

Elements of Ecclesiastical Law: Compiled With Reference to the Syllabus, the Reference to the of Pope, Pius the Council of the Vatican and the Latest ... the Discipline of the Church in the United St

S. B. Smith

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Excerpt from Elements of Ecclesiastical Law: Compiled With Reference to the Syllabus, the Reference to the of Pope, Pius the Council of the Vatican and the Latest Decisions of the Roman Congregations; Adapted Especially to the Discipline of the Church in the United States

Rev. and dear Father: - I have to thank you for sending me a copy of your work on the "Elements of Ecclesiastical Law." On receiving it, I it once examined certain parts to which my attention has been lately directed, and I found the treatment of them singularly full and precise. The book, therefore, will be, I believe, of much use in Seminaries and to the Clergy. And I will not fail to make it known.

The new Hierarchies and the Churches of the New World are under conditions so totally unlike the old countries in centuries past, that we need a "Novum Jus" by the application of old principles to a new state. May every blessing prosper your labours.

Dear Rev. Sir:

On receiving your Elements of Ecclesiastical Law I put it into the hands of the Theological Professor of one of our Seminaries. He has read it for me, and, I am glad to say, confirms the. prima facie judgment I had formed of its utility for ecclesiastical students, as well as of its learning. As I think you will like to see his letter, I inclose it.

My Lord Cardinal:

The "Elements of Ecclesiastical Law," by Dr. Smith, is in my opinion not only a very interesting, but also a most useful book for Students and Priests here as well as in America. The chief good points of the book I take to be:

- I. The selection of material, i.e., the leaving out a great deal of archaic information which one usually meets with in such books, and giving just what is necessary for our times and circumstances.
- II. His method, i.e., 1st, the order in which he puts the general principles or the old Common law of the Church first, and then the special Ecclesiastical law of America, England, or Ireland, makes a good and clear picture of the American Church as part of the old Mother Church and still on the other hand as a new creation of our own times. 2d, the manner in which he proposes the matter in questions and answers, is catechetical, and makes things very concise and clear. One sees the author has but one purpose throughout, i.e. to be useful to his readers.

- III. The author constantly refers to the best authorities for his statements and conclusions, and the book has been examined by Cardinal Simeoni's Consuitors, whose suggested corrections are embodied in the 3d edition, and it bears the stamp of approbation by many Bishops and is consequently on mere external grounds a very reliable book.
- IV. What makes the book also very interesting and useful is the many references to the Schemata Vaticani Concilii, or proposals made by Bishops to bring about a change, revision of the Corpus juris, and he gives many instances.
- V. With a few more additions as regards England, the book might be classical for this country; anyhow, there is no book that would better meet our wants at present. I hope it is a little spur for students as yet there is no such thing as Canon law in our seminaries, and I believe Priests at large do not care for it, or think they can do without it.

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