

W TH  
899

THE INFLUENCE OF JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS  
UPON  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH\*  
IN  
AMERICA

By

JAMES PHILIP WORTHINGTON

B.A., Gustavus Adolphus College

B.Th., Luther Theological Seminary

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY  
in  
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, New York  
April -- 1950

BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY LIBRARY  
HATFIELD, PA.

17741

To

My Wife Adelaide

T A B L E   O F   C O N T E N T S

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| <u>INTRODUCTION</u> . . . . .                                   | Page 2 |
| A. The Subject Defined . . . . .                                | 2      |
| B. The Subject Delimited . . . . .                              | 3      |
| C. The Subject Justified . . . . .                              | 3      |
| D. The Method of Treatment . . . . .                            | 4      |
| E. Sources for the Study . . . . .                              | 5      |
| <br><u>CHAPTER I: YEARS OF PROMISE</u> . . . . .                | 8      |
| A. Introduction . . . . .                                       | 8      |
| B. Significant Beginnings . . . . .                             | 9      |
| 1. In Baltimore . . . . .                                       | 9      |
| 2. In Ireland . . . . .   | 9      |
| 3. In New Orleans . . . . .                                     | 10     |
| 4. At St. Charles' College and St. Mary's<br>Seminary . . . . . | 10     |
| C. The Progressive Priest . . . . .                             | 12     |
| 1. Parish Priest--Sunday School . . . . .                       | 12     |
| 2. Second Plenary Council . . . . .                             | 13     |
| 3. North Carolina Mission . . . . .                             | 16     |
| 4. Methods and Vision . . . . .                                 | 17     |
| 5. Youngest Member of Vatican Council . . . . .                 | 19     |
| 6. Bishop of Richmond . . . . .                                 | 21     |
| D. Summary . . . . .  | 24     |
| <br><u>CHAPTER II: YEARS OF SEASONING</u> . . . . .             | 27     |
| A. Introduction . . . . .                                       | 27     |
| B. Archbishop of Baltimore . . . . .                            | 27     |
| 1. Team-work . . . . .  | 27     |
| 2. Defined Purpose . . . . .                                    | 29     |
| 3. Public Life . . . . .  | 31     |

May, 1950 27815

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| 4. Useful Hobby . . . . .                                   | 34     |
| 5. Friendships . . . . .                                    | 36     |
| C. The Archbishop's Masterpiece . . . . .                   | 37     |
| 1. Preparation for the Third Plenary Council . . . . .      | 37     |
| 2. Leadership for the Third Plenary Council . . . . .       | 39     |
| 3. Official Definitions . . . . .                           | 40     |
| 4. Characteristics of the Legislation . . . . .             | 44     |
| 5. Chart of the Future . . . . .                            | 46     |
| D. Summary . . . . .  | 47     |
| <br><u>CHAPTER III: YEARS OF POWER</u> . . . . .            | <br>50 |
| A. Introduction . . . . .                                   | 50     |
| B. The Second American Cardinal . . . . .                   | 51     |
| 1. Champion of Knights of Labor . . . . .                   | 51     |
| 2. Rome Shocked . . . . .                                   | 53     |
| 3. Victory Won . . . . .                                    | 55     |
| 4. Power in Rome . . . . .                                  | 56     |
| 5. Western Visitor . . . . .                                | 57     |
| C. A Cardinal's Problems . . . . .                          | 60     |
| 1. The School Question--Faribault Plan . . . . .            | 60     |
| 2. Cahensly Movement . . . . .                              | 64     |
| 3. Victory of American Catholicism . . . . .                | 67     |
| 4. Catholic University . . . . .                            | 68     |
| 5. Coming of the Papal Delegate . . . . .                   | 72     |
| 6. War Policies . . . . .                                   | 74     |
| D. Summary . . . . .  | 76     |
| <br><u>CHAPTER IV: YEARS OF TRIUMPH</u> . . . . .           | <br>79 |
| A. Introduction . . . . .                                   | 79     |
| B. The Popular Cardinal . . . . .                           | 79     |
| 1. Through a Popular Cardinal to a Popular Church . . . . . | 79     |
| 2. Gibbons and Socialism . . . . .                          | 81     |
| 3. Growing Catholic University--Gibbons Hall . . . . .      | 83     |
| 4. Public Relations . . . . .                               | 84     |
| C. The World War Cardinal . . . . .                         | 87     |
| 1. Activities Before the War . . . . .                      | 87     |
| 2. National Catholic War Council . . . . .                  | 89     |

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| D. The Cardinal's Legacy . . . . .   | 91      |
| 1. National Catholic Welfare Council . . . . .   | 91      |
| 2. Gibbons, Wilson and Benedict XV . . . . .   | 94      |
| 3. Death of Gibbons . . . . .  | 95      |
| E. Summary . . . . .   | 97      |
| <br><u>CHAPTER V: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</u> . . . . .                                   | <br>99  |
| A. Summary of Study . . . . .  | 99      |
| B. Factors Which Made Possible His Influence . . .                                       | 101     |
| C. Significance of Influence Upon Contemporary<br>Roman Catholicism in America . . . . . | 102     |
| <br><u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u> . . . . .  | <br>106 |

## THE INTRODUCTION

THE INFLUENCE OF JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS  
UPON  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH  
IN  
AMERICA

INTRODUCTION

A. THE SUBJECT DEFINED

There is evidence that certain strategic policies have been adopted and employed by the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in America.<sup>1</sup> These strategic policies which have been employed have apparently contributed to the phenomenal growth of the Roman Catholic Church in America, for in two hundred years it has increased from the smallest to the largest church in the nation.<sup>2</sup> With the above facts in mind, it will be the purpose of this study to discover the part which James Cardinal Gibbons had in formulating and applying the strategic policies which have been followed by the Roman Catholic Church.

. . . . .

1. Blanshard, Paul: American Freedom and Catholic Power, p. 10.
2. Ibid., p. 8.



## B. THE SUBJECT DELIMITED

Since the policies of the Catholic Hierarchy are extremely numerous and varied, no attempt will be made at an exhaustive treatment. Rather, this study will limit itself to the significant events of the inter-relation of Gibbons and his church. These significant events will be selected according to the estimate of Cardinal Gibbons himself or according to the estimate of other Catholic writers. The pattern of these events reveals to the student how the early life and background of Cardinal Gibbons enabled him to adapt Roman Catholic policies so that they fit into the American point of view in a better way than they had up until his time.

## C. THE SUBJECT JUSTIFIED

Whenever any organization, whether religious or secular, claims the loyalty of eighteen per cent of the total population of a nation, the policies which have influenced and are influencing the members of that organization assume tremendous significance.<sup>1</sup> It is very important, then, for the student to discover the origin and content of those significant policies. This study<sup>2</sup> reveals the author of most of the important policies.

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 11.

2. Will, A. S.: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, p. 234.

It also reveals the factors involved in the formulation of those policies. The source material also suggests in a very clear way that many of the most able and influential Catholic leaders looked upon Gibbons as the man who could combine the American point of view and the Catholic point of view successfully. From the above mentioned facts, it is clear that there is a strong linkage between James Gibbons and the policies which have helped shape the large organization that now constitutes the Roman Catholic Church in America. This linkage will be set forth and documented in the course of this thesis.

#### D. METHOD OF TREATMENT

The findings presented in this study will be drawn from historical sources. The method will thus be that of the historian who seeks to ascertain the essential elements of some phase of a certain period or event. This method will involve the selection of the important events in the life of Gibbons and the life of the Roman Catholic Church in America between the years of 1834 and 1921. The study will reveal the operation of the law of interchange in that the church reached out to influence Gibbons and then Gibbons in due time

. . . . .

Ibid., p. 201.

reached out to influence the church. As little emphasis as possible will be placed upon the commonplaces of Gibbons' life. Rather the emphasis will be upon the thought-life of Gibbons and his activities which were directly related to the more permanent policies of the Roman Catholic Church in America. The study will follow a logical progression, moving from the smaller events to the larger and most important phases of the life of Gibbons and his church.

#### E. SOURCES FOR THE STUDY

Sources which have come from the pens of Catholic writers have been used for the most part in making this study. This has been done in order to see more clearly the inner thought pattern and the basic point of view that only a Catholic can reveal to a student. In so far as possible, the personal writings of Cardinal Gibbons have been used. However, since he wrote very little in his early life, his statements made later to his official biographer, Allen Sinclair Will, concerning his early life, will constitute the best source material available on the early part of his activity and thought. In later years the Cardinal was writing and speaking almost constantly, therefore ample material is available which reveals his purposes and ways of realizing those goals. A few non-Catholic sources will be used which,

because of their high quality and accuracy, will make a contribution to this study.

CHAPTER I

YEARS OF PROMISE

## CHAPTER I

### YEARS OF PROMISE

#### A. INTRODUCTION

The first chapter will be devoted to significant events in the early life of Gibbons which are essential for an understanding of his later activity. His early home life in Baltimore as well as his later training in Ireland will be traced briefly. The contribution of the element of travel and his experiences in New Orleans will also be considered. Some reference will be made to his decision which resulted from his attending a Redemptorist Mission in New Orleans. This decision led him to travel to St. Charles College in Maryland, where he began his study for the priesthood. Reference to a small number of events in his schooling which point toward future events will be made and then the activities of the young priest will be traced from his work in Baltimore, until as Bishop of North Carolina, he took his place as the youngest member of the Vatican Council. Reference will also be made to the years following the Council, in which James Gibbons further proved himself as Bishop of Richmond, Virginia.

## B. SIGNIFICANT BEGINNINGS

### 1. In Baltimore

James Gibbons was one of the many Irish sons of Baltimore, for when he was born in 1834, 75,000 of Baltimore's 500,000 people were estimated to be Catholic.<sup>1</sup> Most of these 75,000 Catholics were of Irish descent who had come to America in the pre-famine emigration.<sup>2</sup> The parents of James Gibbons were among those who came. Thomas Gibbons was employed in the large shipping industry of Baltimore; thus young James knew the point of view of the laboring man from his earliest boyhood.<sup>3</sup> Another part of the boy's early experience involved the Cathedral which was about one-half mile from the Gibbons home. In this Cathedral he was baptized and learned something of the Catholic faith and point of view.<sup>4</sup>

### 2. In Ireland

When his father's health began to fail, the family returned to Ballinrobe, Ireland. James entered school in Ireland and received an unusually fine training in the Latin and Greek classics.<sup>5</sup> This background is evident in many of his later writings, especially in Our Christian Heritage.<sup>6</sup>

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 7.
2. Ibid., p. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 3.
4. Ibid., p. 1
5. Ibid., p. 16
6. Gibbons, James Cardinal: Our Christian Heritage, p.114.

### 3. In New Orleans

After the death of Thomas Gibbons in Ireland in 1847, Bridget Gibbons wanted to return to America. This she did in 1853, bringing her family to New Orleans.<sup>1</sup> James, who was almost nineteen years of age when this voyage was made, must have been impressed deeply by the long and stormy expedition. As soon as the family was settled in New Orleans, he secured a position as a clerk in a grocery store. He evidently had ability and people liked him, for the owner of the store soon offered to take young Gibbons into partnership. Gibbons chose to enter the priesthood instead, but the fact that the offer was made, tells us something of his character and personality.

### 4. At St. Charles' College and St. Mary's Seminary

The family was little more than settled in New Orleans when the plague of yellow fever visited the area. Ten thousand people died before the late frost came, and James Gibbons was one of the many who nearly died.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after recovery, he attended a mission conducted by three Redemptorist priests who had been converted from Protestantism. Their messages made a profound impression upon the mind and heart of the

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 16.

2. Ibid., p. 19.



young Irishman who had recently been near death's door. Thus late in the summer of 1855, just after his twenty-first birthday, he set out on a river boat up the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers to Cincinnati, Ohio. Proceeding from there by rail to the Alleghany Mountains, by stage over them and then by rail again, he arrived at St. Charles College in Baltimore in time to start his training<sup>1</sup> for the priesthood. He knew Latin and Greek so well that he completed the six year course at St. Charles College in two years, and although he wanted to take a third year at St. Charles, he was forced to enter St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.<sup>2</sup>

Soon after his entrance into the seminary, his health broke and for some time it was uncertain whether he could continue his training for the priesthood. He recovered and continued his work, but he was frail and was forced to take extra care to keep well as long as he lived. Allen Sinclair Will, who was the only official biographer of James Gibbons, refers to the problem of health in relation to the Cardinal's activities many times throughout the two large volumes. His biographer had access to the records of the St. Mary's Seminary and of course points out the remarkable abilities shown by

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 24.
2. Ibid., p. 39.

Gibbons in Seminary. Even more significant is the fact that his friends in college called him Dominus, which<sup>1</sup> means Master.

