

These dangers are to be found, doubt it not, Beloved Brethren, in the reading of bad books and bad journals, especially, which are circulated more than ever through the world. For, alas! they are hawked about every where, in public places, in railroad stations and carriages; in the jails and in the hospitals; in the market places and in private houses. Error disguises itself under every form, and, in order to disseminate its poison more effectually, it is hidden in an infinite number of false bibles, of small tracts full of falsehoods, of irreligious and immoral pamphlets, and of newspapers injurious both to faith and morals. In truth, we have arrived at the evil days foretold by the apostle St. John, when the locusts, which devour all things, come forth from the depths of the abyss in such vast numbers, that they form a dark cloud, which obscures the light of the sun (Encyclical letter of Gregory XVI, 15 August, 1832).

At the sight of so many criminal works, which Hell unceasingly vomits forth on the earth, tremble, Beloved Brethren, as you would on seeing venomous serpents gliding into your houses; *Quasi à facie colubri fuge peccatum*. Drive them far from your dwellings, so that your spirit and your hearts, as well as those of your children, may not be tainted by the poison they contain, which is a thousand times more pernicious to the soul than the pestiferous breath of the serpent to the body. On the contrary, keep in your homes none but approved books, calculated to foster in your families the love of good principles and sound doctrines.

Similar dangers are, also, to be found in frequenting schools, academies, faculties of law and medicine, universities and other institutions of a like kind, where catholic principles are laid aside, if they are not openly controverted; and where, consequently, the faith of the students is imperiled. It is, then your duty, christian parents, to take such measures as will prevent your children from ever becoming attached to these institutions. It also concerns the honor of our Holy Religion, which would be humbled by the preference given to them over the many establishments it unceasingly raises to the glory of God, in the interest of your families, and to the honor of our country.

The danger to your children would be particularly imminent, were you to place them in certain institutions, which, it is well known, have been established solely for the perversion of catholics. The pretended charity that opens to them those asylums, and where they are fed, clothed, and taught gratuitously, has no other object than that of robbing them of the precious gift of Faith. To what dreadful judgments would not parents expose themselves, who would be guilty of sending their children to such institutions, and of thus