

## VI. Education

### A. Religious Education

308.

Lecture, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, January 14, 1863

We lay before our readers in the present issue the first of a series of interesting lectures by the Right Rev. Bishop Rosecrans. It will well repay perusal.

Lectures in St. Peter's Cathedral. No. 1.  
[The Importance of Religious Instruction.]  
(Incomplete)

It would have been desirable that a clergyman not distracted with many occupations might undertake the usual winter course of afternoon instructions in the Cathedral; but as the serious illness of the worthy President of the Seminary\* has not only deprived us of his services, but thrown additional burthens on his colleagues, no one could be found with leisure to devote to that labor. Still it did not seem to be right to deprive the large numbers who attend Vespers of some religious instruction, and so I have determined to give some simple discourses on matters of Catholic doctrine and discipline in place of the course of Lectures we would have wished to have delivered.

To-day it is my intention briefly to impress on your minds the importance of religious instruction. You must have all been scandalized with the conduct of those so-called religious teachers who spend their time and the time of the people in speaking of other things than religion in the pulpit--who seek to engage their hearers by what is sensational or amusing, as if persons came to church to be amused, or entertained, and as if there were nothing of importance to be learned about religion. You may well be scandalized. For when the pastors of the people do but lead them into thoughts of worldly events, strifes, and interests, the salt has lost its savor, and the whole mass is becoming corrupt. Religious instruction is of the highest importance to all men, and especially to Catholics.

1st. Every man to whom God has given life and the use of reason knows himself to be a dependent being. Like Adam, when his first felt the breath of life thrill through his body, amid the glories of Paradise, he must say, "Not I moulded and formed this body, or gave being to this mind, but One mightier than I. I must learn of Him, then to what end He gave me life." Every one too is conscious of freedom; of the power he had of blundering, and of choosing wisely, and feels that to live is to move from state to state--condition to condition. The first man would have been almost excusable, if in the soft air, the numberless beauties, the unmingled delights of Eden, he had forgotten his

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\* *President of the Seminary was Rev. William J. Barry, who passed away in the spring of this year. Rev. Dr. Rosecrans had been President of the College, not the Seminary, until 1862.*

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freedom, and imagined himself created not to act but to enjoy, not to row or steer the barque of life towards a haven, but to float in it, over calm waters, through soft sunshine, by endless flower-banks, and trees bearing luscious fruits. But for us, the presence of evil is felt too sharply to permit any such illusion. The soul feels itself moving all the time; and death that plucks from it, one by one, those around whom were twined its affections, and disappointment that tears cherished hopes away from it, mark sadly but clearly the stages of its journey, and demonstrate that neither joy nor grief is our end. It is the law of our being to move. But whither are we moving? We feel within ourselves the power of guiding ourselves. But of what use is the power of controlling our actions, unless we know the rule according to which our interest requires them to be regulated? No one acts intelligently who does not know what he is doing.

Religion tells us what God made us for and what he wants us to do. Religious instruction, therefore, is our first necessity. It must be had at the threshold of life, before the first rational act. A man would be a lunatic who would put to sea without knowing in what direction he was to sail; or take the oars without asking whether they were to go east or west.

So is he irrational who sets forth on this wild journey of life without first settling to what end he is going to live; without examining thoroughly the matter of religion. You may say there are many who do it, nevertheless, and that the class is too large and respectable to be called irrational. Do not our most influential business men toil to accumulate without ever having an answer to the child's question, what are you doing it for? Do not our statesmen rush into strife and grasp at honors, without settling in their reason what honors are worth to a soul that must live on eternally? Are these shrewd bargainers, these keen wire-pullers, who can buy and sell the rest of mankind, to be called irrational?

I acknowledge their cleverness. The children of this world are wise in their day. They have only made one mistake and that was in the start. Now let them use ever so much wit in living, the end will show that they were unwise. Their mistake was radical, and vitiated all their acts. They were travelling, and decorated the wayside inn where they spent one night with much taste, ingenuity, and effort. I find no fault with the decorations; the blunder was in adorning it at all. They were crafty at getting honors, and foiling foes, but foolish in so wasting their craft. They showed much talent in accumulating wealth; but little talent in employing their talents thus. They could buy and sell the rest of men, but in the end were bought and sold themselves.

I repeat it then as undeniable, that as the sea-going man must know the port he sails for, the traveler the city he wishes to visit, the beginner of any enterprise must know its nature, so every rational man must in the outset know what he lives for, and to know it, must study religion.

