

friendship, social intercourse, if not in schools; from newspapers, literature, the stage. Though we cling firm to the dogmas of the faith, as proposed by the Church, we adhere also to a crowd of opinions, ideas, views, principles, reaching even to standards of conduct which are opposed, if not to the revealed truths themselves, at least to the conclusions which necessarily flow from them which ought to stream out like so many rivulets into all the actions of our life and which we cannot repudiate logically without a denial of the faith itself. How often do we hear laid down by Catholics, as axioms of what they call their political faith, principles subversive of the divine power of the Pope or his infallibility! They would be horrified to talk of the mystery of the Incarnation or the Eucharist as they talk of the *mystery* of the Papacy, though it is a no less fundamental article of revealed truth. Fortunately, ignorance saves such people from any intentional attack on the faith. But the contradiction is there. There rests on the intellect, the seat of faith, a cloud that obscures the clear bright vision, that chills and benumbs its power, that destroys its influence in private, social and public life. What enhances the evil is the fact that whilst we take care to improve ourselves and our children in all branches of secular knowledge, our religious knowledge remains at a stand-still. We are satisfied with the few chapters of catechism learned but very imperfectly in our school-days, and flatter ourselves that we have not forgotten them. Side by side with rapid progress in worldly culture, there has been no growth of the religious spirit, no study of the Sacred Writings, of the History of the Church, of the Lives of the Saints, of Catholic dogma and asceticism, and, as a consequence, the good seed of faith is choked by the briars and thistles of worldliness. No doubt this chilling atmosphere of heresy is the main cause why there are so few canonized saints from countries infected with it.