

olics, and to those Catholics not undeserving of the name; but this is no objection to our general conclusion. We are too apt to forget that the Church is in the world, and that it is through her that society is redeemed,—too apt to forget that the quiet and unobtrusive virtues of Catholics, living in the midst of a hostile world, are always powerful in their operations on that world; and that the world is converted, not by the direct efforts which we make to convert it, but by the efforts we make to live ourselves as good Catholics, and to save our own souls. The little handful of sincere and devout Catholics, the little family of sincere and earnest clients of Mary, seeking to imitate her virtues in their own little community, are as leaven hidden in three measures of meal. Virtue goes forth from them, diffuses itself on all sides, till the whole is leavened. No matter how small the number, the fact that even some keep alive in the community the love and veneration of Mary, the true ideal of womanhood, the true patroness of the Christian family, the mother of chaste love, adorned with all the virtues, and to whom the Holy Ghost says, 'Thou art all beautiful, my dove,' must have a redeeming effect on the whole community, and sooner or later must banish impurity, and revive the love of holy purity and reverence for Catholic morality.

'For, in the second place, the worship of Mary is profitable, not only by the subjective effect it has upon her lovers, but also by the blessings she obtains for them, and, at their solicitation, for others. In these later times we have almost lost sight of religion in its objective character. The world has ceased to believe in the Real Presence; it denies the whole sacramental character of Christianity, and laughs at us when we speak of any sacrament as having any virtue not derived from the faith and virtue of the re-

cipient. The whole non-Catholic world makes religion a purely subjective affair, and deduces all its truth from the mind, and all its efficacy from the heart, that accepts and cherishes it, so that even in religion, which is a binding of man anew to God, man is everything, and God is nothing. At bottom that world is atheistical, at best epicurean. It either denies God altogether, or excludes him from all care of the world he has created. It has no understanding of his providence, no belief in his abiding presence with his creatures, or his free and tender providence in their behalf. Faith it assumes is profitable only in its subjective operations, prayer only in its natural effect on the mind and heart of him who prays, and love only in its natural effect on the affections of the lover. This cold and atheistical philosophy is the enlightenment, the progress, of our age. But we who are Christians know that it is false; we know that God is very near unto every one of us, is ever free to help us, and that there is nothing that he will not do for them that love him truly, sincerely, and confide in him, and in him only.

'Mary is the channel through which her Divine Son dispenses all his graces and blessings to us, and he loves and delights to load with his favors all who love and honor her. Thus to love and serve her is the way to secure his favor, and to obtain those graces which we need to resist the workings of concupiscence, and to maintain the purity of our souls, and of our bodies, which are the temple of God. She says, "I love them that love me," and we cannot doubt that she will favor with her always successful intercession those whom she loves. She will obtain grace for us to keep ourselves chaste, and will in requital of our love to her obtain graces even for those without, that they may be brought in and healed of their wounds and putrefying sores. So that under either point of