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It will not do to shirk the study and live on at hap-hazard, trusting that, somehow or another, things will come out right in the end. To do that, we need not understanding or free will. Dumb cattle that go where they are driven, that surfeit when man gives them food, and starve when he denies it to them, can do that. If you say you will trust to nature, remember that intellect and freedom are nature, not those animal interests and passions that have usurped the name. Nature, used in the sense of instinct or passion, is a poor thing to trust to. It is not all corrupt, it does not seek things because they are evil, but it seeks its own gross satisfaction, right or wrong. A mother's life is nature, and good; but drunkenness, gluttony, lust, wrath, and murder, are also nature, and bad. You do not rely upon your nature in enterprises where the issue is of worldly importance. You do not leave to nature the investment of your money, the collection of your debts, the building of your houses, or the purchase of your marketing. You do not let nature take care of your reputation, your business, or schemes. For a stronger reason, therefore, you cannot leave to nature the affair in which not your property but yourself are in the hazard, and of which you must abide the tremendous issue. Freighted with all your powers, hopes, capacities, your life-barque is rushing on to where are two outlets into eternity, one into the roaring fathomless gulf, the other into the sun-shiny, boundless calm. Shall you rest supine as it cleaves the water in its arrowy course, or will you be up and doing with all the might of wit and will to guide it from the abyss, and into the eternal brightness?

I know that those outside the Catholic Church have two difficulties in the way of studying into religion; one is the disrepute into which religion has been brought by such a multitude of sects, and the other is a secret fear that the end of the investigation would be the Catholic Church.

The sects have wrangled so endlessly, that among them there is nothing definite left of religion to be a subject of study. They tell you to read the Bible, but they do not tell you what right they have to the Bible, nor where to begin in it, nor what to look for, nor where to stop, and although they cry "read" very lustily, you find that they mean patronize my publisher, and come to my conclusions. They tell you to have faith, but they fly to generalities when you inquire what you are to believe and why you are to believe. They make a distinction between the essentials and non-essentials of Christianity, and are so uncertain and conflicting about the dividing line between the one and the other, that you begin to think that the non-essentials cover the whole ground. In a word, with much clamor and froth, reminding one of the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," with which the craftsmen of Ephesus silenced St. Paul of old, you find everything vague, undefined, and to an irreverent mind, contemptible.

Now, when I ask you to study the subject of religion, I have something definite and clear for you to do. If you do not believe in Christ study the question, was He a messenger of God, and God or not? Study the history of His life, miracles, death,

resurrection, and come to the conclusion reason dictates. The four Gospels are authentic history, read them and see whether Christ was more than a man. If you do believe in Christ, but are uncertain which of a thousand wrangling sects contains His doctrine, read history and find which one He founded. Look into the annals of the past, and see whether the organizations called Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, got their laws and life from Him. Find whether the ancients ever understood Jesus Christ to teach anything about faith saving without works, or rejected the doctrine of the real presence, or did not teach Confession and the other Sacraments.

The course of study is very definite, and you will easily know when it is completed. If the sects are vague the Church is not. She leaves no problem of life unsolved, but wherever there is perplexity she is found holding out a clearly defined doctrine, and saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

You cannot rationally ignore her claims. You have before your eyes a system claiming to solve all the problems of human existence that has a distinct historical existence of four thousand years, two thousand of which it awaited the Messiah, and the other two thousand, in which it has adored Him as having come and taught and saved the world. You cannot deny but that this system *may be* correct and taught of God. You are not safe, therefore, without examining whether it is or not.

As to the fear that the investigation may compel you in honesty to become Catholics, I cannot deny that it is well founded. I remember a time in my own life when I would have given everything short of salvation to be able to prove to my own satisfaction that the Episcopal Church contains the doctrine of Christ. It is such a respectable and comfortable church to belong to! But after the conviction was forced on me that the Church of Christ was one, and Roman Catholic, and I yielded myself to her guidance, I found difficulties vanished, and that it was not such a terrible

*[Here there is a large hole in the Telegraph as microfilmed.]*

The literature of our ... is full of others; and Catholics, to fulfill their duties, must study well all the bearings of the doctrines which, through God's goodness, they have learned and believed.

