religion and in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, in the secrecy of the confessional.

In the name of Jesus a little girl of seven is induced to make her first confession to an unmarried man. She goes into the confessional—that dark spot into which not one ray of God's sunlight ever enters—kneels down, says the prescribed formula, and then is questioned by one of those sleek, fat priests, whose passions and whose desires are no different from the desires and passions of any other of God's creatures. She kneels there! The priest asks her if she has lied, if she has been disobedient and many other questions which her pure little mind, into which sin has not effected an entrance, readily forms an answer. He then asks her—I shall not give the priest's words; I will use my own language to convey the idea contained in his question—he asks her if she says her prayers before she goes to bed? Then, gentlemen, this man, oh, no, this beast, who claims to be the representative of Christ, this priest asks that little girl, that pure, innocent child, if she, upon retiring, ever does ought to herself that would cause immodest thoughts or immoral passions. You know a child of that age naturally knows nothing about that which the priest questions her. He tries to make it plain to her, but she does not understand. Growing impatient, he tells her to leave her compartment in the confessional and to come in to him. She does so. That child, who does not

know what sin is, goes into the box with the priest; and then, gentlemen, what a crime is committed in the name of religion and in the name of Jesus Christ! That priest gives that child a lesson in how she can be sinful—how she can be immoral.

Will you tell me that is religion? Will you tell me that is Christianity? That child has been taught a lesson she never will forget, and Jesus is made the covering. Oh, blasphemy!

Then the priest goes on questioning her. He asks her who are her playmates—whether they are little girls or little boys. If they are little boys, do they ever undress before her, or does she ever undress before them, and whether they ever do anything they should not do. Think of a man, an unmarried man, asking a seven-year-old girl such revolting questions, and then if her little mind is too pure to catch what he means, she must be taught, so that she may in the future be able to guard her soul against that sin. And that man claims to be a representative of Christ! Did Christ ever lead a child's mind into channels of sin? Did he not take a child and sit it in the midst of his disciples and say: "suffer little children to come unto me," and, "Except ye become as little children ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven?" What a sacrilege then, for this priest to claim to represent Christ! He is the representative of the devil.

That is Mrs. Shepherd's statement, in our words, of the first confession of a Roman Catholic child. She stands ready to prove that that is the practice laid down by Roman Catholic theologians, and followed by Roman Catholic priests. The charge is so serious that we cannot allow it to pass without offering space in these columns to Bishop Richard Scannell, the head of the Roman Catholic church in this part of Nebraska, to explain to the people that the church neither teaches nor practices such revolting things. Will Bishop Scannell say the Roman Catholic church theologians do not teach, or that Roman Catholic priests do not propound such revolting questions to little girls? If they do, should they not be arrested for running schools of immorality?

Mrs. Shepherd then took up the case of a young woman who is about to be married. The young lady goes into the confessional. That same fat, sleek priest is there. He is unmarried. He has passions like other men. Yet he asks her questions that none but a man of stone could ask a young, prepossessing, virtuous woman and not cause passion to consume him. She kneels before him. She confesses all her sins, except a secret sin.

But he is not satisfied. He must know the secret recesses of her heart—her very thoughts—so he asks if her betrothed ever attempted to take undue liberties with her? If he had attempted to kiss her? If he had kissed her on the brow, or on her cheek? If he had kissed her lasciviously on her lips, etc.

Then she says she has sinned grievously; that she has parted with her virtue—that gem of her womanhood. He asks her when? How often? Whether it was with a married or a single man; whether it was with her intended husband. She tells him the story.

If she has sinned the priest pronounces absolution, and then, while they are both wrought up over the disclosures and the recital, what do you expect?

It is the doctrine of the church of Rome that the betrothed husband should first go to the confessional, that the confessor might the more easily induce her to, and the betrothed wife be the more ready to confess her secret sins knowing that her betrothed husband had already confessed the sin in which they had been partners. If,

however, the betrothed husband was not guilty of sinning with her, if it was some other man, then the priest pronounces absolution and sends her to the arms of her betrothed husband as pure as she was the day she was born. Such is popery. To such depths it drags woman.