### C. THE PROGRESSIVE PRIEST

#### 1. Parish Priest--Sunday School

James Gibbons received the tonsure in the Baltimore Cathedral, September 15, 1858, at the hands of Archbishop Kenrick and was ordained to the priesthood<sup>2</sup> June 30, 1861, by the same prelate. He was sent to a small and poor parish known as Canton's St. Bridget's Church in Maryland.<sup>3</sup> He won the confidence of the people by setting aside most of his own quarters to make room for them to hold fairs and other community meetings. On the second floor of his quarters he started a parochial school for the children of the parish. He also served St. Lawrence's Church, but the heavy schedule seemed to be too much for his frail body. His people thought that he had tuberculosis and even expressed their opinion that he could not live more than two months. Gibbons was overjoyed when a doctor could find nothing wrong with his lungs and was soon able to resume

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 31
2. Ibid., p. 41
3. Ibid., p. 47

his duties and also become a volunteer chaplain in Fort McHenry and Fort Marshall.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Second Plenary Council

In June of 1865 came the call which was to change the course of his entire life. Archbishop Spalding of Baltimore had become interested in Gibbons from the time he met him in Louisville, Kentucky, when Gibbons was on his way to New Orleans to visit his family after completing college.<sup>2</sup> Spalding was getting old and was in poor health, yet the Pope had ordered Spalding to preside over a Second Plenary Council which was not far in the future. In short, Spalding needed an able secretary to do a great part of his work. Thus he called Gibbons. Reluctantly, Gibbons accepted the call and said farewell to the people who had learned to prize their progressive young priest. According to Gibbons' own statement, had he not accepted that call, he might have spent his entire life in that parish.<sup>3</sup>

Will, whose biographical account was approved by Gibbons himself, tells us something of the significance of the position of secretary to the Archbishop of Baltimore. In that day it was considered to be a stepping

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 54.
2. Ibid., p. 67.
3. Ibid., p. 65.

stone to promotion in the church, for at that time the Archbishop of Baltimore was to a great extent the representative and spokesman of the Pope in America as a whole. To the Archbishop were addressed all general communications from the Vatican and he received commissions to act for the Pope in the adjustment of controversies and the administration of corrective measures. In turn, through the Archbishop's reports, Rome learned, in a large measure, of the operations and progress of the church in America. The secretary of the Archbishop framed many of these reports and in general carried out<sup>1</sup> the instructions of the Archbishop.

While Gibbons carried out the orders of the Archbishop, he was also busy in the Baltimore parish where he was born. In January, 1866, Gibbons again revealed his progressive point of view and established the first Sunday School in Baltimore's Catholic circles. This school became so popular that in its second year, the average attendance was five hundred per week. At the same time he taught catechetical classes at a school<sup>2</sup> and at an orphanage.

In October of 1866, the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore convened. Archbishop Spalding presided

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 66.
2. Ibid., p. 71.

over it, but Gibbons was assistant chancellor of the Council and did a great share of the work. During the time the Council met, Gibbons caught a vision of the over-all program of his church. This vision thrilled him. From that time on, he seemed to have new power and ability to care for the affairs of his church and gave himself completely to its work.<sup>1</sup>

The Second Plenary Council helped prepare the way for the work that Gibbons was to accomplish more fully at a later time. Several constitutions were framed for new dioceses; regulations were made concerning the way priests were to preach and many rules concerning church practice were formulated. Priests were to preach in an explanatory way rather than in a controversial manner and pulpit attacks upon public magistrates were not to be made. Entrance money was not to be collected at churches; free burial was to be given to the poor and Catholics might be buried with sacred rites in non-Catholic cemeteries if they possessed lots in such places, provided they were not obtained in contempt of church law. Bishops were directed to seek to use a uniform method in granting matrimonial dispensations and all priests were to be instructed to discourage mixed marriages. Even more significant, however, was the decree that every

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 74.

parish should erect a parish school which was to be staffed by teachers belonging to religious congregations. If no parish school could be provided, Catholic children were ordered to attend catechetical classes in addition to public school. This above decree made it necessary for priests to be better trained. Consequently, plans for new preparatory schools and seminaries were adopted. In addition, the Council condemned the Masonic Order, the Odd Fellows and the Sons of Temperance. Special consideration was also given to the post-war conditions of the South. As a result the post of Vicarate Apostolic of North Carolina was established. Gibbons, then thirty-two years of age, was<sup>1</sup> unanimously nominated for that position. His appointment was later confirmed, and in the Baltimore Cathedral, Gibbons was made bishop in the year of 1868.

### 3. North Carolina Mission

When Gibbons arrived to take up his new work in North Carolina, he faced one of the most difficult tasks of his life. His biographer states that most of the people in the area regarded Catholicism with a deep-seated<sup>2</sup> misunderstanding. Gibbons set out to win the confidence of those who doubted and distrusted him and

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 76-82.
2. Ibid., p. 83.

his church. Since there were few Catholic churches in the district, he sought and gained permission to speak in various Protestant churches.

Gibbons set aside convention and went about disarming the people of their prejudice. One of the most striking examples of this fact is the account which he related to his biographer. He obtained permission to speak in a Methodist Church. The people were summoned by the church bell; the Methodist choir assisted in the services; Gibbons stood in the Methodist pulpit and read his Scripture lessons and text from a Protestant Bible. His sermon was not doctrinal, but stressed the brother-<sup>1</sup>hood of man and duty to God and country. Since he was a native of the South and was very careful not to open any of the wounds inflicted by the war, the people received him.

#### 4. Methods and Vision

In describing some aspects of his mission in the state of North Carolina, his methods have been suggested in part. However, several specific elements in his methods should be mentioned. One of the most important parts of his work was the fact that he made daily and constant contact with the people. This part of his method is revealed by the entries in his daily

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 93-94.

log of his activities which is included in part in the official biography. With one priest to assist him, he traveled in a worn-out little wagon throughout the state.<sup>1</sup> He was working among poor people for the most part and he became one of them. He faced cold and storm to visit them and always gave them a message that would not offend. He wanted them to like him so that they would like his church. ✓✓✓

Within a year his methods were bringing about results in a visible form. The support of the people in money and interest enabled him to start St. Mary's College for the purpose of training native Southern priests. He was also able to purchase quarters for the Sisters of Mercy in Wilmington and brought a group of them from the mother house in Charleston to work in that city.<sup>2</sup>

The vision of Gibbons for North Carolina was to establish a strong base from which to work in the South. By establishing a preparatory school for the priesthood in the state he would better be able to draw young men from that area. In transplanting a group of Sisters into the state, he was also making it possible to draw young women into the service of the

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., pp. 95-101.
2. Ibid., pp. 112-113.



church and at the same time the Sisters who were there, devoted their time to helping the poor and needy, thus winning their love and confidence.

While his vision included the above for North Carolina, the experience in that state gave him a vision for the whole American Catholic Church. His effort then and later centered about the task of overcoming prejudice toward Catholics. Thus he studied the non-Catholic point of view and formed his appeal upon the basis of his understanding of the mind of the non-Catholic citizen. ✓

The insight into American life which he had from his varied experiences as a boy and young man, plus his intimate contact with the people of Maryland and North Carolina as a priest, gave him a broad charity, amazing self-control in the face of opposition and a wide horizon of view. His biographer sums up these elements when he states that the impressions gained in country towns and secluded rural homes were felt later<sup>1</sup> in the Vatican itself.

##### 5. Youngest Member of Vatican Council

After a little more than a year in North Carolina, Gibbons went to Rome to take his place in the Vatican Council. He was only thirty-five at the time,

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 113-115.

yet he was mature enough to keep silent during the proceedings. One of the main questions which confronted the assembly was the definition of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope. This doctrine, in outline, was that the Pope, when speaking in the exercise of his office as the shepherd of all Christians and declaring a doctrine of faith and morals to be held by the Universal Church, was infallible. Gibbons states this very briefly:

What, then, is the real doctrine of Infallibility? It simply means that the Pope, as successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, by virtue of the promises of Jesus Christ, is preserved from error of judgment when he promulgates to the Church a decision on faith or morals.<sup>1</sup>

When the vote was taken, Gibbons voted for the adoption of the definition, even though he feared, along with several others, that the statement would be misunderstood in America.<sup>2</sup> His fears were well founded, for the definition was misunderstood and perhaps hindered the spread of Catholicism more than is commonly realized.<sup>3</sup> However, Gibbons returned from the stay in Rome more enthusiastic than ever before. He took the position that papal infallibility involved only the

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James Cardinal: Faith of Our Fathers, p. 123.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 124-130.
3. Ibid., p. 131.

spheres of faith and morals and that it in no way tres-  
passed upon civil authority.<sup>1</sup>

#### 6. Bishop of Richmond

Following his experiences in Rome, young Gibbons received his second episcopal appointment in four years. Thus at thirty-seven, he was appointed bishop of Richmond, which included the responsibilities of directing the future of fifteen churches, fifteen chapels, sixteen parochial schools and the activities of seven-  
teen priests.<sup>2</sup>

The pattern of his experiences in North Carolina appears once again in his activities in Virginia. While he moved about confirming candidates and planning for the expansion of the church organization, he was preaching on such subjects as: "The Infallibility of the Pope", "Christian Education", "Temperance" and "The  
Unity and Catholicity of the Church".<sup>3</sup> The chief content of these sermons and the general approach to these subjects can be determined by his book, Faith of Our Fathers, for it was written while he was serving as bishop of Richmond. In fact, this book is one of the best examples of his method of approach to the non-

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, op. cit., p. 123.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 144.
3. Ibid., pp. 148 and 153.

Catholic, for he himself remarked that it was fortunate that he wrote the book while in the deeper South, where opinion was almost unanimously against him, so that he was on his good behavior.<sup>1</sup> From this statement alone, it is clear that he was no less a Catholic because of the liberal position which he assumed. It would seem that he took the liberal view because he believed that such a view would best serve to attain the goals which his vision had set before him.

It is worthy of special note that while Gibbons was Bishop of Richmond, he publically attacked a proposal made by President Grant in his message to Congress on December 7, 1875, which suggested a Constitutional amendment tending in the direction of Federal control of education. Gibbons wrote the following words which express a view with far-reaching implications:

The Constitutional amendment regarding the school question, recommended by President Grant, if carried out, would reduce our American republic to the condition of things that existed in pagan Rome. In the Old Roman empire the individual was absorbed by the State, which was a political juggernaut crushing under its wheels all personal liberty. Nor do I see how paganism and religion can be simultaneously excluded from the schools as the President proposes, for if an education excludes all religion it is necessarily pagan, there being no medium between the two terms.<sup>2</sup>

. . . . .

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 887.
2. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 161.

In order to understand what may have been in the mind of Bishop Gibbons when he made this attack upon the proposal of the President, it is well to note that Gibbons had been very busy establishing schools in both Virginia and North Carolina. Thus he must have sensed that the proposal was almost certain to threaten the very existence of these schools which he had been working so hard to establish. But beyond the immediate threat, Gibbons was undoubtedly alarmed because of the possibility that the whole Catholic system of education might be permanently handicapped by governmental law.

Thus from this incident and from his emphasis in earlier years, it is safe to say that education from a Catholic point of view was one of the main elements in the total strategy for the future. This statement is strengthened by the fact that during the five years as Bishop of Richmond, Gibbons directed the organization of ten new parochial schools, one of these being a well-equipped boys' academy in Richmond which opened with an enrollment of 187 boys.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 148 and 155.

#### D. SUMMARY

Thus far some of the significant elements of the early life of James Gibbons have been reviewed. It is impossible to estimate the exact worth of his boyhood experiences in Baltimore and his formal schooling in Ireland, but it is safe to say that they contributed to the formation of his knowledge and ability. Nor is it easy to appraise the experiences involved in his travel and life in New Orleans. Perhaps the combination of his sickness and the coming of the Redemptorist Mission to New Orleans brought about the decision to enter the priesthood.

It is also worthy of note that in his travels to college and seminary he called upon Bishop Spalding, for, years later, Spalding remembered the student and called him to be his secretary. Had this one step been omitted, there is a good possibility that James Gibbons would have been only an able local priest in a small parish until his death. His training under Spalding helped fit him for promotion, and the mission assigned to him in North Carolina and Virginia, which was one of the most difficult sections in all the church, developed his liberal tendencies further and gave him deep and mature insight into the problems of common

American people.

Undoubtedly, the remarks which he had heard his father make as a laboring man and his own experiences in the grocery store in New Orleans laid the basis for his understanding of the common man. This insight into the minds behind the American point of view was perhaps the greatest single factor of the brilliant record which he<sup>1</sup> made in the service of the Catholic Church.

His ability to adapt traditional views and practices grew out of his insight already mentioned, while his willingness to be identified with his people won their support as it disarmed them of their prejudice. Another element of his strength, which we have seen in his early life, is his determination to gather the youth of the church into its own schools. Interestingly enough, all of these elements of emphasis were carried on through his life, becoming stronger as he was given more power and freedom of leadership. Even in this brief study of his early life, we sense that they were years of promise.

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 141.

CHAPTER II

YEARS OF SEASONING



## CHAPTER II

### YEARS OF SEASONING

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Chapter two will set forth the significant developments in the life of Cardinal Gibbons as the Archbishop of Baltimore. Attention will be given to the main principles which guided Archbishop Gibbons in the early months of his new position and to his objectives as they grew out of these basic principles. Emphasis will be placed upon his widening public relations, upon his deepening interest in American history and upon his important friendships. A large portion of the chapter will be devoted to the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore with special attention being given to the preparation for the Council, its leadership, the nature of its business and the significance of approved legislation.