I have known Catholics who were not in the habit of living in mortal sin, but who had so far allowed their taste to be perverted, as to regard religious reading as irksome and distasteful. This aversion grows in them from the habit of fugitive reading, and of seeking in books for what will allure the fancy and gratify the passion for excitement. It is a soul sickness, the forerunner of death. Like the disease produced in the body by abuse of strong drink, it takes away not only strength but also the appetite for sustenance. God deliver us from it! God deliver us from the state in which the soul, sitting amid the wreck of wasted graces, boasts, in idiotic insolence, of its neglect of the reading and the thoughts that would nourish it to life, and its absorbing love for what is vain and useless, if not pernicious! If your soul loathes the thoughts of

God and of religion, you had better examine into its state and correct its tastes before God comes. For that knowledge is to be preferred to kingdoms and thrones, and riches are as nothing in comparison with it. It is not to be compared to any precious stone; all gold, in comparison with it, is a little sand, and silver but as clay.

Strange perversion of modern science, to turn all investigations earthward! to bring the philosopher's soaring flight after truth down to clay! Astronomy, natural philosophy, chemistry, the knowledge of living creatures and of plants, what are they but aids to commerce, manufactories, and agriculture? And we call the spirit that chains science to these vile uses a spirit of enlightenment, and evidence of progress. This should not be so, for knowledge should lead upward. "He hath given me," says the Book of Wisdom, "the true knowledge of the things that are, to know the arrangement of the whole world and the operation of the elements, the beginning, the ending, and the midst of the times, the alterations of their courses and the changes of the seasons, the revolutions of the year, the positions of the stars, the natures of living creatures, and the rage of wild beasts, the force of the winds, the reasonings of men, the diversities of plants and the virtues of roots, and all such things as are hidden I have learned; for wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me, and she glorifieth her nobility in being united to God--for it is she that teacheth the knowledge of God, and is the chooser of his works."

Science that is not of God is of little moment; it can neither build up nor cast down in our true home. But the knowledge

*[The gap begins again here.]*

309.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Oct. 16, 1875 (2)

### **[The Necessity of Studying Religion]**

The enemy of souls has easy work in the capture of those who see nothing to interest them in works of religious instruction, after they have made their First Communion. They surrender the whole field to Satan as soon as they imagine that they have learned all they need to know in getting the little catechism by heart. The fact is that the study of those truths which guide moral conduct is of far more vital importance than that of science or literature. It requires closer application, calmer judgment, and profounder intelligence. The world scorns at this idea. But then the world is "set in malignity," and scorns at every thought of eternity. It calls all who try to live in the remembrance of their immortality dreamers, theorists and fanatics. Those only are practical men who hoard money, satiate appetite, gratify ambition. Of course, "our faith has overcome the world." Jesus Christ will judge it. The men who trust in riches, the lying politicians, and the sensual, who make lust their law, will tumble together into the

## 310 - Catholic Reading

abyss when the time comes for justice to be uppermost. And how many foolish Catholics will fall with them, simply for want of study and consideration. They take up the world's maxim that reading and study are not labor but amusement; that one may lawfully occupy his thoughts with whatever happens to be most his whim. And that if there be any reading forbidden, the limit will be what his self-conceit will admit is directly hurtful to him. And so we find Catholics filling up their leisure week after week with sensual and foolish novels, with sensational newspapers and sometimes works aimed directly at faith or morals.

To them there is no relish in the Gospel or in Thomas, no wisdom in St. Augustine and St. Thomas of Aquin; no eloquence in St. John Chrysostom, St. Bernard, St. Francis of Sales, Bourdaloue, Massillon. The history of countries, the description of travels, and adventures is dry if the Church or Christian missions are in any way mixed up with them. In the inner life of Christianity, comprising all that is worth knowing of human knowledge, revealed or reasoned out, they find nothing to interest them. Is it not a wonder that these people cannot see what it means to be a Catholic? There needs no God Incarnate, no Baptism, no Holy Eucharist, to make a sensualist, a miner, an ambitious trickster, or a dreamy pleasure seeker. If religion is true, it is worthy of all our thoughts, it must give shape to our entire life and therefore its study is a matter of daily and hourly concern from the dawn of reason to the rending of the soul from the body at death.