But you can readily understand the regard, the estimation, which the Roman Catholic church places on woman by the following instruction to the priesthood: "Should a monstrosity, born of a beast and a human, be baptized?" is a question propounded by the theologians. The answer is "if the monstrosity be born of a man and a beast, yes, because man is a lineal descendant of Adam, who was made a living soul, and because man is capable of reproducing a soul. If the monstrosity be born of a woman and a beast, no." There you get the estimation of woman from the standpoint of the priesthood!

Mrs. Shepherd then went into prenatal baptism, but we do not think we can explain it fully and keep clear of the postal regulations, so we will make the statement short and as plain as the English language will permit:

If it is found that the child of a Roman Catholic mother cannot be born alive, then the infant must be baptized before its birth and before its soul takes its flight into eternity. This is done by aid of a syringe filled with water, and by making the sign of the cross on any part of the infant which the priest can reach and by saying: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." If the mother dies in childbirth, or during pregnancy, the priest comes. He enters into the death chamber, the clothing is raised, an incision is made in the abdomen, the infant or the foetus is removed, and this unmarried man holds the embryo in the light and decides by its color whether it is dead or alive. If it is dead it is not baptized, it is not returned to the coffin with its mother, it is denied burial in consecrated ground, and is hid and buried in the garden or the field as a thing of loathing and contempt.

If it is alive, that priest baptizes it, and replaces it in the basket with its mother. Is that religion? That superstition which disfigures the dead to live out a rule of the Dark Ages, is that Christianity?

Then the lecturer took up the confessional as it relates to married women. This part cannot be pictured in type. It is too vile, too horrible, too revolting to gain admission to the mails. This we can say. The priest questions the wife and mother as to her most secret acts, words, thoughts, desires, and hopes. The marriage relation is ruthlessly invaded. A description of the intercourse of husband and wife is demanded. It must be described in detail. Certain rules laid down by these unmarried priests must be observed. Not to conform to those priestly rules lays them liable to mortal sin and eternal damnation. How many of you fathers, you brothers, you young men who are going with Roman Catholic girls and expect to make them your partners for life, how would you like those lecherous, drunker priests to ask your dear ones such awful, such insulting questions?

Some people wonder at my being able to stand before an audience composed of men and tell of these revolting and un-Christian practices; but I have put aside that false modesty that would close my mouth, and listen only to the call of duty. I am but the pioneer, the Argonaut in this work. In a few years there will be a score of women warning the public as I am warning you tonight. The evil of immorality is a national evil—it is our national crime and disgrace—and you men who wield the ballot will have to meet it some day.

For years the warning has been sounded from the pulpit and from the lecture platform. For years the columns of the patriotic press have teemed with editorials against its growth and against the institution that breeds it. Yet the people sleep on. It reminds me of Johnstown and the flood. For years men would go up above the city and inspect a dam that held millions of barrels of water, and they would come back and say the dam is unsafe; you ought to move out of this valley. Some day it will give way and then the whole city will be destroyed. So it went on year after year, and people began to laugh at those who would bring back the reports and call them alarmists. One day, however, the clatter of horses' hoofs was heard coming down the valley. A man, hatless and almost breathless dashed through the streets of Johnstown, shouting, "The dam has given way; flee to the hills." So it is today. The people hear these things against the

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A GRAND JURY NEEDED

The Courts, the County Board, the Board of Education and City Government Should be Investigated.

What a Former Grand Jury Had to Say on Municipal Corruption--The Bribe-Giver and Taker Scored--Same Conditions Exist To-day.

"We find that many crimes have been committed that are barred by the statute of limitations, and we recommend that a grand jury be impaneled hereafter at least once a year."

This is what the grand jury which adjourned after a four weeks' session ending March 11, 1892, said in its report to the district court! That same grand jury returned fifty-three indictments, including charges against several city officials. The newspapers said the jury had done good work, the court thanked the jury for its devotion to the public interests; every public official indicted by the jury escaped conviction through technicalities, and but one grand jury has been held since that time, more than six years ago.