#### B. THE ARCHBISHOP OF BALTIMORE

##### 1. Team-work

Although James Gibbons had been groomed for the coveted position of Archbishop of Baltimore under Archbishop Spalding, there was no little stir in the

circle of bishops when his appointment was made. There were some leaders who even suggested that Gibbons had secured the appointment by means of a coup.<sup>1</sup> However, there can be little question that Gibbons was appointed through the regular channels, for the private entries which he made in his journal show each step<sup>2</sup> in the process and all of the other papers were in order. On May 2, 1877, Gibbons was appointed by Archbishop Bayley as his co-adjutor with the right of succession.<sup>3</sup>

Gibbons came to Baltimore and worked closely with the sick and failing Archbishop, learning more and more about the current problems of his church as he carried out the wishes of the Archbishop. It is also interesting to note that Gibbons, even while serving as Bishop of Richmond, was often called by the Archbishop to come to Baltimore to preach and carry out other special duties. He was able to do this because he had already learned to train others to execute independent responsibilities, leaving him free to direct and form general policies.<sup>4</sup> This ability alone may have won him the appointment.

It is also of interest to note that Gibbons'

. . . . .

1. Will, A. S.:
2. Ibid., p. 177.
3. Russell, William T.: The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 234.
4. Will, op. cit., p. 173.

emphasis in his preaching was the same at Baltimore as it had been in North Carolina and Virginia. In a sermon preached in Baltimore in May, 1876, Gibbons revealed his usual interest in the basic relation of his church to the governmental structure of the United States when he said:

Need it be repeated that the Church is slandered when it is charged that she is inimical to liberty? The Church flourishes only in the beams of liberty.<sup>1</sup>

When Archbishop Bayley died in October of 1877, Gibbons shouldered the full responsibility of his work and set about applying the principles which he had learned through the painful experiences of his earlier life and ministry.

## 2. Defined Purpose

Out of the many principles which he had discovered, came one great objective. This objective is evident in almost every important address given by Gibbons and is summed up very well by C. E. McGuire in the following statement:

He proved by his timely and judicious utterances that the Catholic Church was the friend of those free and democratic institutions of which his countrymen were so proud.<sup>2</sup>

Thus in this statement and many others it is clear that the great objective of Gibbons' administration in Baltimore was to prove in every possible way that the Catholic

. . . . .

1. Walsh, James J.: Our American Cardinals, p. 77.
2. McGuire, C. E.: The Catholic Contribution to Religion and Education, p. 17.

Church was a friend of the American government and people. Within the frame work of this great objective, the meaning of much of Gibbons' activity is found.

Nor is it at all strange that the above is true when the background of the leader is considered. He was an Irishman who knew, on one hand, something of Catholic Ireland, Irish Catholic Baltimore, French Catholic New Orleans and, on the other hand, much of the bitter and fanatical attitude of Protestants in North Carolina and Virginia toward his church. He knew the patriotism of the Williamsburg aristocracy and the mind of the uneducated mountaineer of western Virginia and North Carolina. Thus with this combination of great love for his church and deep understanding of the attitude of large groups of non-Catholic people toward the Roman Church, it is natural that his great purpose would be to identify Roman Catholicism with the popular democratic institutions.

Catholic authors seem to agree that James Gibbons was not a profound thinker nor a masterful organizer, but that his quick and instinctive understanding of the men and the times, along with his spiritual outlook, enabled him to strongly impress the imagination and heart of the American people.<sup>1</sup> But, probably in

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 19.

making this statement, Catholic authors are simply .  
saying that the man was too profound to be ensnared in  
the complexities of philosophical thought and organiza-  
tional intricacies.

### 3. Public Life

From the various records of the Archbishop's  
activities during this period, it is clear that his pub-  
lic contacts were increasing in number and in importance.  
His first book, The Faith of Our Fathers, had been pub-  
lished and was being criticized. Therefore, Gibbons  
carefully revised the book in 1879 and tried to remove<sup>1</sup>  
those qualities which were hindering its circulation.

During this early period as Archbishop of Balti-  
more, he was also working on a second book entitled, Our  
Christian Heritage, which was released in 1889. The  
first book attempted to restate the doctrines of the  
Roman Catholic Church in a way which would show their<sup>2</sup>  
simple beauty and sweet reasonableness. Our Christian  
Heritage was published in celebration of the One Hundredth  
Anniversary of the creation of the hierarchy in America.  
It ex~~al~~alted the blessings of Christian civilization for<sup>3</sup>  
which the Roman Catholic Church was responsible.

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Faith of Our Fathers, Preface to 11th Ed.
2. Walsh, op. cit., p. 75.
3. Gibbons, James: Our Christian Heritage, p. 6.

From these two books, it is clear that Gibbons was anxious to remove whenever possible those things that were hindering Catholicism from becoming popular. The timing of the release of the second book indicates that Gibbons knew the importance of gaining publicity through the means of great historical events. This principle was followed closely throughout the remainder of his life and was adopted by the Press Department of the National Catholic Welfare Council which was created in 1919.<sup>1</sup>

The general emphasis made in his writings was carried over into the realm of public addresses. He rarely spoke on controversial themes and when he did so, he formed the statements carefully and usually held to positive views.<sup>2</sup> Thus his real strength as a writer and speaker was in knowing how to carry his message in plain language and in the most effective way right where he wanted it to go.<sup>3</sup> His clear voice and careful enunciation, mentioned by several authors, enabled him to communicate his messages most forcefully.

Another important factor in his public relations with Protestants was his knowledge of Scripture. However,

. . . . .

1. Williams, Michael: "The Bishops and Our Press", The Catholic World, Vol. CXII, March, 1921, pp. 721-732.
2. Gibbons, James: Denominational Schools, A Discussion at the National Education Association, Nashville, Tennessee, pp. 3-5.
3. Kelley, Francis Clement: The Bishop Jots It Down, p. 51.

his use of Scripture may have impressed those who had no deep knowledge of its message, but hardly would have impressed those who knew the Scriptures well. He only used the materials of Scripture to illustrate some point which he wished to make. None of the sermons available for this study expound a unit of Scripture.

Thus far in this section of the study there has been portrayed a leader who is anxious to please the public because of his desire to magnify Catholicism. This desire caused him to trim his written and spoken words with great care and led him to use Scripture freely in order to appeal to the Protestant ear. But this is only a part of the story that relates to his public life. Gibbons was a polished gentleman at all times. This enabled him to move with ease in Washington society and also opened to him many contacts with leaders of govern-<sup>1</sup>mental departments. Eventually these contacts led to personal interviews with President Hayes concerning mis-<sup>2</sup>sions among American Indians. Thus the public life of Archbishop Gibbons, while centered in the affairs of his church, extended into the affairs of his church, extended into the affairs of government and into the thinking of the common man.

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 201.
2. Walsh, op. cit., p. 80.

#### 4. Useful Hobby

Behind the Archbishop's keen interest in political problems was his very practical hobby. He studied American history and especially the structure of American governmental systems throughout his long life. He was interested not only in the details of national government, but was also attentive to municipal government and state government.<sup>1</sup> In this regard he not only studied books and court records and official documents, but also questioned students, who accompanied him on his daily walks, concerning the local situations in their home communities.<sup>2</sup> Since he chose a new student each day to accompany him, he collected a vast amount of information concerning specific communities.

This practical side of his information linked with his constant study of American history enabled him to direct the total strategy of the church in such a way that it was in harmony with the political trends wherever such harmony was possible. This fact is especially evident in relation to the Knights of Labor, as will be shown in the following chapter.

The Archbishop's knowledge of American history and the trends of his time is also evident in his pastoral

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 228.
2. Ibid., p. 223.



letter which was issued shortly after the Third Plenary Council had convened. While the letter did contain some very unfavorable and unfounded statements against Protestant groups, as a whole it was positive and set forth principles for parish life that were in keeping with the American scene.<sup>1</sup>

Still another area of the Archbishop's activity should be mentioned in relation to his hobby. From the information which he gleaned from all available records, Gibbons was able to construct a history of the United States which was dominated with the activities of Catholic men who labored for the good of all in behalf of their most holy church.<sup>2</sup> This effort may be accurately described as a conscious effort to rewrite American history in terms of the Roman Catholic Church. So it happens even today that where it is impossible to use school text-books that have been written in terms of the Roman Catholic tradition, Catholic public school teachers are themselves urged by the hierarchy to present the Catholic history of America to their pupils.<sup>3</sup> If Gibbons were alive, he would certainly approve of the policy, for he promoted it.

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, pp. 3-20.
2. Gibbons, James: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, p. 18.
3. Blanshard, Paul: American Freedom and Catholic Power, p. 83.

## 5. Friendships

Something has already been said concerning the Archbishop's social contacts, but it should be pointed out that beyond these helpful contacts were many enduring friendships. He made friendships in college and seminary days which lasted throughout the years. Some of these friendships proved to be very helpful in maintaining peace in the American hierarchy which was no easy matter according to Bishop Kelley's many little stories concerning the various attitudes and incidents from the lives of the men who constituted the hierarchy. In some cases Gibbons' activity was entirely misunderstood by Catholics while it was approved by non-Catholics. Little wonder then that Gibbons had bitter adversaries who thought that he should be removed from power and given a humble and less important position.<sup>1</sup>

When the problem of organized labor confronted Gibbons, he became a friend of Mr. Powderly who was the leader of the organization. After many conferences with Powderly and with his friend, President Cleveland, Gibbons decided to take the side of labor even at the risk of being denounced by other church leaders.<sup>2</sup> Still another friendship probably enabled him to take such bold action.

. . . . .

1. Evans, Maurice Francis: "Cardinal Gibbons, American and Catholic", The Catholic World, Vol. CXVI, January, 1923, pp. 467-475.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 329.

He was a close friend of Pope Leo XIII who liked the liberal views which Gibbons held.<sup>1</sup> Another friend who entered into this decision was the liberal Bishop Manning of England who agreed with Gibbons. Thus the value of friendships in the life of Gibbons is abundantly clear.

There is also another factor in relation to his friendships that is significant. Gibbons was always the friend of the families which he had served as a young priest at St. Bridget's in Canton. This is an indication that he remained a humble man, even though he had great power and a position of honor. His family ties also remained strong which is another indication of humility.<sup>2</sup>

### C. THE ARCHBISHOP'S MASTERPIECE

#### 1. Preparation for the Third Plenary Council

When hints came to Archbishop Gibbons that Pope Leo XIII was considering the possibility of calling the Third Plenary Council, he was alarmed, for he feared that if another Council were called in America, it would bring about a renewal of the fanatical know-nothing attack which followed the first and second Councils.<sup>3</sup> Gibbons also believed that no formal Council was necessary at the time in order to deal with the problems which faced the

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 212.

2. Ibid., p. 216.

3. Walsh, James J.: Our American Cardinals, p. 81.

Roman Catholic Church in America. When he had done everything possible to prevent the action by the Pope and it still seemed likely that the Pope was going to go ahead in spite of his suggestions, Gibbons sailed for Rome in the spring of 1884.<sup>1</sup> The Pope insisted that such a Council was necessary and set the date for the Council to meet on November 9, 1884. Gibbons returned to Baltimore and worked feverishly with his assistant, Dennis J. O'Connell,<sup>2</sup> in preparing for the Council.

It is very evident from the various comments of Catholic authors that Gibbons was still convinced that it was a mistake to convene a Third Plenary Council. However, he went ahead with the task, being obedient to the command of his friend and superior, Leo XIII. It is interesting to note that one of Gibbons' traits found expression even in this difficult situation. Since he had to go ahead, he decided to turn the emphasis of the Council in such a way that it would serve to promote the ends which he desired. He decided that the Council should consider twelve different areas of American Catholicism and he so planned each consideration that the finished document had a decided American quality about it.<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. Russell, William T.: The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 234.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 245.
3. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter, pp. 3-20.

Then to help further his point of view still more, Gibbons issued a pastoral letter which restated the action of the Council in terms of his point of view and stressed the fact that the Roman Catholic Church was the friend and champion of all good things which Americans<sup>1</sup> cherished. The fact that Gibbons was able to bring this about when many of the bishops and archbishops were of a different opinion indicates that he was not only wise enough to have facts to support his point of view but also that he was clever enough to secure the appointment from Leo XIII<sup>2</sup> of apostolic delegate over the Council. This appointment gave him the authority to over-rule opposition when absolutely necessary. It is thus abundantly clear that Gibbons planned every part of the work taken up by the Third Plenary Council with exacting care.

## 2. Leadership for the Third Plenary Council

When the Third Plenary Council actually convened on November 9, 1884, it was the largest Council held until<sup>3</sup> that time outside of Rome since the Council of Trent. Not only was the Council large but it consisted of great members such as Ireland of St. Paul and Corrigan of New York who were also accustomed to defending their views.

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 10.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 241.
3. Fanning, W. H. W.: The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 238.

Thus Gibbons faced tremendous problems in relation to leadership alone. According to Gibbons' own account, he was near a physical collapse on the day that the Council convened because he had been working so feverishly in preparation for the event.

In spite of this, he was able to bring the strong personalities into partial agreement on the main issues and thus won his desired ends without resorting to his reserve authority. Leo XIII certainly knew of the problems involved and when Gibbons met these problems successfully, he made him a cardinal.<sup>1</sup> This last fact is the greatest testimony to the qualities of leadership possessed by Gibbons.