### 310.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, July 1, 1876 (1)

### Catholic Reading

The direct work for Christian zeal in this country is to make Catholics *Catholics*. There are so few of us, who even get a glimpse of the grand idea of being a citizen of the Eternal World! And of those who get that glimpse for once, there are so few that do not lose sight in the distraction and turmoil of even good works! The earth is desolated because people will not think heartily and conscientiously. They prefer to take up and occupy themselves with what is passing before them day by day. They think they are good Catholics when they are not bad Catholics, and because they have been in godless schools and read without scruple all kinds of books and newspapers without apostatizing, they hold themselves up as proofs that the Church is carrying things too far when she forbids godless schools and unscrupulous reading of whatever happens to be printed.

The solemn truth is that [the] law of the Church concerning the nourishment given to the soul by school of reading is binding on the conscience, whether it happens to be insisted on or not. The eternal salvation of writers, parents, and children depends

### 311 - Catholic vs. Sensational Reading

upon it. A parent has no right to neglect the inspection of the reading of children; children have no right to read any book thrown in their way. And of course authors have no right to sell their power of moving their fellows for any other than a benefit belonging to the Eternal World.

Bad reading is either against faith or against morals. It is a matter of conscience to refrain from both. Works that teach infidelity, heresy and unpiety cannot be read without sin, unless by those who prudently undertake to read them with the intention of refuting them.

Works against morals are still more strictly prohibited. Those that are professedly obscene cannot be read by anyone under any pretext, without deadly sin. Nor can any Catholic find justification in the fact that the country is flooded with infidel, heretical and obscene publications and say that one need not be particular in this enlightened age about what he reads--that he can judge for himself; and select and adopt what is said of good, rejecting the evil. Such power is not given to man. The mind will contain and occupy itself with what is put into it. No farmer sows nettles and thistles with his wheat, saying, "I will separate them in the harvest time." No sane man swallows poison and food indiscriminately relying on the power of his stomach to select the nourishing and reject the hurtful. So no conscientious Catholic will permit himself, or those of whom he has charge, to read without selection whatever is thrown in their way. Thanks to the efforts of Catholic publishers and writers in this country, there is now no lack of safe reading for all classes of Catholics. The [Catholic] newspapers keep even with the times, without the horror and obscenity of their details of crime. The magazines, from the quarterly down to the Sunday school publication, are not inferior in literary merit to those put forth by Anti-Catholics. There is no reason, therefore, why Catholics should not feed their minds and hearts with sound, intelligent, truthful Catholic reading, and no excuse for defiling homes with the ribaldry of Harpers or the obscenity of the sensational papers.

**311.**

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, August 8, 1878 (5)

#### **[Catholic vs. Sensational Reading]**

The Catholic parent who will allow his children to grow up without the advantages of Catholic reading and give them free access to the indecent sheets of the day, will not have to answer for mortal murder, but for that which is infinitely greater, the destruction of an immortal soul. The ravages of the daily press as well as the sensational weeklies are terrible to think of. Crimes are multiplying, minds are becoming corrupt, souls are daily going to perdition, on account of the daily ghastly recital of crime that the public constantly craves. Catholics could aid in counteracting

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these results by helping in the support of their press. A little less than *four* cents a week purchases a Catholic paper for the family. Who that lives, cannot afford it?

312.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, August 22, 1878

### [Religion Every Day]

If Catholics would read their prayer books, study their catechisms and read Catholic papers, they would not be guilty of breaking fast and abstinence on days on which it is prohibited. These are days when the practices of our faith are constantly put before us, but strange to say that people will remember circus day, or Thanksgiving Day, and Church feasts and fasts are given the go by. Another result of making religion only a mockery, and not the solid foundation of every day life.

313.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, July 2, 1853 (1)

### Public Morality.

The frightful increase of crime during the past few years, in all parts of the Union, has aroused at last almost all the secular papers. It is an undeniable fact that crimes of the most enormous character are daily becoming more frequent throughout the whole country. Now, we do not propose to inquire into the causes of this increasing demoralization, but merely to make a few reflections on the question, what is to be its remedy.

It is obvious that *some* remedy is to be sought; otherwise property and life will be insecure, and society will return to the barbarism of the tenth century, *minus* its right of sanctuary and its "*Tregua di Dio*." What is to be that remedy?

"Educate! educate!"--respond the quack reformers of all things--"Educate the masses!" Yes, but *how* educate? If education be not of a kind calculated to prevent crime, it will be no remedy. He is a fool who expects an *effect* in one sphere from a *cause* in another. Unless your education teach the masses what is crime, and why crime ought not to be committed, it will have no tendency to prevent its commission. What is there in reading, writing, and arithmetic to make a child afraid of sin? The abstract propositions of the higher mathematics, the dry nomenclatures of botany, chemistry, physiology, the statistics, observations and conclusions of geology and astronomy--what motive do they contain to hold back the hand from crime?

