

in the school appeared to him as a sacrilege, and he feared not to say that "to organize teaching so as to deprive it of every point of contact with religion, is to corrupt in the soul the very germs of the beautiful and the honest, to prepare, not defenders of the country, but a pestilence and a plague for the human race."

Afterwards, anxious to make heads of families and all interested in education understand, that that which the child claims, by right of his baptism and of the Catholic Faith, is not merely a smattering of religious instruction relegated to a secondary rank, but a teaching wholly penetrated with the Christian spirit, he wrote these beautiful words which We love here to repeat: "Not only must religion be taught to children at certain hours, but the whole teaching must breathe forth a fragrance of Christian piety. Otherwise, if that sacred aroma does not penetrate and enliven the spirit of masters and pupils, the teaching, whatsoever it may be, will produce but little fruit, and all often, on the contrary, result in most grave inconveniences."

These important lessons, Our dearly beloved Brethren, Leo XIII repeats to-day, in addressing Us the masterly Letter which it is Our mission to promulgate. The Catholics of the whole world will reap benefit therefrom, but it is on you especially that devolves the duty of listening to them with the deepest respect and of putting them faithfully into practice.

It is assuredly for all Canada a signal honor and an inestimable advantage that the immortal Pontiff should thus deign to take particular notice of us, to examine our many requirements, to take an exact account of our social condition, of our strength and of our weakness, to seek the cause of the evils from which we are suffering and of the strifes which divide us, in order to point out to us the way we must follow and the remedies we must use. He to whom it has been said by Jesus Christ himself: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep: confirm thy brethren." Yes, he is the same who speaks from the sacred hill of the Vatican, and the pages full of tenderness and of powerful doctrine that his hand has traced will form one of the noblest chapters of our national history.

But why has the Pope spoken to your Bishops, and through them to the entire Canadian people? Why does he recall to our minds, more forcibly perhaps than he has ever done before in any of the documents emanating from his authority, the unchangeable rules from which the children of the Church may never swerve in the