### 3. Official Definitions

Since the Archbishop's Pastoral Letter was the only official public statement of the conclusions reached by the Third Plenary Council, this letter will be the most significant document in the consideration of the definitions.

As a preliminary consideration, the general emphasis of the letter should be noted. Applying the simple law of proportion to the document, it is discovered that one printed page is devoted to the carefully worded

. . . . .

1. Walsh, op. cit., p. 81.

introduction; six pages are filled with materials which concern the doctrine of papal infallibility; one and one-half pages are given to a discussion of the education of the clergy; two pages define pastoral rights; two and three-quarter pages speak of the new program of Christian education; four pages describe the ideal Christian home; two pages discuss the meaning of the Lord's Day; two and one-half pages outline the Catholic attitude toward forbidden societies; one and one-half pages state the advantages of Catholic societies; one page is devoted to the cause of home and foreign missions and an appropriate<sup>1</sup> conclusion fills one-fourth page.

A significant contrast is evident when the official titles are examined. They are in the language of the Roman Church, while the letter's titles are in the language of the American people. The original official titles were: of ecclesiastical persons; of divine worship; of the sacraments; of education of clerics; of the education of Catholic youth; of Christian doctrine; of zeal for souls; of church property; of ecclesiastical trials; of ecclesiastical sepulture; and the final decree that the above pronouncements were to be binding as soon as promulgated<sup>2</sup> by the delegate apostolic.

. . . . .

1. Gibbons; Pastoral Letter, pp. 3-20.
2. Fanning, William H. W.: op. cit., p. 239.

In essence the emphasis in the letter was the same as that of the Council. For those who were troubled about the doctrine of papal infallibility, the letter insisted that the doctrine was based upon Acts 4:19-20, and that the doctrine had wrought itself into the life and action of the church to such a degree that the Vatican Council had deemed it proper to consecrate it by a solemn definition. In so doing, the letter further declares, the church was only setting the solemn seal of definition upon what had always been the belief and practice of the church.<sup>1</sup>

The letter continues to argue that there is nothing in the character of the most liberty-loving American, which could hinder his reverential submission to the Divine authority of our Lord, or to the like authority delegated by Him to His apostles and His church.<sup>2</sup> Then this section is concluded with the affirmation that Pope Leo XIII's predecessors watched the first feeble beginnings of America with loving care and encouraged her development in the pure atmosphere of freedom, when the name of Carroll shone with equal lustre at the lead of her new-born hierarchy and on the role of our country's patriots.<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, op. cit., p. 7.
2. Gibbons, op. cit., p. 9.
3. Ibid., p. 10.



Education was also emphasized in the letter in three different ways. There was a plea for better financial support of the seminaries in which to train priests;<sup>1</sup> an order directing each parish, which had not already done so, to erect within two years an adequate parochial school.<sup>2</sup> The Council also decided that the time was ripe for the founding of a Catholic University in Washington, D.C.<sup>3</sup> It is significant that as a basis for the total educational program a commission was appointed to prepare a new catechism and prayer book for universal use in America.

One of the most interesting parts of the letter is that which concerns Sunday worship. Gibbons uses the Protestant terminology, Lord's Day, to introduce the universal order concerning feast and fast days. Six feasts were to be observed by the Roman Church in America and only six. These six were: The Immaculate Conception, Christmas, New Year's Day, Ascension, Assumption and All-Saints' Day.<sup>4</sup>

In relation to mission work, a commission was appointed to aid the missions among the Indians and Negroes and provision was made for the immigrants to be instructed

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. Will, A.S.: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, p. 254.
4. Ibid., p. 251.

in their own language. This last provision was clearly intended to be only a temporary measure but the desire of many to make it a permanent policy led to real difficulty later on when the immigrants refused to make any attempt<sup>1</sup> to fit into the total American scene.

#### 4. Characteristics of the Legislation

In order to understand the characteristics of the legislation enacted by the Third Plenary Council, the fact must constantly be kept in mind that Gibbons spared no effort in making it clear to Catholics and non-Catholics alike that the Roman Catholic Church was a sup-<sup>2</sup>porter of American civil institutions. This explains the order to hold only to the essential feast days, setting aside the many other special days which were not understood by Americans. The Archbishop's purpose also suggests reasons for the long explanation of the doctrine of papal infallibility and the emphasis upon a better trained American clergy. It almost certainly explains why the Council did not condemn the American<sup>3</sup> public school system in more direct terms.

Thus with the Archbishop's purpose in mind, it is easier to understand why the preponderance of the

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, p. 153.
2. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter, p. 7.
3. Ibid., p. 16.

legislation was of a positive nature, and why, as most Catholic authors agree, most of that legislation involved some phase of education.<sup>1</sup> In regard to the educational legislation, it must be said that it was detailed in certain aspects and very general in other aspects. Since the whole educational program was centered around the clergy, detailed curriculums were outlined by the Council for seminary courses and after ordination priests were required to take comprehensive tests at set intervals.<sup>2</sup> Parochial schools, which were to be directed by the parish priests, were to be a part of every parish and the new and simplified Baltimore Catechism was to be a foundation stone in the total educational structure.

A general aspect of the educational plan included the decision to found a post-graduate Catholic University in America which would remove the necessity for unsuitable foreign training for the leaders of the church.<sup>3</sup> Washington, D.C., was chosen for the site of the new project because it was the nerve center of the United States and was also, at that time, included in the diocese of Baltimore. In summary, the characteristics of the legislation set forth by the Third Plenary Council could be described as being lofty in breadth and range,

. . . . .

1. Smith, Albert E.: Cardinal Gibbons--Churchman and Citizen, p. 110.
2. Fanning, William H. W.: op. cit., p. 239.
3. Will, op. cit., pp. 257-258.

complete in its treatment and adaptable to world con-  
1  
ditions.

## 5. Chart of the Future

Perhaps few other activities in which James Gibbons engaged reveal so clearly the fact that he was a man of great vision as does his work in relation to the Third Plenary Council. Catholic authors agree that the legislation enacted by the Council under Gibbons has been the chart for the Catholic Church in America since  
2  
1884. Several Catholic authors state that the Council laid the foundations for and gave direction to the educational structure which brought about the Americanization  
3  
of the leadership of the Roman Church.

The implications of an American leadership are tremendous, for history reveals that many of the national groups which came to America were retarded greatly because they refused to adopt American ways or the English language and hesitated to welcome their American neighbors into fellowship.

Allen Sinclair Will, who undoubtedly has devoted more time to the study of the life and affairs of Gibbons than any other writer, sums up the significance

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 235.
2. Ibid., p. 234.
3. Gibbons, op. cit., p. 12.

of the Third Plenary Council by saying that greater results have flowed from it than from any other national Council of the church held in the last three hundred and fifty years since the fathers met at Trent. Will adds that its work stands as the perfected type of a fabric of ecclesiastical legislation covering alike fundamentals, complexities and contingencies; as an expression both of the universal aims of the church and of the<sup>1</sup> details by means of which those aims may be realized.

#### D. SUMMARY

Chapter two has shown Archbishop Gibbons in relation to one of the great undertakings of his life-- the direction of the Third Plenary Council. Although the Archbishop thought that the convening of the Council should be delayed, he nevertheless carried out the wishes of Pope Leo XIII and planned the work of the Council so very carefully that in spite of opposition he was not only able to identify his church as a champion of American institutions but was also able to give some evidence to the American public that his claim was true.

According to the definitions formulated by the Council, it was noted that the greatest single emphasis

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 235.

was upon various phases of the Roman Catholic educational system. This emphasis brought about the strengthening of the parochial school system, provided for American training for American priests and laid the general plan for a great Catholic University in the nerve-center of the nation. The far-reaching significance of each of the above decisions will become abundantly clear in the following chapters of this study.

Concerning the characteristics of the legislation, it was pointed out that the practices of the Roman Catholic Church were adapted where it was possible to do so in order that they might fit more naturally into the American scene. This adaptation was brought about through a positive emphasis, since not even the hated American public school system was directly condemned. Because of these positive characteristics, the legislation proved to be a remarkable chart and compass for the advancement of Roman Catholicism in America after 1884. As these facts are reflected upon, Gibbons appears as a great personality, seasoned and mature, ready for even greater things.

CHAPTER III

YEARS OF POWER

## CHAPTER III

### YEARS OF POWER

#### A. INTRODUCTION

The first part of chapter three will be devoted to the new Cardinal's great struggle on behalf of the Knights of Labor, while the second part will be given to the discussion of those problems which followed the labor struggle. Emphasis will be given to the fact that the Cardinal was bold enough to begin battle for what he considered to be a basic policy the moment the red hat was upon his head. The clash which resulted from his desire to apply his policy in a practical way shocked Rome and a great part of Europe, but the Cardinal knew his ground and won his case before he left Rome. News of his activity preceded his return to America and made possible a good-will tour of the United States upon his return.

Soon after the tour, various problems which had been forming over a period of time demanded his attention. Among these problems were those relating to the educational system of Roman Catholicism in America, the Cahensly movement, the coming of the papal delegate and the Spanish-American war. While some of these



problems have been mentioned in relation to the Third Plenary Council, it is necessary to point out the way in which each developed under Cardinal Gibbons' powerful leadership.

## B. THE SECOND AMERICAN CARDINAL

### 1. Champion of the Knights of Labor

As the second American Cardinal, Gibbons undertook a task that was three-fold in character. He tried to interpret American government and institutions to his fellow Catholics; he attempted to interpret Catholicism and American institutions to his fellow citizens of other faiths; and he made a determined effort to interpret<sup>1</sup> American Catholicism to Europe. These three areas of labor were not new to the Cardinal, for he had been working in that direction most of his life. But when his power increased the out-reach of his policies took on new proportions.

During the two years between the Third Plenary Council and the summer of 1886 when Gibbons was created Cardinal, organized labor became more and more active. Gibbons was anxious to do what he could to help the laboring man, for he understood their problems and also realized

. . . . .

1. Healy, Patrick: "James Cardinal Gibbons, 1834-1934", The Ecclesiastical Review, July, 1934, pp. 1-16.

that Roman Catholicism in America ministered mainly to the laboring class. Thus he called Mr. Powderly, the Catholic leader of the Knights of Labor, to Baltimore and learned in detail about the labor movement. Powderly even promised Gibbons and the archbishops on behalf of the group that they would alter their constitution if the church demanded them to do so.<sup>1</sup> Gibbons then conferred with President Cleveland and found that the President could see nothing in the methods of the Knights of Labor which might threaten the national institutions.<sup>2</sup>

Armed with facts, Gibbons then set out to prove to labor that the Roman Church was their friend. This certainly was not an easy thing to accomplish, for organized labor had already been condemned as a secret society by the Canadian hierarchy which had the approval of Rome in the matter.<sup>3</sup> Added to these great difficulties, many of his own bishops felt that the United States hierarchy should support the Canadian hierarchy and condemn without delay organized labor as a secret society according to the provisions made by the Third Plenary Council.

Against all of this opposition, Gibbons wrote a detailed letter to Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the

. . . . .

1. Will, A. Sinclair: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, p. 329.
2. Ibid., p. 329.
3. Ibid., p. 324.

Propaganda, in Rome pleading for organized labor. He outlined the problem with great care and then presented the following conclusions: condemnation is not justified; condemnation is not necessary; condemnation is not prudent but dangerous; condemnation would probably be inefficacious and destructive; condemnation would turn into suspicion and hostility; and it would be regarded as a cruel blow to the authority of the bishops of the United States.<sup>1</sup>

The very fact that a leader could be so bold just before he was invested as Cardinal must have surprised Rome, but it is clear that his position was perfectly consistent with his general policy of adaptation. He saw the tremendous potential power of organized labor and set out to direct that power into channels which would be beneficial to Catholicism. He turned what might have been a destructive power into a program of social betterment.<sup>2</sup> In short, he applied with great skill the policy of adaptation.

## 2. Rome Shocked

Though Rome may have been surprised by Gibbons' letter which came early in the year of 1887, the real shock came when he spoke out personally in defense of

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 352.
2. Healy, op. cit., p. 15.

the American system of separation of church and state. This was a sensitive issue in Rome at that time for European governments were striving to crush the Roman Church. Even the Pope was a prisoner in his own palace<sup>1</sup> having lost his temporal power. Thus when Gibbons in taking possession of his titular church in Trastevere praised America as a country which had liberty without license and authority without despotism, Rome was truly shocked. Gibbons in that utterance not only criticized the European governmental system but also declared that full ecclesiastical freedom was neither unthinkable or unattainable, for it had already become reality in<sup>2</sup> America.

However, in taking this position, Gibbons was not utterly rash, for he was careful to quote Leo XIII's encyclical on the Constitution of Christian States as follows:

The Church is not committed to any particular form of civil government. She adapts herself to all. She leavens all with the leaven of the Gospel. She has lived under absolute empires, under constitutional monarchies and in free republics; and everywhere she grows and expands.<sup>3</sup>

Thus when criticism of the sermon was made, Gibbons could

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James Cardinal: "My Memories", Dublin Review, April, 1917, pp. 160-172.
2. Healy, op. cit., p. 7.
3. Gibbons, James Cardinal: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, p. 86.

refer the critics to the words of the Pope and silence them. In reality, Gibbons was attempting to convince the church leaders of Europe of the fact that a nation had woven the principles of democracy into a stable pattern of government.<sup>1</sup> This the church leaders found difficult to believe, for they had seen the results of the French Revolution and supposed that since many of the same principles had been followed in the founding of the American government, that the results were the same in America. Their mistaken notion, with which Gibbons had been familiar since 1870, troubled him and even at personal risk, he did all possible to interpret American Catholicism to Europe.

