

no resolutions could be more commendable. And if this had been some party banner used merely to garnish some partisan platform, I could well understand the disgust it might excite. But I am unable, I confess, to see how the two subjects or the two flags can be so confounded; and with the profoundest reverence for the teachings of Religion in its most evangelical form, I have never been able to perceive how men of the purest religious faith and devoted with the sincerest purposes to the solemn Worship of God, can find in such a purpose any thing inconsistent with the most ardent love of their Country. How they can turn their back upon its flag or refuse to offer up a prayer in its behalf, and call such an exhibition or such offerings - Politics.

Such was not the faith nor the practice of our Fathers. In our Revolutionary times when making our first struggle for Civil and Religious freedom, Patriotism and Religion went hand in hand together. The men of those days clung to their Country with an instinctive adoration second only to that which they rendered to God himself; and the Minister who would have refused or hesitated to worship under the flag of the one, would not long have been tolerated at the Altars of the other.

Looking therefore to the conduct which provoked the first order of the Military Authorities I can see no reason for the complaint that your Congregation has been baselessly made an exception to all others; Whilst in the requirements of the order itself there is certainly nothing to authorize the assumption that it is an interference with that Constitutional provision which declares that no man on account of his religious persuasion ought "to be molested in his person or estate."

I take occasion here to suggest, that even if the order could be by any one regarded as trenching in any degree upon that religious liberty which it was the purpose of our Constitution to secure, there is nothing in that Instrument which makes that right so absolutely sacred and paramount as the comments of yourselves and occasionally of others upon its inviolability would lead us to suppose. On the contrary the very clause which guarantees this right, uses language which shows that those who framed it recognized other and higher obligations. "The language employed is "no person ought by any law to be molested in his person or estate on account of his religious persuasion, or profession or for his religious practice, unless under color of Religion any man shall disturb the good order, peace or safety of the State." Where then, as everywhere, and under all Governments is the Supreme law to which all others are subordinate - the Public Safety and the Public Peace.

I beg that you will not for a moment suppose that in quoting the above proviso I mean to impute to you or your Congregation any design to do aught under the color of Religion to disturb the good order, peace or safety of the State; I have no such thought. But however unobjectionable may have been your purpose, Gentlemen of your intelligence must on reflection readily perceive that in such times as these and in a loyal community like ours, with its sensibilities profoundly stirred by the sufferings