

the ministers, the creatures, if you will of human power, taking the word of command no longer as of old from some prelate, but from the advocate, the deputy, the statesman of whatsoever class or order who may hold in his hands the roll of appointments and benefices for the day; on the instant their confidence would be destroyed; the root of their obedience would be cut through; and they would abandon the faithless and servile pastors who would conduct them imperceptibly to a new edition of the Anglican schism.

(To be continued.)

EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

“Naturam hominis hanc Deus ipse voluit, ut duarum rerum cupidus et appetens esset religionis et sapientie. Sed homines ideo falluntur, quod aut religionem suscipiunt, omnia sapientia, aut sapientiam soli student, omnia religione; cum alterum sine altero esse non possit verum.”

LACTANTIUS.

MY DEAR SIR—The pious and eloquent Lactantius could not pen more appropriate language were he called from the tomb to pronounce on the merits of the State-system of education with which we are menaced. I am of opinion that there is no public question, at this moment, so deserving of especial attention. It is impossible to look without alarm on a system of culture that professes to consult for the development of the understanding only, without imparting any religious bias, or moulding the heart by discipline and moral training. No one can for a moment question the importance of first impressions, when a preoccupation to right views and feelings may be imparted; a circumstance that should deter one from inviting the Catholic youth of this country to lay aside, for a time, their religious convictions, and resort to a common instructor, in secular sciences. That plan of education, Malebranche wisely observes, is best calculated to bequeath infidel principles to a rising generation which engages the youthful mind in the study of the exact sciences and their collateral branches, without implanting religious principles, and enforcing a severe moral discipline. It is painful to see the periodical press enlisting his talents in support of very different views, and asking, in a tone of triumph, “*whether an assent to the Athanasian Creed be requisite for the due study of the law or the practice of medicine.*” Without questioning the ability with which this portion of the press is conducted, I am by no means disposed to look there for just views respecting those large measures of concession which the religious well-being of this country demands. Habits of thinking with deliberation cannot be well expected from spirits hurried and irritated by constant collisions; and, perhaps, I may go further, and doubt whether the qualities that are indispensable for this class of writers be a genuine intelligence and high sense of duty; or, rather, the cheaper faculty of easy composition and spirited style, with strong prejudices, that are seldom com-

bined with expansive views and sober sense; and still more rarely with humble and fervent zeal in the service of religion.

But I would ask: should that species of training be deemed indispensable for youth, without which the study of the art and sciences cannot be pursued with safety? The head should influence the affections of the heart; and the heart, in turn, should exercise a due share of jurisdiction over the head. It is before the passions have acquired strength that they may be combated with success; for while in early life, the affections, those powerful auxiliaries to religion are most impressible, the passions are best strangled in the cradle. When the young spirit is gently and gradually drawn to venerate religion; when the endearments of life are blended with sacred associations; when youth has been accustomed to look up, through his instructor, to God; and when he has learned to extend and to apply this notion in his relations with parents and superiors and friends; then provision is made for uniting spiritual happiness with the highest mental culture; and in after life the devotions of the closet, far from being irksome, will be fraught with the purest enjoyment. The groundwork thus wisely laid, the exercises of the understanding may be profitably pursued; and the temptings to vanity and self-complacency, that too fatally attend on mental advancement, will be fully overbalanced by habits of moral discipline.

By education, now-a-days, men mean almost exclusively intellectual training; and to this the moral and religious discipline of youth is easily sacrificed. It is forgotten that the understanding must labour with *disinterestedness*, which is the very soul of virtue, that it may grow up to soundness and healthy vigour. The most acute reasoners for want of this quality have cheated themselves and others, and become entangled in the web of their own weaving, till “*the light within became darkness.*” It is notorious that men of rare powers of mind have broached the grossest errors and undermined, as far as in them lay, those fundamental, primitive truths, on which virtue and truth and society itself repose; and we daily meet with persons of a very moderate range of thought, who by a disinterested love of truth have gradually made their way to some mental enlargement. The moral principles of the soul, therefore, when generously cultivated, fertilise the intellect and open fresh and valuable avenues to truth. The passions may lift a louder voice than conscience; but how different is their clamour from the tone of its authority? The greatest truths are damaged when not linked with moral beauty; and never do they win their way surely and so deeply into the soul as when vested in this attire. And now it appears, we are called upon to sacrifice this saying