### 3. Victory Won

The letter which Gibbons had written to Cardinal Simeoni before he came to Rome outlined his position in regard to labor and when he arrived he followed up his letter with a still stronger personal plea for the Knights of Labor. He presented evidence to support his position that unless the church championed labor she would lose her right to be considered the friend of the people. Cardinal Manning of England supported Gibbons and shared

. . . . .

1. Healy, op. cit., p. 6.

the view that the time had come when the masses were  
<sup>1</sup>  
destined to rule.

After long months of battle, Gibbons began to win ground and persuaded Leo XIII that the labor movement was not a secret society and was considered to be a lawful  
<sup>2</sup>  
organization even by the President of the United States.

The fact that the church should at least keep up with the progressive views of civil authorities appealed to the liberal Pope and finally ecclesiastical machinery was set in motion to endorse the Knights of Labor in the United States and to lift the ban on the  
<sup>3</sup>  
organization in Canada.

News of the new Cardinal's struggle on behalf of labor spread over America rapidly and was hailed by press and people as evidence of the fact that the church was truly the friend of the laboring man. Walsh perhaps expresses it best when he states that while it was a great victory for labor, it was above all a personal victory  
<sup>4</sup>  
for Gibbons and set him prominently before the world.

#### 4. Power in Rome

It would seem that Gibbons had fought some

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: "My Memories", op. cit., p. 171.
2. Evans, Maurice Francis: "Cardinal Gibbons, American and Catholic", The Catholic World, January 1923, pp. 467-475.
3. Will, op. cit., p. 354.
4. Walsh, James J.: Our American Cardinals, p. 101.

difficult battles in Rome in 1887 and deserved to return to Baltimore without further trial. But still another difficult question faced him as leader of the American branch of Catholicism. Henry George, who had written a controversial book, was seeking to win the office of mayor of New York City. While some Catholic clergymen were assisting George, Archbishop Corrigan thought that the book should be condemned by the church.<sup>1</sup> One of the clergy, Dr. McGlynn, who was supporting George was ordered by Corrigan to have nothing more to do with George. McGlynn disobeyed Corrigan, was suspended from his pastorate and finally excommunicated.

Word of these matters came to Gibbons and he immediately took the view that George's book should not be condemned since it was almost forgotten; it had been ably refuted by theologians; it would give bigots ammunition; it would awaken sympathy for George and besides George would help re-elect Cleveland.<sup>2</sup> Needless to say, by this time Gibbons had such great power in Rome that Corrigan was over-ruled and the book was not condemned openly.

##### 5. Western Visitor

When all of the controversies in Rome were ended

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., pp. 362-372.
2. Ibid., p. 371.

which involved Gibbons, he returned to Baltimore and was given the welcome of a national hero returning victoriously from battle. After a brief rest in Baltimore he came to Philadelphia to give the closing prayer and benediction at the centennial celebration of the framing of the Constitution and then visited Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, various towns in Montana, Vancouver, Portland, San Francisco<sup>1</sup> and returned by way of New Orleans.

On this western tour, Gibbons was hailed as the friend of labor, the prince of American Catholicism and American citizen "par excellence". In many cities he spoke on the subject of labor in relation to capital, being very careful to urge organized labor to exclude from their ranks any turbulent element that might bring reproach upon the general organization. He urged labor to practice boycotting but advised against strikes whenever possible. He also reminded them that if they had the right to guard themselves against unfair monopolies, they also had the sacred obligation of doing honest work and not<sup>2</sup> infringing upon the rights of their employers.

Gibbons' interest in arbitration for the settlement of disagreements is also very evident in the addresses

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 394-398.

2. Gibbons, James: Our Christian Heritage, pp. 449-450.



made at this period. The following paragraph expresses this clearly:

It would be a vast stride in the interests of peace and of the laboring classes, if the policy of arbitration which is now gaining favor for the settlement of international quarrels, were also availed for the adjustment of disputes between capital and labor. Many blessings would result from the adoption of this method, for, while strikes, as the name implies, are aggressive and destructive, arbitration is conciliatory and constructive; the result of the former case is determined by the weight of the purse, in the latter by the weight of the argument.<sup>1</sup>

As these words are considered in their setting, it is amazing how very modern and practical they are. They express a view that was many years ahead of most churchmen and the laboring people responded in a constructive manner. According to present standards Gibbons' views seem very fair and Christian, but in 1888 and 1889 they must have seemed bold and radical to many.

Gibbons did more than express his views and speak to crowds of people on his visit to the West. He saw for the first time many of the new as well as old Catholic centers and gained insight into their problems. This insight fit into his total strategy and is well described by Gibbons' biographer as his vision of the West.<sup>2</sup> It is very likely that Gibbons used that phrase when he related the experiences to his biographer. At

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 451.

2. Will, op. cit., p. 398.

least it is safe to say this long tour gave Gibbons a more complete understanding of the American Catholicism which he was fostering and at the same time gave him opportunity to interpret Catholicism to Catholics and non-Catholics.

### C. A CARDINAL'S PROBLEMS

#### 1. The School Question--Faribault Plan

Although Gibbons spoke enthusiastically about the relationship of church and state in America, he had to face one thing that was most disagreeable. It was the defective school system in America.<sup>1</sup> He believed that the religious and secular education of children could not be divorced from each other without inflicting a fatal wound upon their souls. Consequently he advocated the establishment of a denominational system patterned<sup>2</sup> after the Canadian public school system.

However, even though he disliked the public school system, Gibbons insisted in the pastoral letter written after the Third Plenary Council and in The Ambassador of Christ that if Christian doctrine was not embraced in the course of public-school studies, its absence was not due to any hostility toward the Catholic

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Our Christian Heritage, p. 489.
2. Ibid., p. 495.

religion on the part of the state nor to any anti-religious public sentiment, but that it was the natural result of conflicting religious convictions of the pupils which made introduction of dogmatic teaching difficult. <sup>1</sup> Because of this view Gibbons was determined to find a new plan for public schools, whereby public funds would be used to support various denominational schools.

Archbishop Ireland, of St. Paul, working toward Gibbons' plan of a denominational public school, decided to test a plan, which he had formulated, in Faribault and Stillwater, small cities in southern Minnesota. While many Catholic authors express their ideas of what the plan involved, Allen Sinclair Will gives the most concise summary:

1. The school buildings remain the property of the parish. They are leased to the school commissioners during the school hours only, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Outside of these hours they are at the sole disposal of the parish. The pastor and the Sisters who teach can hold in them such exercises as they deem proper. The lease is for one year only and at the end of the year the Archbishop may renew the lease or resume the exclusive control of the buildings.

2. The teachers must be accredited and the Sisters receive the same salaries as are paid to the ordinary teachers.

3. During school hours, the Sisters give no religious instruction, but as they are not only Catholics, but also members of a religious order, they wear their religious habits and do not alter

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: The Ambassador of Christ, p. 324.

their teachings in any respect. The schools, although under the control of the state, are, in respect to instruction, precisely what they were before the arrangement was made. The Sisters teach the catechism after school hours and there is Mass at 8:30 in the morning.

4. The public schools are scattered in various parts of Minnesota cities, and children are required to attend the school in the district wherein they live. Faribault and Stillwater are excepted from this rule. Catholic children can attend the schools in question from all parts of the cities; the Protestant children living in the districts where our schools are situated may do so, but are not obliged. The result is that almost all the Catholic children of the two cities attend these schools, whereas there are few Protestant, and the influence is almost wholly Catholic.<sup>1</sup>

Naturally the provisions were attacked by Protestants and the plan was eventually completely defeated. This opposition was branded by Catholic writers as sectarian bigotry and one author has emphasized that Ireland's plan was a dangerous compromise from the Catholic point of view, but was not intended to be so by the Archbishop. Then comes the same author's significant comment:

The Archbishop had hoped that the generosity and sense of justice of the Protestant school board would grant more than the letter of the contract allowed and would permit his schools to remain just as Catholic after as before their transference to the public school system, despite the damaging clause that religion must only be taught before or after the regular school day.<sup>2</sup>

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 485.
2. McGucken, William Joseph: The Catholic Way in Education, p. 102.

This comment reveals a rather typical Catholic attitude toward agreements and is also based upon the Catholic philosophy of education that whatever the curriculum, every shred of the fabric of education must be<sup>1</sup> impregnated with Catholicism.

Still another Catholic author writing about Catholic education makes it even more clear that Ireland's agreement could not have been kept and was not intended to be kept. The statement is as follows:

The Catholic instruction is not an appendage to the secular branches; rather it is to be the very core of the teaching with which the other subjects are to be in every possible instance correlated. To relegate religious instruction to an hour on Sunday, or an after-school hour daily, cut off and separate from the rest of instruction, would soon impress the young with its irrelevance to the other subjects of instruction and its relative unimportance as compared with the rest.<sup>2</sup>

This basic view leads to the question concerning the ethics of Roman Catholic leaders. Gibbons is also involved in this question, for he followed the events with great care and must have been greatly disappointed when the plan met with failure, for he praised Ireland in the attempt and pointed out that similar plans had been in operation in Baltimore, Boston and New York for some time. Gibbons, with Bishop

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 49.

2. McGuire, C. E.: Catholic Builders of the Nation, p. 209.

Keane, also appeared at the National Education Association meeting in Nashville in 1889 and spoke on behalf of the Canadian plan for public education.<sup>1</sup> Later he expressed his view even more directly by saying that he trusted that Catholic schools would one day become in some way<sup>2</sup> connected with the public school system.

From these facts there can be little question concerning the plan which Catholicism still hopes to attach to the public school system. The issue is far from dead which fact can be verified by examining the documentation given by Mr. Blanshard in the fifth chapter<sup>3</sup> of his recent book. There can be no doubt that Cardinal Gibbons shared the views expressed by other Catholic writers on the subject of education and that he sought diligently to find ways of diverting public tax money to support Catholic parochial schools. His influence is felt keenly in this area of Catholic activity today. ✓

## 2. Cahensly Movement

The next problem which confronted Cardinal Gibbons was a natural result of immigration. Large

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Denominational Schools--A Discussion at the National Education Association, Nashville, 1889, p. 5.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 478.
3. Blanshard, Paul: American Freedom and Catholic Power, pp. 79-106.

numbers of people moved to American shores and settled in communities where they attempted to preserve their native language and customs. It happened that Peter Cahensly was an efficient secretary of a Catholic society for the protection of German immigrants in the Milwaukee area. He was especially zealous in his work and thus pointed up a problem which would have had to be faced<sup>1</sup> sooner or later.

The movement, which was named after Cahensly, was an attempt to secure the appointment of bishops in the Catholic Church in America on the basis of the numbers comprising the foreign groups in the church<sup>2</sup> here. Thus Irish people would have Irish bishops and German people would have German bishops.

When the request came to Gibbons, he sensed the importance of the issue and the dangers which were involved and set out to crush the movement without delay. He went in person to Milwaukee to speak against the<sup>3</sup> movement. The sermon given August 20, 1890, reveals a tactful, yet firm approach. Gibbons said in part:

Woe to him who would sow tares of discord in the fair fields of the Church of America. Woe to him who would breed dissension among the leaders of Israel by introducing a spirit of nationalism into

. . . . .

1. Walsh, James J.: Our American Cardinals, p. 105.
2. Will, A.S.: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, Vol.II, p. 997.
3. Gibbons, James: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, p. 149.

the camps of the Lord. This is our watchword--loyalty to God's church and to our country--this is our religious and political faith.

The Catholic community in the United States has been conspicuous for its loyalty in the century that has passed away; and we, I am sure, will emulate the patriotism of our Fathers in the faith. Let us glory in the title of American citizen. We owe our allegiance to one country, and that country is America. We must be in harmony with our political institutions. It matters not whether this is the land of our birth or the land of our adoption. It is the land of our destiny.<sup>1</sup>

The strength of this language, when compared with the language of other sermons, is very strong and pointed. Walsh mentions that Gibbons feared the disintegrating effects of the different nationalities maintaining their own languages and loyalties. Thus he<sup>2</sup> battled with all of his might against the danger. Will agrees, stating that Cahenslyism was perhaps the most serious danger which has ever threatened the progress of<sup>3</sup> the Catholic Church in this country.

Once again facts suggest that while Gibbons was naturally discreet and apparently pliable he had a steel-like quality which was often over-looked while he<sup>4</sup> was living. This steel-like quality which was evident in earlier battles is certainly evident also in this

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 149-153.
2. Walsh, op. cit., p. 105.
3. Will, op. cit., p. 540.
4. Evans, M. F.: "Cardinal Gibbons, American and Catholic", The Catholic World, January, 1923, p. 467.



important phase of his work.

### 3. Victory of American Catholicism

By July 4, 1891, Gibbons secured the papal<sup>1</sup> condemnation of the Cahensly movement. It is not too much to suggest that Gibbons ordered the condemnation for that day so that he could make the impact of the pronouncement felt in connection with the celebration of Independence Day.

