

**THE QUESTION OF THE
HOUR: THE BIBLE AND
THE SCHOOL FUND**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649685431

The Question of the Hour: The Bible and the School Fund by Rufus W. Clark

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Cover @ 2017

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BY
RUFUS W. CLARK, D. D.



BOSTON:
LEE AND SHEPARD.
1870.

LC71
C6

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1870, by

RUFUS W. CLARK,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Northern
District of New York.

Silman
1870

STEREOTYPED AT THE
BOSTON STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY,
19 Spring Lane.

63

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INTRODUCTION.

THE question before us is one of vital moment to every American citizen. It relates to our individual interests and hopes. It touches the heart of our national life. It enters into the future of our republic, and bears upon every interest, social and religious, that is embarked in our perpetuity and success. We would approach it, therefore, under a sense of our solemn obligation to God. We would discuss it as patriots and Christians, bound to give to our country and religion every service that can strengthen the one, or perpetuate and extend the other.

The attack upon our public schools has various phases, all of which, however, aim at the same result—the destruction of the system provided by our fathers, and cherished by their

descendants. The effort that is being made to exclude the Bible from our schools has underlying it a deeper purpose ; and that is, to obtain, if possible, a portion of the school funds to educate youth in principles that are in direct antagonism to our civil and religious institutions.

This matter is no secret. It is open to all our citizens, to all the world. The Papacy, that is growing weak in Europe, seeks renewed strength on our soil. And it boasts of its future triumphs here. Said a Romish priest, when commenting upon the losses of the church in Italy, "We can afford to let the rags of Italy go into the hands of Garibaldi, when we are taking possession of the United States." An Italian paper says, "The Roman Court expects to be able to control the American Republic." At a meeting of Roman Catholics, held in New York last year, and representing all parts of the country, one of the speakers, exulting over what had been gained by them through special appropriations from the New York legislature, said, "This is the little finger, and we must persevere till we get the whole hand." That hand,

I believe, they never will get, unless it is palsied by apathy. If this people are willing to yield, step by step, to the encroachments of that system whose word is death to all human freedom, whose breath withers human happiness, and whose anathemas fall upon all who do not yield to its authority; if Americans cannot appreciate the institutions under which they live, or see at what a cost of blood, and treasure, and heroic daring they were purchased; if legislatures will continue to appropriate the money of the descendants of our fathers to sustain schools where children are taught everything *but* the love of civil and religious liberty; if Boards of Education, like that at Cincinnati, are ready to vote the precious Bible out of the public schools, and forbid the use of religious books and the singing of sacred songs in the schools; if Protestant ministers and others are ready, at the first note of alarm, to give up the Bible, — then the hand that the foe is striving to get may be palsied. It may lose its vitality, and become withered and dead. Then the Papacy may grasp it, and the American Republic become the grave of liberty. Then the dead may come from Rome to bury the