

*much displeased*, and said to them, suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And, *embracing them*, and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them" (Mark 10th chap.) What a lovely picture this is! The Lord of Majesty, who rules over heaven and earth; the Sage of Sages, Eternal Wisdom who "dwells in light inaccessible" (1 Tim. 6th chap.) does not deem it beneath His dignity to converse familiarly with lisping childhood, to bear with its thoughtlessness, its giddiness, its obtrusiveness, its dulness, perhaps, or its excessive vivacity. What a lesson for us, His representatives before men, the sharers of His eternal Priesthood for the salvation of His elect, not to disdain to give our time and earnest thought to the Christian formation of childhood's mind, as though it were an inferior office of the ministry, which should yield to the frequent pressure of high duties. Aristotle, one of the most learned philosophers of antiquity, thought his time best employed in teaching the first rudiments of grammar to Alexander, son of Philip of Macedon, because his pupil was the heir of an empire, and his future career would much depend upon the first lessons of the school. Our little ones, dear revd. fathers, are children of the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (1 Tim. 6th chap.), the heirs of a royalty infinitely superior to that of Alexander, and the rudimentary lessons of faith and piety will exercise a powerful influence on their future, for time and for eternity. Jesus Christ would be "much displeased" did we fail to interest ourselves in their instruction at all seasonable times. Our Divine Master "embraced them," says the Evangelist. He did this for our example, that we may open our manly hearts to the little innocents and receive them in the spirit of affection. And this we know you do, dear revd. fathers, and we thank our good God for the zeal you display in fulfilment of this duty of the ministry, under conditions of great hardship, at times, and edifying disregard of the fatigue and discomfort consequent on long journeying and late celebration of mass on the Lord's Day. You shall have your "reward exceeding