Whether Gibbons did actually ask that the condemnation be released on that day does not matter, for it was released then and with a telling effect. Although the trouble in various communities was not over for some time, English speaking priests ministered to them and brought about a transition to the English language and customs whether they liked it or not. The significance of Gibbons' leadership in this transition was expressed as follows by Archbishop Blenk of New Orleans:

In a memorable struggle, Gibbons with the aid of the American Hierarchy and the approval of the Holy See, prevented the adoption of a policy which would have created in our great cities large permanent centers of foreign influence, hostile to one another and more or less hostile to American ideas.<sup>2</sup>

This tribute is especially significant for it was uttered in 1911 when it was apparent that if a world war should

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 523.
2. Blenk, James H.: "His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons", The Catholic World, September 1918, p. 749.

come, America would certainly be greatly handicapped unless the foreign immigrants were loyal to their adopted land.

#### 4. Catholic University

The reasons for founding a Catholic University have already been mentioned in the discussion of the Third Plenary Council. Washington, D.C., was chosen for the site because it was the nerve center of the nation and would afford opportunity for graduate students to draw first-hand information from the various departments of government. In this regard it should be stated that the courses of study were intended primarily to give professional training and to offer facilities for original research to graduates of Catholic seminaries and colleges.<sup>1</sup>

Financially, the University was started by a gift of three hundred thousand dollars by Mary Caldwell Gibbons, with the help of others, incorporated the University and secured its apostolic constitution from Pope Leo XIII in 1887.<sup>2</sup> The University was opened for instruction in 1889, the same year in which Gibbons' book, Our Christian Heritage, was published, and both constituted

. . . . .

1. The New International Encyclopaedia, Second Edition, Vol.IV, "Catholic University of America", p. 689.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 256.
3. The New International Encyclopaedia, Vol.IV, p. 689.

a part of the centennial celebration of the founding of the American Catholic hierarchy. Once again we see the hand of Gibbons at work using one event to raise an historic monument for another even which he wished immortalized.

The University was governed by a self-perpetuating board of trustees, chosen from the episcopate, clergy<sup>1</sup> and laity. It is interesting to note that Gibbons was also successful in over-ruling some opposition in securing a place for the laity on this important board.<sup>2</sup> This fact undoubtedly contributed to the success of appeals for financial support of the University. The chief executive officers were the chancellor, the rector and the treasurer. Gibbons was the chancellor from the time of<sup>3</sup> the University's founding until his death.

In relation to Gibbons and the founding of the University, there is a little story which is significant concerning the attitude of many of the clergy toward him. Loaded with heavy pontifical vestments on a hot autumn day, Gibbons went down into the excavation for the basement of the shrine at the Catholic University to lay its cornerstone. A young priest remarked that it was a shame to

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 689.
2. Will, op. cit., pp. 446-448.
3. Ibid., p. 256.

send such a feeble old man down into that hole in the terrible heat. An elderly bishop heard the remark and told the young priest not to worry about that feeble old man because he had gotten into many holes and always<sup>1</sup> climbed out in triumph.

However, in 1904, the Catholic University went into a serious financial hole from which Gibbons had difficulty rescuing it. Thomas Waggaman, who was then treasurer of the University failed in some way and en-<sup>2</sup>dangered the very life of the institution. Gibbons, however, secured the able help of Michael Jenkins of Baltimore at this critical moment and the University was<sup>3</sup> preserved. This period in the life of the University was such a trial to Gibbons that shortly before his death he turned upon his bed and spoke the following words to the priest who attended him:

Father, I wish that I could tell you the full story of the Catholic University. There was a time in its history when some of my closest friends begged me to desert the work, but I would not. The University was the child of my old age, and like children begotten in old age, its beginning caused me much pain.

The Waggaman failure was a blessing in disguise for it exposed the weak spots; enlisted the ablest minds and awakened a generous response from the laity.<sup>4</sup>

. . . . .

1. Kelley, F. C.: The Bishop Jots It Down, p. 51.
2. Smith, A. E.: Cardinal Gibbons--Churchman and Citizen, p. 127.
3. Gibbons, James: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, p. 244.
4. Smith, op. cit., p. 127.

This little comment speaks volumes, for almost all Catholic authors either ignore the difficulty completely or else only mention it in passing. Therefore it is difficult to find exact information concerning the nature of Waggaman's failure. It is only clear that it concerned the finances of the institution. Healy simply stated that Gibbons came to the rescue of the University and that under his guidance, the institution continued its work and went on to greater usefulness.<sup>1</sup> Blenk mentioned only the fact that the University was the child of Gibbons' heart and the center of his strongest hopes.<sup>2</sup>

From the information given thus far, it is clear that the Catholic University is one of the most significant contributions made by Gibbons to American Catholicism. The University constituted the pinnacle of Catholic education in America which took away the need for foreign trained leaders and produced an American leadership which was most familiar with American law and governmental system. This development was parallel to the battle against Cahenslyism and brought about the ultimate defeat of the movement.

Gibbons gave an estimate of the value of the Catholic University in 1916 when he made an address on the

. . . . .

1. Healy, P. J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons, 1834-1934", Ecclesiastical Review, July, 1934, p. 14.
2. Blenk, op. cit., p. 753.

occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Catholic University. He declared that the founding and development of the University was the most important work ever undertaken for the Catholic educational system in America.<sup>1</sup> There can be little question but that he was right in the light of present day developments.

#### 5. Coming of the Papal Delegate

When Gibbons heard that Leo XIII was planning to send a papal delegate to America, he was disturbed, thinking that such a move was unwise and contrary to the American separation of church and state.<sup>2</sup> However, Gibbons' wishes were not heeded by Leo and soon Cardinal Satolli was sent as temporary Apostolic Delegate to America. Nevertheless, Gibbons did succeed in securing a modification of the plan and Satolli had no diplomatic status.<sup>3</sup> It was also fortunate that Satolli had not been trained in the diplomatic school of the Vatican and consequently was not interested in political questions. He was primarily a theologian and thus caused little trouble for Gibbons.<sup>4</sup>

As these facts are studied they seem innocent

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, p. 191.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 460.
3. Ibid., p. 460.
4. Ibid., p. 467.

enough, yet there are two comments which suggest that there may have been more behind the coming of the papal delegate than appears. Archbishop Blenk mentioned in 1911, in an address which praised Cardinal Gibbons, the fact that non-Catholic America had hoped for a break with Rome. His words are as follows:

Non-Catholic America, we know full well, would welcome a Catholicism divorced from Rome; but our union with the church of the unfailing promises is our glory and our strength.<sup>1</sup>

This comment linked with a remark once made by Pius IX suggests that Rome may have had a certain fear of the extreme boldness of the American branch of Catholicism, for Pius IX once replied when asked to do something beyond his power, "Only an American bishop can do that."<sup>2</sup> Thus it is possible that even though Leo XIII thought very highly of Gibbons, he decided to keep a very close check on the popular Cardinal to make sure that he did not become too popular and lead the American branch of Catholicism away from Rome.

After Satolli had been in America for some time and Gibbons had gotten along well with him, Leo suggested that Satolli should receive a permanent appointment as

. . . . .

1. Blenk, James H.: "His Eminence James Cardinal Gibbons", The Catholic World, September, 1918, p. 756.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 236.

Apostolic Delegate to the American Church with residence in Washington. Gibbons was still unwilling and even expressed his disapproval formally as shortly as a month<sup>1</sup> before the permanent appointment was made. Gibbons' attitude was well known at the time and newspaper cartoonist Kepler pictured Gibbons in the barber chair with Cardinal Satolli ready to tonsure Gibbons. Gibbons was saying to the helpers, "Let him lather me if he likes<sup>2</sup> but don't give him a razor".

Satolli stayed, but Gibbons continued to direct with a free hand the affairs of American Catholicism. Satolli seemed to be wise enough to keep on the sidelines and report his impressions to the Vatican without troubling anyone. Undoubtedly Leo XIII hoped eventually to win some kind of official status for his representative with the United States government. Thus far no such status has been granted.

## 6. War Policies

When hostilities broke out between Spain and the United States, the Catholic Church was very much involved, for she had come to own a great part of the Philippine Islands. After the fighting ended and the treaty was

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 469.
2. O'Donovan, Louis: "Little Stories of James Cardinal Gibbons", The Catholic World, December, 1931, pp. 294-295.



signed in Paris, the Philippine Islands were ceded to the United States.<sup>1</sup> However, the problem was not really settled, for the friars who owned the land on behalf of the Catholic Church demanded that they be paid for the property which was the richest in the island area.<sup>2</sup>

President William McKinley had started these negotiations, but after his assassination, President Theodore Roosevelt had to complete the arrangements. William Howard Taft had been appointed to the Philippine Commission in 1900 and became civil governor of the island possession in 1901. When difficulties arose concerning payment for the friars' land, Gibbons offered to help Roosevelt make an economic settlement. Thus through Gibbons, Roosevelt sent Taft to Rome to negotiate for a complete settlement of the matter. Taft had been instructed so carefully by Gibbons that settlement was easily made. Roosevelt was most grateful to Gibbons for assisting in the matter which, according to Catholic authors, was one of the most difficult problems which Roosevelt encountered while serving as President.<sup>3</sup> ✓

Earlier in the struggle between Spain and the United States, Gibbons had come out strongly for arbi-

. . . . .

1. Finegan, P. M.: "Philippine", Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 12, p. 13.
2. Will, op. cit., p. 613.
3. Ibid., p. 615-616.

tration, saying that while it protected the rights of the weak it did not wound or humiliate the national pride of the strong.<sup>1</sup> This view was consistent with Gibbons' general policies and reflected his deep interest in the affairs of the Catholic Church, whether those affairs were directly under his power or not. The fact that he could offer his assistance to the President indicates that he must have been a powerful and bold figure in national affairs at that time.

#### D. SUMMARY

As the contents of chapter three are reflected upon, Gibbons appears as a leader who wielded tremendous power through a period of years extending from about 1886 through 1901. In that period of time he was deeply involved in important matters relating to church and state, labor and management, ecclesiastical turmoil, educational problems, disunity because of immigration, public and personal sentiment concerning the papal delegate and war policies.

These facts emphasize once again that a man who was able to wage victorious battles in these areas deserves study, for although he may have been very

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 599.

popular, he may also have been extremely dangerous. It is clear that he popularized Catholicism, thus removing the fear which many had of it, and at the same time he was forming an effective organization which sought to weave its way into the very fabric of the American governmental system. These were truly years of power for Gibbons.

CHAPTER IV

YEARS OF TRIUMPH

## CHAPTER IV

### YEARS OF TRIUMPH

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Whenever a man is able to attain, in some measure, the goal which he has set up as his life's purpose, he may be said to have entered into his years of triumph. Cardinal Gibbons did attain, to a startling degree, his life's goal. Thus chapter four will place emphasis upon these attainments as they relate to the realization of his one great objective.

The burning desire of the Cardinal's heart and the goal of his life was to make the Roman Catholic Church strong in America. This fact is evident in almost everything which he said or did after he became a priest. Accordingly, this chapter will present evidence which gives an indication of the great strength which the Roman Catholic Church possessed during the last golden years of Gibbons' rule. It will also outline the areas in which the great strength resided.

#### B. THE POPULAR CARDINAL

##### 1. Through a Popular Cardinal to a Popular Church

Personal popularity was but another way of

making Catholicism popular. Thus Cardinal Gibbons felt that it was his duty to do all possible to become popular as a man. Catholic authors suggest that the best approach to an interpretation of Cardinal Gibbons is from the breadth of his personality.<sup>1</sup> Moreover it should be added that Gibbons' popularity was not a temporary emotion in the hearts of those who followed him, but a deep respect which constituted an enduring popularity.

That he was successful in winning this deep respect there can be little doubt, for upon the Fiftieth Anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in 1911, he was honored in a most unusual way at Baltimore. First of all, Gibbons was honored by the presence of 20,000 people in the armory of Baltimore.<sup>2</sup> This in itself is unheard of when it comes to honoring a churchman. Then, to make the occasion more unusual, President Taft, Theodore Roosevelt and Governor Crothers of Maryland were the main speakers of the evening.<sup>3</sup> Many senators and other leaders were also present.

Following this great occasion, the Baltimore Sun published the following tribute to Cardinal Gibbons as a person:

. . . . .

1. Kerby, William J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons--An Interpretation", The Catholic World, May, 1921, p. 153.
2. Mullany, Milo: "Cardinal, Citizen and Patriot", The Rosary Magazine, July-December, 1911, p. 7.
3. Ibid., p. 7.

Cardinal Gibbons is the most eminent and distinguished citizen of Maryland now living. He is more widely known than any other. His sympathies and his friendship have in no wise been confined to his own church. They have embraced the whole world, the whole people.<sup>1</sup>

As these estimates are studied, some shrinkage should perhaps be allowed, for those who spoke them, like Gibbons, were aware of the benefits of popularity. Yet it must be admitted that Gibbons was actually an extremely popular leader in whom government officials and people had great confidence. Thus through personal popularity, Gibbons found a means by which the position of Catholicism was strengthened in America.