The knowledge of all these things is good--is a *power* to him who possesses it,--but it has no proportion as a *cause* to the prevention of crime. It is out of the moral sphere. It does not touch the *will*. When a man is angry, will his knowledge of the



manner of finding the solidity of a truncated cone prevent him from striking? When he is tempted by avarice, will his knowledge of Mercury's distance from the Earth prevent him from stealing or robbing or forging? Can he reason; the Earth's distance from the Sun is about 95,000,000 of miles: *therefore* I will not steal this purse, by which I may so easily enrich myself. There is no room for influence. Mere natural science cannot impede wrong, any more than *eloquence* can move drays.

The education that is to stay the increasing demoralization must be that which teaches to men, first, what *is* sin, and secondly, what are the motives for avoiding sin. Men, and especially children, must be taught the sanction of the law. They must be made to reflect on the terrible judgment that all men are to undergo before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and that an eternity of pain awaits the sinner, while everlasting delight shall be the crown of the innocent.

In vain will you tell them, with the insane followers of Combe, that the violators of the moral law are punished as those of the natural physical law, without trial and without judgment. The natural understanding cannot be blind to the fact that if there is any punishment, there must be a trial and a condemnation.

In vain will you say, with the followers of Luther and Calvin, that mere *faith* saves from hell, and that a man may persevere in every crime provided only he believe that the Lord Jesus does not impute it to him. These are *shams* of those who believe not in eternity; and as *shams*, they cannot keep men from doing wrong.

Religious education, Catholic education, is the only means of restoring morality among the people. The law is powerless without a sanction. And among infidels and Protestants who believe in "justification by faith," the sanction is wanting.

### 314.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, November 8, 1856

#### **Ignorance of Religion.**

It is by no means uncommon for persons of considerable information on general topics to profess with pride their profound ignorance of religion. They will wonder at the Paris *Patrie's* giving out the springing up of a powerful religious sect of *Negro-Worshippers* in this country, they will pity the ignorance of those unfortunate people who do not understand the mysteries of railroads, revolvers, and spinning jennies, they will speak contemptuously of the mental darkness of those ages in which people believed the earth to be flat and immovable, but they will proclaim in beautiful tones their own ignorance of God, of what He has revealed, and their indifference as to whether He has revealed anything at all or not. They despise others for being ignorant of remote and indifferent things, and extol themselves for not knowing what is of vital importance.

## 315 - Catholic Schools and Catholic Homes

What good can accrue from knowing all things about us, unless we know ourselves, our own wants, our happiness, our own destiny?

Is it not the desire of happiness that makes us seek knowledge? But we only mock that desire if we seek not the knowledge it needs, but knowledge of indifferent things.

What shall it profit a man to have studied every subject, to have been perfect in every science, if he know not God and the means of fulfilling God's will?

In the world beyond, the man who lived in an enlightened age shall meet him whose lifetime was an era of darkness, the philosopher and the fool shall be of one company, and all together they shall dwell for eternity. And yet perhaps not together. For if he of the dark age knew God, knew how to love Him above all things, and to manifest that love in fraternal charity, he shall "shine as a star through everlasting ages," while the man of the "enlightened" age may go down, philosopher, inventor, poet, statesman, politician, as he is, to be buried in darkness forever.

What will it profit a man irrevocably banished from the delight, groaning under the weight of a hopeless eternity, to have known the course of the stars, the laws of motion, the structure of the earth, the classification of animals, vegetables and minerals, the annals of wars, the histories of dynasties, the principles of mechanics, and the details of machinery. Nothing. On the contrary, the remembrance of so many studies will add poignancy to his regret at having neglected them that were necessary.

How men persuade themselves that it is honorable to ignore "theological points," is a mystery to us. In worldly matters a man who does not know his own business, is a fool; and if in addition he does not try to know it, he is a driveller.

But is not our own salvation our business? How, therefore, can it be honorable for us not to know how we are to be saved?

Only the knowledge of religion, is supremely absolutely necessary to us--and it is disgraceful for any one to affect ignorance on that topic.

