

WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO TEACH ?



HE Church has the right to teach anything lawful, wholesome and truthful. Such was the conclusion of our last paper. We are now to answer the question : Have parents the right to teach and to educate their children ; and can they intrust them to the care of persons of their own choice ?

At the very outset we find ourselves in a position not far from critical, for in the matter under our present consideration, one might easily be misled and might set forth on either of the two routes that might lead us to dangerous and excessive conclusions and even to extremes : the absolute or partial denial of the parents, right on the one hand and the granting it unlimited sway on the other. Though our bark is fairly launched on a stream overcrowded with vessels flying different colors, but all steering for the same port, we must not for all that run into Charybdis whilst endeavoring to shun Scylla. "In medio stat virtus," says the old adage ; so with the hand of authorities by no means to be despised at the helm, and with the beacon light of Justice at the prow let us trust and hope we shall not wreck on the shoals of partiality and falsehood. Parents, as will be seen farther on, have the right of bringing up and caring for their children. The might of States, the whimsical legislation of Senates and the transitory zeal of reformers cannot alter that time honored and sacred parental privilege ; nor can they raise difficulties that would render it untenable and ineffective, without undermining the very foundation of Society upon which is built the edifice of States and Kingdoms. Nay, the State cannot even subject such right to arbitrary rules ; for prior to civil power, domestic authority, firm and indestructible stands preeminent like a giant rock lifting its proud head over the angry waves of the ocean. Born with man and sing the child of Nature's laws, the right of parents can wave over civil authority the claims of primogeniture. Laws conceived and brought forth in the gilded halls of capitol cannot dominate and lord over the Law of Nature whose supplement they are, and to