## 2. Gibbons and Socialism

When the Socialists polled 402,283 votes in the election of 1904, Gibbons studied carefully the implications of this trend in public opinion. He found that the great majority of its adherents in this country were men of foreign birth who had been disappointed in illusions cherished in their imaginative minds about the meaning of that equality of opportunity which was the American ideal.<sup>2</sup> This fact disturbed Gibbons, for he saw in Socialism a serious threat to the American governmental system which he dearly loved.

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. Will, Allen Sinclair: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, p. 674.

Therefore Gibbons prepared to throw the whole force of Catholicism against the further progress of the movement. He quoted encyclicals from the pen of Leo XIII<sup>1</sup> and interpreted their meaning to the American public. In so doing, he was not only calling upon the authority of the Roman Church, but was also placing the American branch of Catholicism in the main stream of public opinion which was against the Socialist movement. Once again he was able to hold firmly to a popular position which reassured all America that Catholicism was in no way favoring Socialism.

It is also interesting to note that the Encyclical *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, published by Leo XIII in 1878, which Gibbons quoted and interpreted against Socialism, states that Socialism, Communism and Nihilism are based upon the same fundamental errors. These errors are traced back in history and are said to have their roots in the Reformation.<sup>2</sup> Thus in quoting the encyclical mentioned, Gibbons was not only showing that Catholicism was opposed to Socialism, but was also suggesting that the Protestants were the ones who caused the evil of Socialism in the first place. While any student knows that this view is unfounded, Gibbons' suggestion undoubtedly furnished ammunition for popular argument and swayed many people who were uninformed.

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 676.

2. Hughes, Philip: *The Popes' New Order*, p. 53.



### 3. Growing Catholic University--Gibbons Hall

Catholic authors seem to be in general agreement that one of the great triumphs of Gibbons' life was the success of the Catholic University. By 1911, the University had grown from a School of the Sacred Sciences to a vast organization comprised of faculties of theology, philosophy, letters and the sciences. The Teachers' College was opened in 1911. By 1914 the University library contained 100,000<sup>1</sup> volumes exclusive of pamphlets.

Thus in 1916, on the Silver Jubilee of the University, there is a note of triumph in the words of Gibbons when he said:

The honor of the Church in the United States is bound up irrevocably with the Catholic University of America, for it was founded not to meet the needs of a single diocese nor of any particular section of the country, but to further the welfare of religion in every diocese, parish and home.<sup>2</sup>

The emphasis upon furthering the welfare of religion caused one of the archbishops to say that Gibbons looked to the University to carry out his life work which was to bring the mind of the Church to all the questions of the age that it might be recognized as a light to the nation<sup>3</sup> and the world.

. . . . .

1. The New International Encyclopaedia, Volume IV, "Catholic University of America", p. 689.
2. Shahan, Thomas J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons: In Memoriam", The Ecclesiastical Review, May, 1921, p. 458.
3. Ibid., p. 459.

Three years later Gibbons gave what proved to be his final written estimate of the value of the University. He wrote in the last pastoral letter that the Catholic University was designed to be a home of all sciences and the common base of Catholic educational forces. Then he went on to explain that he believed this to be true because it was clearly understood how much a Catholic University of high repute and influence could do toward spreading and upholding Catholic doctrine.<sup>1</sup> From these statements, there can be no doubt that the University constituted one of the major areas of Gibbons' triumph. This triumph was expressed in a tangible way when the name of Gibbons was linked permanently to the University by the erection of Gibbons Memorial Hall in 1911. Thomas J. Shahan, rector of the University, gave still more meaning to Gibbons' Hall, saying that it served to remind all of the fact that Cardinal Gibbons was the University's inspiration, support and savior.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. Public Relations

Thus far in this study, emphasis has been placed upon the areas of larger activity in the life of Gibbons. However, there were many smaller activities in which

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter, September, 1919, pp. 21-22.
2. Shahan, op. cit., p. 458.

Gibbons engaged that are also worthy of note. These lesser activities undoubtedly grew out of his belief that the forming of sound public opinion was an indispensable<sup>1</sup> element in ecclesiastical success.

Some reference has already been made to the fact that Gibbons won personal approval by his warm, diplomatic and polished ways, which Bishop Kelley described so fully.<sup>2</sup> However, he also offended many by his manner, for they felt that he was hiding his real mission. Those who mistrusted Gibbons warned that the "namby-pamby" sort of Romanism set forth by Gibbons and<sup>3</sup> the Paulist Fathers was not the real Romanism. So his public relations were not always as convincing as Catholic authors pretend.

Another element in the public relations of Gibbons which should be mentioned was that he was always at work. Ceaselessly he went the round of all diocesan institutions, colleges, convents, orphanages, industrial<sup>4</sup> schools, hospitals and homes for the poor. This is even more significant because Gibbons was a frail man<sup>5</sup> who lived ever on the very edge of his strength. This

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter, September, 1919, p.30.
2. Kelley, F. C.: The Bishop Jots It Down, p. 52.
3. Phillips, J. A.: Roman Catholicism Analyzed, p. 119.
4. Shahan, op. cit., p. 311.
5. Ibid., p. 308.

priestly devotion and genuine concern for people, even at the risk of his own health cannot be denied. This quality probably explains to a great extent the remarkable love<sup>1</sup> which people had for him.

In the area of political public relations, he preached continuously on American patriotism, on the security of the American Republic, on the American concept of church and state, on religious liberty, on the share of American Catholics in the making of the republic and

similar subjects.<sup>2</sup> When prohibition and woman suffrage became political issues, he stated his views in simple and moderate language. In fact his moderation was said

to be a result of his unemotional nature.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the

reasons may have been, Gibbons held that prohibition could never be enforced and that a statute aimed at

abolishing the use of liquor would be but a vain law.<sup>4</sup>

He was, however, in favor of local option on the question.

This was undoubtedly a popular view held in most Catholic and city areas. Concerning woman suffrage, he was op-

posed to general sufferage for women, but in favor of

conferring municipal suffrage upon women who owned property.<sup>5</sup>

. . . . .

1. Shahan, op. cit., p. 30.

2. Ibid., p. 307.

3. Evans, M. F.: "Cardinal Gibbons, American and Catholic" The Catholic World, January, 1923, p. 470.

4. Will, A. S.: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, p. 456.

5. Ibid., p. 782.

In the area of international relations, Gibbons was also active. He instituted in Washington an annual Pan-American Thanksgiving service for the entire diplomatic corps of the Western hemisphere.<sup>1</sup> In 1911, he was invited to offer prayer at the Third National Peace Congress, and instead of praying he gave a three page address which favored the signing of a treaty of arbitration between Great Britain and the United States.<sup>2</sup>

Still other activities of the Cardinal included a discussion on the immortality of the soul with Thomas Edison; the offering of prayer at the Democratic National Convention in 1912 and at the Republican National Convention in 1920; opposition to the principle of national ownership of public utilities and activities related to religious and humanitarian groups.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps his willingness to give himself to all of the many smaller demands, opened the larger doors of opportunity through which he walked in ever greater triumph.

### C. THE WORLD WAR CARDINAL

#### 1. Activities Before the War

After President Wilson was elected, Gibbons made an informal call to convey his respects and give

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 789.
2. Gibbons, James: Arbitration Between Great Britain and the United States, p. 2-4.
3. Shahan, op. cit., p. 311.

personal evidence of loyalty to the authorities of his country which he loved. Little is recorded concerning this first visit except that it was short and involved<sup>1</sup> no intimate discussion of public affairs.

There is little record of continued contact between President Wilson and Cardinal Gibbons until shortly before America was drawn into active conflict. However, Gibbons was keenly alert to the possibility of war and devoted much time and energy to laying the total<sup>2</sup> Catholic strategy to be used in case war did come. Emphasis was placed upon the activities of the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Young Men's Union. Patriotism was stressed among the foreign elements in the cities and was effective because these groups had been largely Ameri-<sup>3</sup>canized after the Cahensly movement had been crushed.

As attempts at bringing about peace continued to fail, Gibbons, on July 23, 1916, his eighty-second birthday, declared that universal military training was necessary to safeguard the nation, build up its manhood<sup>4</sup> and further fuse its foreign strains. This pronouncement revealed the fact that Gibbons saw no possibility of avoiding armed conflict. At first thought there seems

. . . . .

1. Will, op. cit., p. 791.
2. Kerby, W. J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons--An Interpretation", The Catholic World, May, 1921, p. 150.
3. Will, op. cit., p. 744.
4. Ibid., p. 812.

to be no triumph possible in relation to such a conflict, yet for American Catholicism it was a rare opportunity to prove conclusively that its followers were absolutely loyal.

## 2. National Catholic War Council

When the program of military training began to take concrete form, a meeting of the American hierarchy was called at the Catholic University. Under Gibbons direction, many Catholic men were selected to serve in an organization which was called the National Catholic War Council. Father Burke was elected president of the Council.<sup>1</sup> The function of the organization was to assist the government by unifying all Catholic war activities, by establishing local boards for the same purpose in each diocese, by acting through the Knights of Columbus and by giving support to the welfare work for the soldiers<sup>2</sup> in camps.

Perhaps the most amazing part of the National Catholic War Council was the fact that it was planned by a man who was eighty-three years of age. Catholic authors agree that Gibbons continued to see the value of new endeavor and displayed a courage and understanding in

. . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 817.

2. Ibid., p. 817.

respect to the War Council which would have honored a  
man of forty.<sup>1</sup> He urged that the War Council be created  
to safeguard the moral and physical welfare of Catholic  
soldiers and suggested that the organization could be  
used as a permanent plan of hierarchical reorganization.<sup>2</sup>

Thus with an organization behind his words,  
Gibbons wrote to President Wilson in April, 1917, and made  
the following pledge:

Our people now as ever, will rise as one man to serve  
the nation. Our priests and consecrated women will  
once again win new admiration and approval.<sup>3</sup>

Still later, when the United States actually en-  
tered the war in 1918, Gibbons declared publicly that he  
and American Catholics were ready to support their country  
in any and every way. He wrote, "There must be no shir-  
kers".<sup>4</sup>

From these above statements the thought pattern  
behind the activity of Gibbons is revealed. He was dis-  
couraged when a peaceful settlement could not be reached,  
but when war came he set out to turn even the tragic  
circumstance into a means by which American Catholicism  
would be benefited.

. . . . .

1. Kerby, W. J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons--An Inter-  
pretation", The Catholic World, May, 1921, p. 151.
2. Ibid., p. 150.
3. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter, September, 1919, p.34.
4. Walsh, James J.: Our American Cardinals, p. 114.



#### D. THE CARDINAL'S LEGACY

##### 1. National Catholic Welfare Council

So effective and beneficial was the National Catholic War Council, that when hostilities ceased, the suggestion which Gibbons had made previously was acted upon. The American hierarchy determined to maintain the organizational structure of the War Council for the continued coordination of Catholic forces.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, they grouped together under a new name, National Catholic Welfare Council, the various agencies which would further the cause of American Catholicism. Basically there are four departments which function under the direction of a powerful administrative committee. These four departments are education, social welfare, press and literature, and social and lay activities.<sup>2</sup> While all were active before Gibbons' death, he spoke most often of the education department and the press department.

Gibbons emphasized, in 1919, the importance of a strong Catholic press as a means of forming sound public opinion.<sup>3</sup> This emphasis grew out of a general belief accepted by the American hierarchy that the Catholic press

. . . . .

1. Gibbons, James: Pastoral Letter, September 1919, p.35.
2. Ibid., p. 35.
3. Ibid., p. 30.

was one of the most potent of all instruments for the teaching of Catholic truth because public opinion was the chief factor in the structure of democratic societies.<sup>1</sup>

Pope Benedict XV expressed the same view when he wrote:

All your noble works, all your grand efforts will be destroyed if you are not able to wield the defensive and offensive weapon of a loyal and sincere Catholic press.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to note in this connection that all of the national press agencies ordered their reporters to record everything which Cardinal Gibbons said. The only other person so honored was the President of the United States.<sup>3</sup>

The department of education of the National Catholic Welfare Council was originally composed of a director and seven assistants. The purposes of the department, as announced at the time of its opening, were as follows:

1. A clearing house of information concerning Catholic education and Catholic education agencies for Catholic educators and students, and for the general public.
2. An advisory agency to assist Catholic educational systems and institutions in their development.
3. A connecting agency between Catholic education activities and government education agencies.
4. An active organization to safeguard the interests of Catholic education.<sup>4</sup>

. . . . .

1. Williams, Michael: "The Bishops and Our Press" The Catholic World, March, 1921, p. 730.
2. Ibid., p. 732.
3. Healy, Patrick J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons--1834-1934", The Ecclesiastical Review, July, 1934, p. 13.
4. McGuire, C. E.: Catholic Builders of the Nation, Vol.V, p. 218.

