

of the Catholic Church, the healer of nations.

When people do not believe in God, or a future life of rewards and punishments, they are prepared for any crime, provided it may bring some gain or content for this life. Children are seldom better than their parents, hence if children be not well instructed, generation after generation will deteriorate, and the upbuilding of all society will be the result. Worldly science is very good when properly used, but it will be as dynamite in the hands of man who, if he be not God-fearing, will do immense damage. Man becomes as an untamed horse without the restraints that religion inspires. (Ecc. xxx., 8) It is more important for parents to have good, honest and pure children, than to have them very learned and rich without those virtues. What will it profit them "to possess the whole world and lose their own souls?" The noblest example which the world ever saw was that of a whole nation of Christian parents from generation to generation refusing to allow their children to enter Universities, Colleges, and Schools where worldly honours and riches were offered to them, on the condition of renouncing the True Faith.

How often had parents in Ireland to console their children who foolishly complained of their want of opportunities to enrich themselves, or gain places, by saying, "It is better to be rich for all eternity, and poor here, than have the whole world and lose our souls." These were true Christian heroes; they and their children rejoice with God now, that they have chosen the better part, which shall never be taken from them.

Parents are not safe in conscience, but are running great risk of eternal happiness, who will expose their children to lose their faith or morality in irreligious schools.

Parents are bound in conscience to send their children to Catholic schools wherever they are established. The Church tolerates parents in sending their children to Common schools where there is no Catholic school near them, but the Church does not take the responsibility of *advising* parents to send them

to them, and when Catholic children are so constrained, parents and Priests are obliged to be more attentive in instructing these children in their religion and in seeing that they frequent the Sacraments. There is a good number of Common schools in this country, in Catholic settlements, where there is little danger.

Parents are obliged to transmit to their children the most precious inheritance of faith which they received from their ancestors, and they commit a more grievous injustice in not doing it, than if they were to squander away their worldly inheritance, because the inheritance of faith is the more precious as it is to last for an eternity. Children have always a right to this treasure, especially in youth, the spring time of life, for when the scorching rays of the summer sun of adolescence come, it may be too late to plant the seed. Again, the life of a child is like a web of cloth which the shuttle is constantly making, and whatever figures the workman may wish to interweave will be marked upon it, whether beautiful or the contrary. As the shuttle is constantly going the greatest care should be taken that the images may be always pure and true. Evil impressions on young minds are most difficult to be erased. The foolish ghost stories or lies against the true church, heard in youth, will influence old age. Even when reason has corrected these falsehoods, the imagination will still conjure up the images of youth.

For Catholics the rule of the Church from the earliest ages is, that the education of Catholic children must be based upon, and mixed up with religion, and our Holy Father Pius IX. of blessed memory, has declared that "mixed education is an evil." The sneer and taunt of Protestant children against priests, the sign of the Cross, Mass, Blessed Virgin, holy water, &c., chills greatly the reverence of the child towards sacred things. We know this from experience, and from the experience of others, who had to frequent Protestant schools. We could not induce a Catholic child of eight years of age, who had frequented a Protestant school for about three months, to make the sign of the Cross, because the child had heard it was a wicked thing