In its report to the court, the most scathing document ever handed in by a Douglas county grand jury, the subject of corruption in the city government and school board, was treated as follows:

"During our investigation we have uncovered many abuses in city affairs which cannot be corrected by bills of indictment for want of sufficient testimony. The municipal affairs of Omaha during the past few years are honeycombed with irregularities that have been costly to the people. It is no secret that the factions in the city council have been created largely by the contractors and corporations. Instances are not rare where councilmen and other public officials have yielded the power entrusted to them with unblushing servility. Veracity and uprightness have been at a discount. Courage and manhood have too often been sacrificed to venality. So many jobs have gone through the city council that it has become an accepted idea throughout the country that material men and agents having business with the city must resort to corrupt methods if they would be successful.

"A grand jury which has listened to the sworn testimony of witnesses whose inclination or whose business has led them to investigate the methods prevailing in the conduct of public affairs, becomes forcibly aware of the reason why the contractors and corporations are so potent in the municipal government. Yet we are convinced that we have been able to uncover only a few of the crimes committed against the statutes that are designed to protect the public from loss at the hands of officials who are dishonest by nature and whose greed impels them, by solicitation of menace, to break all the restraints of propriety and decency. The ways of the corruptionist are devious and hard to trace! Bribes are given and accepted in all sorts of forms and under a variety of names. It may be a contract with the city or school board, or with some corporation having business with these bodies; it may be a suit of clothes, a silk hat, a junketing trip at the expense of the railroads or contractors, or a jamboree in the immoral district; it may be an unusual discount on a gas bill; a street car pass; the payment of the election expenses of candidates, or other consideration more or less valuable, given perhaps with a display of friendship and sometimes accepted with pardonable motives, but it is too often designed to woo the representatives of the people away from their duty, thus removing the obstructions in the way to the public treasury.

"Although embarrassed by reluctant witnesses, this jury has pursued the rumors which justify the foregoing statements with unremitting care, only to find that the statutes have been evaded by some trick or device known to the trained hoodler. There seems to be no adequate remedy except by requiring a higher standard of honesty and efficiency in those who are selected for official places. To this end we believe the primary election law should be amended to conform as far as prac-

ticable to the Australian ballot system, so that contractors and others cannot manipulate the primaries in the interest of the taxpayer.

"We recommend that the law of bribery be so amended as to make the bribe-taker alone responsible. Bribe-givers, who are now equally criminal with the bribed, refuse to criminate themselves, and it is extremely difficult to get competent testimony on which to found indictments for this flagrant species of public wrong. We recommend that a general law be enacted preventing any official from drawing more than one salary at a time for his services to the public. There is a crying demand for more honor and honesty of purpose on the part of those who assume to administer the public business. Examples of integrity and public spirit are here and there met with, but the tendency has been to transact business with a looseness and extravagance that would bankrupt any private institution."

Referring to the board of education the grand jury of 1892 had these wholesome suggestions to make:

"Among a variety of serious rumors affecting this body, several cases have come to our knowledge where members of the board have been or still are engaged, either directly or indirectly, in furnishing supplies or being interested in contracts with the board. We are advised that this is illegal, though not indictable, as the law provides no penalty in such cases. But it should not require a penal clause to prevent members from violating the law. The position of member of that body is purely honorable, without the slightest emolument. Every member, by reason of his office, is a prominent character in the minds of the children and their parents throughout the city. It is folly to inculcate the precept of obedience to law while the child does not have to look outside the body which controls his daily training to find examples of violation of law. Members of the board who wish to contract with that body should resign their positions, and we commend the subject of a revision of the law to the legislature."

Those were the conditions six years ago. What are they today?

There are seven judges of the district court. An equity judge issues a restraining order. Three other judges meet, and restrain the clerk and sheriff from obeying the order. A quarrel ensues. Charges and counter-charges are made. One faction says another is crazy. Another asserts that the others are both ignorant and corrupt. The quarrel goes on. The courts are disgraced. The people are helpless. But the people remember that during the last city election one of the judges mixed in this quarrel said: "That as between an embezzler and a gambler, he would support the embezzler for mayor of the city." Another judge of the same faction vouched for the honesty of a man whose records have since convicted him of being a defaulter as collector and custodian of public funds. People are asking what is at the bottom of this quarrel? A grand jury should investigate.

