

The Mariner's Evening Hymn.

BY WM. COLLINS.

[For Redpath's Weekly.]
Evening's shadows fall around us,
And the sun sets on the sea;
With Thy love, O God, surround us,
Trusting we pray to Thee;
Shine with all its stars has bound us,
Thou canst cleanse and make us free.
Darkness falls upon the ocean,
And the waves in anger leap;
And our hearts with trouble's ocean,
Heaves and trembles on the deep;
But our hearts with true devotion,
Nearer to Thy footstool creep.
Though the winds in wrath are blowing,
Thou the tempest canst command;
Safe beneath Thy guidance going,
We shall hail the welcome land;
And though fierce the waves are flowing,
Power and strength are in Thy hand.
Father, as the night descending,
Hides the sun's last golden ray,
Hear our hearts and voices blending,
As to Thee we humbly pray;
Thou, Thou, love and grace extending,
All our sins shall wash away.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

PASTORAL LETTER OF BISHOP FARRELL.

MICHAEL JOSEPH, by the grace of God and the favor of the Apostolic See, Bishop of Trenton, to the Clergy and Faithful of his Diocese, health and benediction.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: In addressing you during the holy season of Lent last year, we stated that it would have been our wish to treat in our first pastoral letter, of Christian Education, as the subject most dear to our heart and most important to your souls. But, as we felt that Christian education supposes naturally a Christian home, and that such a home cannot exist without Christian Marriage, we decided to begin our public instructions to you upon that fundamental doctrine. We pointed out to you the true teaching of the Church with regard to the unity, the perpetuity, and the indissolubility of the marriage bond; how all the modern notions of divorce are contrary to the teachings of the Gospel, as well as to the best interests of the family and the state;—teaching founded on the sentence pronounced by our Divine Lord Himself, that "what God has joined, let not man put asunder." (St. Matthew, xix. 6.) Then we showed you how the Catholic Church, with the wisdom given to her by her Founder, and from the same source, the Holy Spirit, has provided a constant supply of blessings for those who enter into the holy state of matrimony, to strengthen them against the natural infirmities of the human heart. Finally, we insisted upon the due observance of the practical rules laid down for us by the Church in order to secure these blessings. And now, dearly beloved, we have reason to thank God and to congratulate you for the good success that has attended our exhortations. From every parish we have received most consolating accounts of the docility and obedience of our faithful people. Marriage, which is treated as an honorable and holy institution, is treated as such. Our young people have come to ask the Church to bestow her most solemn blessings on their union, and the adorable sacrifice of the Mass is offered up, in most cases, for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the married couple. Clandestine, disgraceful, uncanonical marriages have entirely disappeared; evening marriages are now unheard of; and the pastors rejoice over the improvement of their flocks. Even when one or two exceptions occurred in opposition to this Christian spirit, the sorrow and the public rebuke of the repentant sinners soon consoled us for the violation of the law.

Such, then, dearly beloved brethren, is your spirit with regard to Christian Marriage. You believe it to be a divine Sacrament instituted by Christ to give every grace to the husband and wife to live happily together, and to bring up their children in the fear and love of God. As the primary object of the institution of marriage was to perpetuate the human race, so the chief end of Christian marriage is to beget children for God, to bring up a godly race of Christian men and women, to add new living members to the body of Christ, until the number of the elect is completed. Hence it is evident that a Christian education should follow a Christian marriage, and that Christian parents are necessarily bound to bring up their children in a Christian way. It is upon this most important truth that we wish now to address you; and we pray you with all the earnestness and affection of our heart to give the deepest attention to our words, and to the same attention to our teachings as you have hitherto done. We know of no subject more important to you and to your children in all its bearings, or more far-reaching in its consequences. May the Author of Light, He "who enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" (John, i. 9.) guide and direct and enlighten us in the abridgment and in the practice of this grand principle!

That every parent, still more every Christian parent, should provide for the wants, both temporal and spiritual, of his child seems almost a self-evident truth. The child is entrusted, in the most helpless condition, to the care of its parents. It can do nothing for itself—it has not even the instinct of animals to protect itself. To the love of its parents it must be indebted for everything. The parents must assist it in its growth and development. Now, as the child is a complex being, consisting of a body and soul, its growth must be in this twofold capacity. It must grow physically in its body to become a man and capable of a man's duties. But it must also grow in its mind and its intellect, otherwise it would not become a reasonable, intelligent being. It must also grow in its moral nature, otherwise it would not become a Christian man.

