

the cross. The Irish numbered 800,000 in Queen Elizabeth's time. So low had they been reduced by sword, famine and pestilence. Their conquerors outnumbered them two to one; yet by a merciful providence of God they soon outnumbered their conquerors three to one. Chaste living, healthy early marriages, and a detestation of the crime of injury to woman, were amongst the Irish the fruitful cause of this increase. The Catholics, some time after, were hardly 1,000,000 whilst the Protestants—English, Scotch, and a few Irish apostates—were 2,000,000, with the whole island, its riches, ornaments and offices in their hands. Catholics were banned and hunted down; yet God preserved them. About a hundred years ago no Catholic place of worship was tolerated; yet the people worshipped God by stealth, and by their unalterable faith conquered. Whilst the Irish were thus persecuted in Ireland worldly men sought conquests through the newly-discovered continent. They were devoured with a thirst for gain; and, following the instincts of their old Scandinavian ancestors, their ships swept every harbor and inlet in quest of gold and precious stones, establishments were formed to trade with the natives and to cajole from them their wealth; and here, as the venerable Father Thebaud says, the Irish ascended their ships, whether welcome or not, prest forward to their commercial centres, crowded their cities, and at once proceeded to practice their religion. They collected together in a little room perhaps at first. With heart and will they endeavor to commence a church, and here is the beginning of the 10,000 altars from which sacrifice ascends in this new country. The great gold fields of California are discovered. There is a rush for gold. Irishmen go there too, and behold the California of to-day, one of the richest gardens of the church of God. The diamond fields of Southern Africa are discovered. The Irish, without intending it especially, carry there also their faith. Australia is made a penal settlement where the convicts of England and Ireland are transported to do penance for their sins far from the centres of civilization. An Irishman in his poverty steals something to save his children from starvation. He too is sent there. He carries with him his faith; the tears of his repentance water the soil; and behold another of the most flourishing churches that could adorn old Christianity. We need not speak of the church of the United States. In Canada its triumphs are well known. The Celtic race, Irish, French, and Germans are making of this country, to the dismay

of those who do not profess the true religion, a home of true faith. An Irishman settles in the backwoods. He is an object of suspicion and even of dread. He does not attend camp-meetings or places of worship in which he does not believe. He tries to instruct his children in the prayer of the true faith. Another family comes along and settles; the priest finds them out, and behold the nucleus of a Catholic church. By this we do not approve of any Catholic unchurching himself by settling in countries where there is no chance of his children being instructed in the true faith or of himself receiving the sacraments. How many have been lost by this isolation. It has often been the boast of many villages in this country that there was not a Papist amongst them. But a poor Irish servant girl is much needed. She brings with her an earnest love of God and preserves her faith. This is the beginning. In a few years a modest chapel is put up and the awful sacrifice offered there. There is no stopping it. The decree of God has gone forth that the Irish people, having lost all in their own country, should establish His true religion and worship wherever they turn. The Irish are indeed an apostolic people. With what readiness do they come forward to the accomplishment of their divine mission! How noble the generosity which caused them for their faith to despise all worldly honors and gains. How many of their noble sons aspire to the priesthood. For them earthly honors and wealth pale before its dignity. How many of our chaste virgins prefer seclusion, the chaste spouse of Christ, and the contemplation of Heavenly things, to the brightest nuptials the world could offer her. Yet there are many things to be deplored even in the midst of these fruits of the conquering courage of this apostolic people. It is true that their altars cover the land: but how many more altars might have been erected, how many more people be converted, how many children preserved from the contagion of vice and heresy, had they had more opportunities of Christian education, and had there been more missionaries in the country? And yet the loss of one child, and with it of its divine faith, is the loss of all its posterity.

We wish to refer to the fearful famine, if famine it can be called. For God had blessed the land with abundance of everything, except one little root, the food to which the poor had been reduced by merciless landlords and landlaws. There was enough grain and meal in the country to feed double the number who perished of famine. But we will speak now