Knowing these purposes of the department, it is also important to know how these purposes were applied at a conference held in February 1920. The following items were specifically outlined:

1. Secure complete information regarding proposed Federal and State legislation affecting education, and furnish such information to the bishops, school superintendents, supervisors of teaching communities and others concerned.
2. Undertake the work of educating the public, Catholic and non-Catholic, upon the aims and nature of Catholic education.
3. Gather and disseminate such information about the requirements in the various states respecting the certification of teachers as may be helpful to Catholic educators.
4. Urge the formation in each state of a Catholic association to cooperate with this department and with the Catholic educational association in the discussion and solution of educational problems.
5. Devise ways and means of putting into effect the recommendations submitted in September, 1919, in the report of the committee of education to the general committee on Catholic affairs and interests.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of this department's work, text books were prepared and selected for elementary high schools, teacher training mother-houses giving normal training were organized, and lists of books were suggested for public libraries.<sup>2</sup> Beyond this the department organized Newman clubs at state universities and authorized the publication of books which emphasized

. . . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 220-222.
2. Ibid., p. 225.

only the Catholic point of view. Two such books were P. J. McCormick's History of Education and James A. Burns' Growth and Development of the Catholic School System in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

From this brief summary of the activities of one department of the National Catholic Welfare Council, it is clear that the organization formed by Gibbons in the last years of his life was one of the greatest enduring triumphs for the Cardinal.

## 2. Gibbons, Wilson and Benedict XV

Catholic records of the relations between Gibbons and Wilson supply very few details. These records mention that Gibbons became the medium of communications between Pope Benedict XV and Wilson in regard to steps which might be taken to bring about peace.<sup>2</sup> The communications finally led to the suggestion by Gibbons that President Wilson visit Benedict, which he did in January, 1919.<sup>3</sup> The Pope, although he had submitted a peace plan to both Germany and the Allies which had not been favored by either, agreed to support the League of Nations which

. . . . .

1. McGuire, op. cit., p. 228.
2. Will, A. S. : Life of Cardinal Gibbons, p. 809.
3. Ibid., p. 832.

1  
was proposed by Wilson. Benedict's support was given by  
the following words:

It is certainly to be desired that all states, putting aside suspicion, should unite in one league, or rather in a sort of family of peoples, designed both to maintain their own independence and to safeguard the order of human society.<sup>2</sup>

Although little came of Benedict's support, Gibbons undoubtedly considered it to be a great triumph when Wilson personally called upon Benedict to enlist his support of the League of Nations.

### 3. Death of Gibbons

In November, 1920, Gibbons collapsed while conducting a mass. He recovered only temporarily from this physical collapse and was thus forced to spend most of his time in bed or in a wheel chair praying in the cathedral in Baltimore.<sup>3</sup> While he was in bed during the last months of his life, he requested that Von Holst's History of the United States be read to him. Shortly before his illness he had read biographies of John Marshall, Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson.<sup>4</sup>

His last public utterance was for the diocesan paper, The Baltimore Catholic Review, and was entitled

. . . . .

1. Hughes, Philip: The Popes' New Order, pp. 265-276.
2. Ibid., p. 281.
3. Kerby, W. J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons--An Interpretation", The Catholic World, May, 1921, p. 145.
4. Will, op. cit., p. 1031.

"The Constitution and George Washington". In this article the Cardinal reaffirmed his faith in America and her institutions.<sup>1</sup> During his last days he had seven volumes read to him on the United States Constitution and would<sup>2</sup> often stop the reader to comment on various articles.

Concerning the state of mind of the Cardinal just before death, there is one statement which suggests that Gibbons had a fear of death. He said, "Only God knows what I suffer. Most gladly would I change my position<sup>3</sup> with that of the simplest child of the city."

News of the Cardinal's death brought a stream of comment and praise from at least twenty nations and the American Catholic hierarchy was quick to review the triumphs of the Cardinal and to present them to the American public.<sup>4</sup> Bishop Shahan preached a long funeral sermon and publications carried pictures and full stories about the funeral. This was as Gibbons would have ordered it, for it would be his desire that even the publicity of his death should assist in the triumphal march of American Catholicism.

. . . . .

1. Smith, A. E.: Cardinal Gibbons--Churchman and Citizen, p. 212.
2. Ibid., p. 212.
3. Will, op. cit., p. 1043.
4. Kerby, op. cit., p. 146.

#### E. SUMMARY

In chapter four, emphasis has been placed upon the triumphs of Cardinal Gibbons' final years. By means of this emphasis, the remarkable strength of American Catholicism was shown and the areas in which its strength resided were outlined. The evidence presented indicates that its strength resided in at least four areas. These areas include the popularity of its leading Cardinal, its articulate defense of the American system of government, its identification with American life and its organizational efficiency.

These facts are significant since they reveal that the one great objective of Cardinal Gibbons' life was, to a large degree, attained. Attainment constitutes triumph.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### A. SUMMARY OF STUDY

The purpose of this thesis as stated in the introduction was to discover the part which James Cardinal Gibbons had in formulating and applying the strategic policies which have been followed by the Roman Catholic Church in America. Thus the study has been limited to relationships between Cardinal Gibbons and American Catholicism which Catholic authors have considered to be significant.

In the first chapter the amazing variety of his experiences in early life was noted and the singular contribution which the mission work in North Carolina and Virginia made to his general point of view was stressed. It was also pointed out that James Gibbons was a man of ability who devoted himself completely to strengthening Catholics in their faith and to winning non-Catholics to the Catholic faith.

Chapter two set forth the significant developments in the life of Gibbons as the Archbishop of Baltimore. His training under Archbishop Spalding, the evidences

of his remarkable insight into the American point of view and his exact knowledge of American history were related to his leadership in the Third Plenary Council. The nature and importance of the policies adopted by the Council was emphasized by pointing out the fact that those policies formed a chart of the future for American Catholicism.

In chapter three the Cardinal's struggle on behalf of organized labor was thoroughly treated because it involved his conviction that the time had come when the masses were destined to rule. As a result of his able defense of organized labor, it was pointed out that the Cardinal became popular with the working people in America. It was also suggested that because of his popularity, he was better able to speak effectively on various phases of the school question, the Cahensly movement and war policies.

In the fourth chapter a view was given of the strong and organized American Catholic Church which was to a large extent, the result of Gibbons' leadership. In relation to the strong organization, the establishment of which was Gibbons' life purpose, it was stressed that four major factors contributed greatly to the realization of his objective. These factors were his personal popularity, his direct defense of the American system of government, his reorganization of the traditional Roman

Catholic system to fit the American scene and his organizational ability.

B. FACTORS WHICH MADE POSSIBLE HIS INFLUENCE

Throughout the process of research, specific conclusions, stated by Catholic authors concerning factors involved in Gibbons' great influence, have been recorded. These conclusions have been carefully studied and it has been found that seven main factors made possible his influence. While these factors are suggested in the body of the thesis, they deserve to be concisely stated.

Catholic authors suggest, either directly or indirectly, that the following factors were involved in Gibbons' influence upon the Roman Catholic Church in America.

1. He did the ordinary and expected things superlatively well.
2. He was born into a crowded and changing time--a time which gave opportunity for leadership.
3. His liberal tendencies made him willing to lay aside tradition, when, by so doing, he could strengthen American Catholicism. This liberality accounted for his occasional boldness.
4. His keen interest was in people, not in abstractions. This interest preserved him from theolo-

gical remoteness from life, guarded him against the use of technical language, quickened his interest in biographical history and at the same time kept him in vital contact with popular movements among the masses.

5. His organizational vision enabled him to weave Catholic organizations into the fabric of American institutions. His practical and systematic mind was behind the formation of the National Catholic Welfare Council.

6. He lived a remarkably long life. He lived under twenty-two presidents of the United States, through three wars and finally became identified with the American scene.

7. His utter devotion to Roman Catholicism gave him a constancy of purpose and a persistence which nothing could break. His religious devotion outlined his goal and motivated his action.

#### C. SIGNIFICANCE OF INFLUENCE UPON CONTEMPORARY ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN AMERICA

Whenever Catholic authors of the present day refer to Cardinal Gibbons in their writings, it is usually in relation to something which he accomplished or initiated which continues to be beneficial to contemporary American Catholicism. The following areas of influence are those

most frequently mentioned in contemporary books and articles.

1. The most significant influence wielded by Cardinal Gibbons upon contemporary Catholicism was undoubtedly his popularization of the Catholic faith. This he accomplished by means of personal influence, consistent and systematic propaganda and practical identification of American Catholicism with popular mass movements. Thus he combated popular prejudice by displacing it with positive content. The contemporary result is that few people see any danger related to the growth of American Catholicism.

2. Cardinal Gibbons also influenced contemporary American Catholicism by directing the initial organization of the National Catholic Welfare Council. This Welfare Council has functioned with increasing efficiency since it was established and has served both as an organ for gathering information and as an instrument for bringing about unified Catholic action in every area of American life.

3. Another area of Gibbons' influence, which is frequently mentioned by non-Catholic authors in relation to contemporary American Catholicism, is to be found in American political life. Gibbons was a Catholic pioneer in American political life during his early years, but

before his death he had so completely mastered the technique of integrating religious and political affairs that he set a pattern of procedure which is still followed in a general way by the American hierarchy. These facts are substantiated both by the writings of Catholic authors consulted in the research for this thesis and by the documentation from Catholic sources included by Paul Blanshard in his book entitled American Freedom and Catholic Power.

It is hoped that the findings presented in this thesis will serve to inform and arouse further a Protestant leadership which will take seriously the growing power of American Catholicism. Perhaps Protestantism should be instructed by Gibbons' strategy and should adopt his positive principles. If this is done, much of American Catholicism will be displaced by a positive and dynamic Christianity.

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Blanshard, Paul: American Freedom and Catholic Power, Beacon Press, Boston, 1949.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: The Ambassador of Christ, John Murphy and Company, Baltimore, 1896.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: The Faith of Our Fathers, One Hundred and Tenth Revised Edition, John Murphy Company, Baltimore, 1917.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: Our Christian Heritage, John Murphy Company, Baltimore, 1889.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: A Retrospect of Fifty Years, John Murphy Company, New York, 1916.
- Hughes, Philip: The Popes' New Order, Macmillan Company, New York, 1944.
- Kelley, Francis C.: The Bishop Jots It Down, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1939.
- McGucken, William J.: The Catholic Way In Education, Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1937.
- McGuire, C. E.: Catholic Builders of the Nation, Boston Continental Press, Inc., 1923.
- Phillips, J. A.: Roman Catholicism Analyzed, Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1915.
- Schaff, David S.: Our Fathers Faith and Ours, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1929.
- Smith, Albert E.: Cardinal Gibbons--Churchman and Citizen, O'Donovan Brothers, Baltimore, 1921.
- Walsh, James J.: Education of the Founding Fathers of the Republic, Fordham University Press, New York, 1935.



Walsh, James J.: Our American Cardinals, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1926.

Will, Allen Sinclair: Life of Cardinal Gibbons, Volumes I and II, E. P. Dutton and Company, New York, 1922.

#### B. PAMPHLETS AND ARTICLES

Benigni, U.: "Pope Leo XIII", The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume IX, 1913.

Blenk, James H.: "His Eminence James Cardinal Gibbons", The Catholic World, September, 1918.

"Catholic University of America", The New International Encyclopaedia, Second Edition, Volume IV, 1914.

Evans, Maurice Francis: "Cardinal Gibbons, American and Catholic", The Catholic World, January, 1923.

Fanning, William H. W.: "Plenary Councils of Baltimore", The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume II, 1913.

Finegan, Philip M.: "Philippine Islands", The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume XII, 1911.

Gibbons, James Cardinal: "Arbitration Between Great Britain and the United States", An address delivered at the Third National Peace Congress, Baltimore, May 4, 1911, American Association for International Conciliation, New York, 1911.

Gibbons, James Cardinal: "The Christian Home," The Paulist Press, New York, 1918.

Gibbons, James Cardinal: "Denominational Schools", A Discussion at the National Education Association, Nashville, Tennessee, July, 1889, Arnold Publishing Company, Boston, 1890.

Gibbons, James Cardinal: "Funeral Oration on His Eminence John Cardinal McCloskey, D.D., Archbishop of New York", Delivered October 15, 1885, at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, Benziger Brothers, New York, 1885.

- Gibbons, James Cardinal: "The Morals and Law in Labor Conflicts", American Anti-Boycott Association, New York, 1907.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: "My Memories", Dublin Review, April, 1917.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: "Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops in Conference at the Catholic University of America, September, 1919", National Catholic Welfare Council, Washington, D.C., 1920.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: "Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States Assembled in the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore", Baltimore Publishing Company, 1884.
- Gibbons, James Cardinal: "True Manhood", Address given to graduating class of Worcester University at its commencement exercises in 1907, Doxey Book Shop Company, Baltimore, 1907.
- Healy, Patrick J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons, 1834-1934", The Ecclesiastical Review, July, 1934.
- Kerby, William J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons--An Interpretation", The Catholic World, May, 1921.
- LaRose, Pierre De Chaignon: "The Arms of His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons", The Ecclesiastical Review, July, 1911.
- Mullany, Milo: "Cardinal, Citizen and Patriot", The Rosary Magazine, July-December, 1911.
- O'Donovan, Louis: "Little Stories of James Cardinal Gibbons", The Catholic World, December, 1931.
- Russell, William T.: "Archdiocese of Baltimore", The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume II, 1913.
- Shahan, Thomas J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons", The sermon preached at the funeral of Cardinal Gibbons, The Catholic Educational Review, May, 1921.

Shahan, Thomas J.: "James Cardinal Gibbons: In Memoriam",  
The Ecclesiastical Review, May, 1921.

Williams, Michael: "The Bishops and Our Press", The  
Catholic World, March, 1921.