Now, nature itself secures the growth of the body; the very fact of living brings physical development; and the common instincts of humanity induce parents to provide for the physical wants of their children. Even the most unprincipled seldom fail in this duty. There are of course exceptions to the rule. There are parents who, to gratify their own vile passions, especially when debased by the foul habit of intemperance, seem to lose their natural feelings, and abandon their children to poverty and degradation. But these are exceptions; they are like monsters, and are held everywhere in just

execration. The brand of shame and dishonor is stamped upon them. Even the most wretched parents will try to find food and clothing for their little ones; and nature itself supplies what may be deficient. For do we not often see how strong and vigorous is the physical growth of the children of the poor, although oftentimes wanting what to many would appear the very necessities of life? We may trust the human heart, even when debased, unless in very rare exceptions, to provide for the material and physical wants of the young. No need, then, to insist upon this truth. But the chief growth, the most important development of the child, is in its intellect, in its spiritual nature. Man is distinguished from other animals by his soul and his intelligence. It is by the growth of his spiritual faculties that he becomes more and more a man. Now this growth will not come spontaneously from nature. It must be brought about and be carried on principally by outside influences. The truths which will develop the intellect must come from without. They will not grow in the mind themselves. They must be sown there by a friendly hand, as the good grain will not spring forth from the soil, no matter how fertile, unless the farmer had previously deposited it there. The education of the mind and soul of the child must then come from external sources, from those who surround him and are interested in his welfare; and a Christian education must come from sources blessed and protected and directed by the Christian faith. Now the first and most natural source of growth must be the home, by the domestic hearth and fire-side, by the side of the mother. This home teaching for Christian children must be supplemented and continued by the Christian Church, and still further developed by the Christian school.

Hence we have three distinct, yet thoroughly connected sources of Christian education—the Christian home, the Christian Church, the Christian school. These three are essential for the full Christian growth of the child, and should not, if possible, be separated. But the foundation is in the home. The most important is the home-training, which may supply in a certain measure the absence of the other two, but can scarcely be replaced itself. These are the points to which we intend to call your attention, the three centres for the Christian education of your children; and we earnestly hope and pray that you may be enabled to give them the inestimable benefits of the three—the Christian home, the Christian Church, and the Christian school.

I. EDUCATION IN THE CHRISTIAN HOME. Home! What precious memories this name evokes! What pure and holy joys, what noble thoughts, what sublime deeds have sprung from this Christian home! There did our intellect first receive the earliest rays of divine truth; there did our heart expand under the pure sunlight of a loving mother's smile; there did our soul grow strong under the mighty influence of a good father. Home is the first, the chief, the best centre for the education of the child. To the mother belongs the first part in this great work. For the earliest years her loving hand, her gentle touch, is needed to direct the growth of the tender plant confided to her! What a wonderful privilege, what a glorious mission for her! The Almighty has intrusted chiefly to her, in those first years, the welfare on earth and the happiness in heaven, of her child. As she is the first to feed and nourish her infant, as she also is the first who can reach to the depths where its soul lies hidden, she can bring it forth by her loving call from its recesses and stamp her own image upon it. She can, as it were, touch this soul with her hand, and fashion it as she pleases. Through her, the rays of truth and knowledge begin to beam upon the child's mind; through her, the mysteries of this life and of the life to come are gradually unfolded. For her loving heart, by her gentle words, her kindly tones, her tender glances, the child is made to grow in the virtues of faith and hope and heavenly charity. By her side he kneels in reverent posture, and his infant tongue licks the sacred names of God and Jesus. How deeply he drinks in the pious words which fall from his mother's lips! how the God to whom she looks up, the great Being of whom she speaks so reverently and so lovingly, becomes for him wonderful in all his attributes, and most deserving of his love, because of the example of his mother's love!

Prayer becomes sweet to him; attendance at divine worship, a source of delight; religion, a consolation and a comfort. His intellect is awakened, his heart is lovingly drawn towards the beauties of faith. His childish joys are thus sanctified by and connected with the practice of his religious duties. Ah! who can tell in adequate terms the wonderful influence of the Christian mother?

The pages of history attest that nearly all the great men, men distinguished above their fellows by extraordinary deeds,—great saints and great heroes,—men who strove to benefit their race and country, or who by their crimes inflicted most injury on both,—have nearly all been such as their mothers trained them. The mother makes the man. Without speaking now of the great men of the world, of the great scholars, the conquerors of nations, of whom this observation has been frequently made by their biographers or historians, let us simply look to the lives of our great saints. It would be impossible here to enumerate the noble women who, from their own generous and devoted hearts, enkindled the fire of religious heroism in the souls of their children. Not to mention the old law the mothers of the Machabees pointing out to their noble sons the pathway to heaven through most frightful sufferings, nor the mothers of the martyrs in the new, let us simply recall some of the mothers of the great saints and doctors of the Church. St. Paul reminds his disciple Timothy of what he owed to "the faith unfeigned" (2 Tim., i. 5.) of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. St. Basil and his brother, St. Gregory of Nyssa, gloried in preserving the faith in which they had been trained by their grandmother St. Macrina. St. Gregory describes most minutely the manner in which his mother instructed his sister. St. Fulgentius owed his education, not merely in sacred science but also in polite literature, to the care of his mother Mariana, "the religious mother" as she is called in his life. The early education, both literal and religious, of