**315.**

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, May 29, 1858 (1)

### **Catholic Schools and Catholic Homes.**

Sometimes we hear people exclaim with wonder, as they see a band of children going to First Communion, or to Confirmation,--"how much good is done by Catholic schools!" And again, others, beholding a crowd of urchins engaged in rude sport, or thoughtless mischief, cry out--"how little good is done to these children, by all the care and instruction bestowed on them!" Much has been done already, and much remains to be done in the training of Catholic children. We have spoken freely of what ought to be done in Catholic schools. But even though all that we desire could be done in the

schools, yet much remains to be done in Catholic homes.

Some one has said, that not one woman in a thousand is fit to be a mother, and, in like manner, not one man in a thousand is capable of fulfilling the duties of a father. If perfection were to be looked for, in this poor world, the saying would be moderate; for the responsibilities of a parent require, a patience, prudence, industry, piety, and self-denial very rare in society. But even compassionating human frailty as much as possible, it must still be acknowledged that there are very many parents, even amongst Catholics, who do not understand the duties of their state.

Young America, smoking, drinking, cursing, gambling, and horse-racing, excites wonder in us like the sight of some monster. Yet Young America grew to be what he is by a regular course of training. The proclivity of children to understand loose-maxims, and imitate bad example is startling. Young America has been accustomed to see drinking, horse-racing, gambling, and the like. Young America has heard, in the parlor, the dining-room, and the street, that indulgence of the caprices, is the height of earthly happiness. According to the rule of arbitrary caprice, it has seen favors granted, indulgence withheld, praise meted out and correction administered. Young America has been consulted, since the age of four, about the cut of his clothes, the choice of his schools, and studies, and companions, and recreations, his judgment has been taken on the character of his teachers, on the quality of wine and cigars, and horses. Therefore Young America has a right to his precocious vice, his unwavering impudence, and pitiable folly. Addicted to self-indulgence while he had nothing to do but attend to it, we need not be surprised at his proficiency. Are Catholic parents free from the guilt of governing by caprice, of admitting their children to injudicious familiarity with them and their guests, of showing foolish indulgence to the whims, and cruel neglect of the interests, of their offspring? Are they free from the error of supposing that their only duty to their children, is to provide them what to eat and drink, and wherewithal to be clothed? Do not Catholic children help to swell the number of precocious little monsters which make Young America a prodigy of revolting pride and vice?

Catholic homes must contribute to the training of our children more than Catholic schools. The children must learn truthfulness, obedience, self-denial, cleanliness, politeness, and fear of God, at their own firesides. Schools may furnish learning; and by proper discipline avert the corruption of good morals; but they can never supply the place of home teaching and example or make Christian gentlemen and ladies, out of the scholars they send forth into the world.

316.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, October 8, 1859

### **One of the Reasons.**

We cannot argue against facts; we cannot deny that many Catholic youths turn out badly. In many cases the fault is the parents'; they failed to give them good example, to send them to school, to see that they frequented the Sacraments regularly. The natural impetuosity and levity of youth, the chilling effects of the atmosphere of infidelity, of religious latitudinarianism--all these are cooperating causes of the ruin of which we deplore. But there is one other--the want of a long, sound, systematic course of catechetical instruction. Ignorance is the parent of full one-half the intellectual and moral perversions which afflict the heart of the Church.

The child, preparing for his first Communion, learns his catechism, but when that great act is performed, he is taken away from school and sent to a trade. Sunday is his only free day; he does not wish to go to catechism; he learned it once, he says. And he may say truly: he learned it once but the learning did not stay; he has forgotten it once, and, in all probability once for all, and the ignorance remains.

The remedy for this would be to establish catechetical instructions on the plan of the famous ones of St. Sulpice, Paris, in which the great principles enunciated in the little catechism would receive their full development and illustration at the hands of able instructors, instructions to which the talent, prudent zeal, enthusiastic energy of the teacher, the approbation of the ecclesiastical authorities, and a well devised system of rewards and punishments would impart an interest both for young and old. M. Hamon, the present parish priest of St. Sulpice, has published, at the end of his treatise on preaching, another on teaching catechism where the subject is discussed at full length. If any of our Catholic publishers were to get this essay translated they would, we are sure, be rewarded for their pains, and render an invaluable service to the Church.