The grand jury of 1892 found a very bad condition of affairs in the city government. How is it today? A man declared by the supreme court to be ineligible is holding the office of mayor, while the president of the city council has become a party to a scheme to defeat justice and to deprive the rightful holder of the office of his rights. A grand jury should investigate.

A city prosecutor appointed by the convicted mayor acts as both prosecutor and defender in the city cases. A grand jury should investigate.

The air is full of rumors respecting inducements offered city authorities to turn Fourteenth street over to the Terminal company. A grand jury should investigate.

A member of the city council of

Omaha has been put upon trial for embezzlement of the funds of the Pacific Express company of which he was auditor. He should resign his seat.

A county commissioner is charged with having voted away public money in violation of law on claims previously rejected. This same commissioner lobbied \$100,000 of outlawed claims through the county board that he might allow himself \$3,500 of public money. The county attorney should sue, and the grand jury should investigate.

A school site is purchased at thousands of dollars more than it is worth. Grave rumors are afloat about this and other transactions of the school board. A grand jury should investigate.

The grand jury of 1892 failed to uncover many crimes with all the power of the county behind it. The matters related above have come to the surface without a grand jury investigation. There is enough in them to justify the calling of a jury. What an honest jury might uncover would astound the community. It's up to the district judges.

ROME DOWNED.

The Roman Catholic papers of Detroit previous to the late election were outspoken in their hatred of the Hon. John B. Corliss, 33 degrees, congressman from the first congressional district of Michigan, for his opposition to the political methods of their church.

The immigration bill, the bill permitting Catholics to erect a chapel at West Point Military Academy and other measures that the Roman Catholics wished passed through congress, had not received the hearty support of Brother Corliss; then he had at one time delivered an address before the Orange society, and it was more than suspected that he was a member of the A. P. A. But the whole trouble evidently centered in the fact that Congressman Corliss had refused to wear the chains of Rome on the questions affecting Romanism, which will come before the next congress. The Witness says:

"The next congress is going to be a very important one. Catholic questions are bound to come up in connection with Porto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines. We want a representative there who will look after the interests of his Catholic constituents who will not be afraid nor ashamed to advocate their cause and who will stand for right and justice though the heavens fall. John B. Corliss is not such a representative. He should not receive the suffrages of Catholic citizens, for in voting for John B. Corliss Catholics would be casting their votes for either an ignorant blunderer, a skulking coward or an artful dodger."

This is Roman Catholic logic: If you do not stand up for the papacy against the world, then you do not stand for right and justice. It was ever thus. The Tyler is glad to know that the patriotic citizens of the First district, Catholic as well as Protestants, decided against so false a doctrine. The Hon. John B. will return to congress for the third term. The mistakes he made in the past in not being more pronounced against the unjust encroachments of Rome upon the liberties of the people of this country can be remedied, when the measures indicated by the Witness come before the next congress. The representatives of Rome and not of the Republic will then be known by the company they keep.—American Tyler.

ANOTHER.

Southbridge, Mass., Dec. 1, 1898.—Dear Sir:—I see you are still in want of money. I don't think it possible to get you subscribers here—so far off, and then many might think this would be just the place for an A. P. A. council, but if they were here they might think different. Fully two-thirds of our population are Roman Catholics, and a majority of our voters are the same. The most of the Americans are afraid to say their souls are their own and are completely under the thumb of the priests, as they dominate our public schools and public library and business places. But I will do the next best thing. I have a friend in Brooklyn who would be highly pleased with the paper, and you may send it to him for a year, for which please find enclosed \$2.00. I heartily agree with you about the great contest which is coming. It will be a hard one. Yours in F. P. P., C. L. N.

ANOTHER.

Ellensburg, Washington, December 2, 1898.—To the American, Gentlemen: You will find enclosed a money order for \$2.00 to renew my subscription for the American for the year 1899. Yours respectfully, JAMES IRWIN.