

in favor of the proposition, or against it? Reasoning *a priori*, should we conclude these three leading institutions of the social system to be mutually dependent, and so connected that diseased action in one shall be communicated to all the rest?

In order to obtain a satisfactory answer to these inquiries, let us make a series of suppositions.

Let us, in the first place, imagine that religion is stricken from this trio. Can education and freedom long survive?

To live without religion, is to be destitute of all sense of moral obligation to God or our fellow-men, and to be free from all influences and sanctions drawn from a future state of retribution. In such circumstances we need not resort to any theological dogma to show that supreme selfishness would be the controlling law of life, and consequently, that every man would strive to gain as much power, and distinction, and property as possible. But the more talented and discerning few would soon discover, that in proportion as the mass of men were enlightened and free, would be the difficulty of gratifying their selfish desires. While, therefore, they might encourage education and freedom among a favored few, they would try to keep the many ignorant and in servitude. This is, in fact, the very process that has been acted over a thousand times in the history of our globe. The masses must be kept ignorant and degraded, or the few cannot monopolize the power, wealth, and influence, which selfish nature urges them to seek after with irresistible impulse. To root out religion, then, is to aim a death blow at education and freedom.

Let us next suppose a nation to be blessed with religion and freedom, but without education. Can she long retain the former?