

us; but this is no reason why we should not follow with anxiety every turn in the crisis through which the old Catholic countries of Europe are struggling. And are we so much better off than they? Is there not already a perceptible falling off in the number of vocations in some parts of Canada? There is scarcely a family of our remote rural districts which has not one representative in some of the large cities of the Dominion or of the neighboring republic, and many have more than one; the occasional visits of these to the frugal homes of their youth, affording ocular evidence of an improvement in their circumstances, tend to breed discontent in the minds of the simple country people with what they are led to look upon as their own hard lot. The more wholesome tastes of country life are soon supplanted by new and extravagant likings. There is a shrinking from honest toil, a craving for something more than the comforts of life, a thirst for riches rapidly to be acquired, an inordinate longing to rise above their former social position. All this is perfectly in keeping with the spirit of worldliness, but it is not an atmosphere wherein ecclesiastical or religious vocations thrive.

The good old spirit of the Catholic family, which made it almost a point of honor, or better still, of holy emulation, to have one member a priest at God's altar and another in the cloister, is now on the wane. No sacrifices were too great to secure for one son a good classical education to fit him for the priesthood. Daily, at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, he was to stand as mediator between God and the poor family whose members had deprived themselves of more than one little luxury on his account; and the poor old folks knew that when dead and gone, others might forget them, but a daily memento would be whispered for their souls into the very ear of our Lord living on the altar.