St. John Chrysostom, was in like manner directed by his admirable mother Anthusa, whose conduct in this particular drew from the pagan sophist Libanius the exclamation, "The gods of Greece, how wonderful are the women of the Christians!" Who has not read or heard of the touching story of St. Monica guiding the early steps of St. Augustine; and when the violence of his passions led her son astray from truth and virtue, she followed him through all his wanderings with her advice, her prayers, and her tears, until at length, she was consoled by his return to God, and the words of St. Ambrose were verified, "that the child of such tears could not perish." How well St. Augustine himself understood how much he was indebted to his mother for his conversion and his happiness may be seen from the touching words of his Confessions.

And again, many of you may have listened to the story of Queen Blanche of France, whom in his childhood, when seated on her knee, she thus addressed: "My Louis, I love you above everything in this world, but I would rather see you fall dead at my feet, than that you should be a single moment without God." Well that boy remembered those lessons of his mother can be seen in his after-life, so manly, so heroic, and so holy that he has merited the honor of being proclaimed by the Church of God, and proposed to the veneration of the people, as the model of Christian kings and the type of the Christian gentleman.

The father, too, has his recognized place, as the head of the Christian family, in the great work of home education. Without his example to fortify, his authority to support, his loving and lovingly when the mother would very often lose their efficiency. The boy, who in his earliest years can be directed safely by the mother, needs, as he grows older, the sterner hand and the strong will of the father to restrain him. In vain will the mother point out to the wayward child the beauty of virtue if his father does not convince him of its manliness also. But when both parents work harmoniously and lovingly, when their authority is combined for the one great purpose, when father and mother place their chief care in the religious development of their child, then God's blessing seldom fails to descend upon them.

It will thus be seen that the first, the best, the most solid foundations of a Christian education are laid in the Christian home, where the gentleness and love of the mother, encouraged, sustained, and developed by the manliness, honesty, integrity, and firmness of the father, gradually form the character, bring forth all the good instincts of the soul, strengthen and guide the efforts of the intellect, repress and diminish the evil inclinations of the heart, so that when their child is exposed to the dangers of the world he is equipped and prepared to take his part in the battle of life, and almost certain to gain the victory. Happy is the man who can look back to the holy memories of such a home. He may, no doubt, have forgotten for a time those precious lessons; his passions, like an impetuous torrent, may have swept him from the path of honor and virtue; yet, the image of his Christian mother will rise up before him, and like a guardian angel guard him back even from the very edge of the abyss. It was the memories of his home that touched the poor prodigal son of the Gospel in the midst of the hordes of swine, and brought him back, sorrowful and repentant, to the feet of his generous father.

But, on the other hand, how miserable, how pitiable the lot of the child who never had a Christian home! For him no holy lessons remembered; no prayers said at his mother's knee; no wise counsels from his father's lips. He was neglected and abandoned to himself. Like a young plant which no skillful hand has cultivated, he has grown up in all the wild exuberance of his passions. He learned not of the goodness of God, nor of His greatness; neither the glories of heaven nor the horrors of hell. Perhaps he only heard God's name pronounced when it fell from the lips of a blaspheming father, or when, in the course of a quarrel, he heard his father say, "I will be damned if I do not have my son for a drunkard, a thief, a liar, a scoundrel, a dishonest one, self-respect from a mean and worthless one." How could he acquire strength of soul against temptation, steadfastness of purpose in the pursuit of truth, integrity and uprightness of heart, when all the lessons of his home all his surroundings, all the examples of his parents, teach him the very contrary? What charms can virtue have for him? No wonder that the enemy of souls finds him an easy prey and an apt pupil for every lesson in vice; that the street becomes his school, in which he learns with marvellous facility the various phases of crime. From the lips of a blaspheming father, from the eyes of a dissolute mother, from the example of a drunken one, he learns a dishonest one, self-respect from a mean and worthless one. How could he acquire strength of soul against temptation, steadfastness of purpose in the pursuit of truth, integrity and uprightness of heart, when all the lessons of his home all his surroundings, all the examples of his parents, teach him the very contrary? What charms can virtue have for him? 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