

ages of ten and fourteen. When a boy has attained the age of thirteen he is advised by the Fathers themselves to select a wife from some of the girls who are in the convent school of the mission. The children are obtained by the Fathers from their parents without any trouble, as the latter willingly part with them. This arises not from any lack of natural affection, but because they readily see the advantages which the children derive from education. The children, who are maintained by the missions, are called by the natives "white," as they are provided at once with clothes, usually of a white color, as best suited to the climate.

Agriculture and various trades, which are the foundation of all progress, are taught by the Fathers. The introduction of Indian corn, which bears easily two crops a year, has done more to facilitate the labors of the missionaries than anything else. The country was frequently devastated by famine. Whenever the rain fell too abundantly the fruits, which constitute the staple diet of the natives, rotted, and starvation followed. Corn being not subject to such damage, the natives regard its introduction as a gift of Providence.

The Fathers who practice medicine are perhaps the greatest personages after the kings in all this region. They have only to threaten to go away and generally they at once obtain any concession they demand of these sovereigns. The huts in which they live are besieged every day by patients. The kings themselves consult them, sometimes performing a journey of a month for that purpose. Surgery is held by the natives as a higher art than medicine. A Surgical operation is always rewarded either with a pair of chickens or of ducks, or with a cow or an ox according to the rank of the patient. A king always gives an ox. It may be added that