Until such a course of more advanced instruction is established for the parish at large, we must labor all the more earnestly at improving what already exists. We take it for granted that every Catholic school, academy and college has its catechism class; we take it for granted that the catechist has a deep sense of his responsibility and an earnest desire to fulfill his duty to the best of his ability. If the catechism is to be a sealed book for the boy and girl after leaving school all the more need of their being thoroughly grounded in the doctrine and morality of that golden little volume when at school. Children are not parents; they are to be taught as reasonable beings, not as birds. To have the words of the catechism pat on the tongue proves a good memory and nothing more. The mind may be as much a stranger to the ideas signified by those words as to the ideas signified by the same number of Hebrew words.

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The catechism is a manual both of dogmatic and moral theology; every catechist, as such, is a S.T.D., --*Sacræ Theologiæ Doctor*. Let it be taught then dogmatically as well as morally. Don't be afraid of argument, don't shy off from a syllogism as you would from a snake. Make the child learn to think and reason, to be able to give an account of the faith that is in him. It is well enough to talk pretty things about the Blessed Virgin in a Sodality of young ladies, but God help them if their instruction is confined to that. The only way to the heart is through the reason, we can persuade only when we have convinced. Flowers of all kind belong to Mary, the flowers of rhetoric as well as the roses and lilies of the field, but they are frail creatures, they wither and die, and love for the Blessed Virgin will *die* with them unless it is based on the great dogmatic fact of the Incarnation, unless we know and appreciate the theological connection between the Mother and the Son.

317.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Aug. 21, 1875 (3)

### [Our Problem with the Common Schools]

This week there was a picnic for the benefit of the only English-speaking Parish School in Columbus. The period at which we write is too late to give any advice to people about encouraging it by their presence and donations. But it is not too late to remind Catholics again of the necessity of having their children at Catholic schools. The Holy Father has decided the question again and again. Experience, elsewhere and here, has shown that Catholics do not grow up Catholics in the common schools. They grow up, at best, Catholics in profession, and form, going to Mass on Sundays and attending to their Easter Communion; but they are not proud of their faith or zealous for it, or attentive to the duties of it. They are Catholics in defiance of the world, but they never pray for their dead relatives, they never go Mass on week days unless to witness a marriage or a funeral; never visit the Blessed Sacrament; never attend any special devotion announced for the congregation; never read books of piety; never belong to any sodality; and are astonished on their death bed by finding that they have wasted their lives as the heathen waste them.

St. James was well acquainted with the teaching of our divine Lord, and he, to Luther's great disgust, says emphatically that "faith without works is dead." But whatever faith is kept by those who are brought up [in] godless schools is, as a general rule, without works. It is not the faith of the old times when Christians considered their Christianity their life, but rather that of those who call the profession of belief in Christ "joining the church."

It is not as much what is taught in the schools as the spirit pervading them which gives bent to the life of the pupil. In the Catholic school you have the Catholic usages,

going to daily Mass, using the sign of the cross, speaking reverently and devoutly of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints; regular sodalities of the Holy Angels and of Mary; and these mould the mind and heart of the child to piety. In the public schools all these are wanting, and in their place there are books which defame religion; teachers who think themselves immeasurably liberal in allowing Catholics to live; companions who sneer about Confession and call us idolators; total forgetfulness of the cross and of prayer all the day; everything that can cheapen religion or make it hateful and distasteful to the mind. These are considerations which should be dwelt upon by those who must answer to God for the souls of children. Do all we may, we cannot do enough to keep them from falling into sin now and then, but doing nothing to make them turn their hearts to God, how shall we face the Supreme Judge?

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Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Oct. 23, 1875 (4)

#### **[U.S. History Book Reviewed]**

We have received from the publishers Messrs. Jones Brothers & Co., of Cincinnati and elsewhere, a copy of the history of the United States prepared especially for schools by John Clark Redpath, A.M., Professor of Belle Lettres and History in Indiana Asbury University.

The material execution of the work is exquisite and the chart of cotemporary events is an admirable feature for a school book. We have examined the work chiefly with reference to recommending it to Catholic schools and have the distasteful task if saying it is not suitable for them.

We do not want our children to learn for history a work that ignores or contemns the Catholic religion. In the charts and maps, Luther and Calvin are made prominent figures while the popes and great Catholics are not mentioned.

On page 16 occurs almost the only allusion to the faith of Columbus, "for more than ten years, he was going from court to court, explaining to dull monarchs and bigoted monks the figure of the earth." The idea of making young people think they know anything about Columbus, where they are told nothing of his faith and piety, nothing of his planting the cross wherever he landed, is absurd.

On page 23, giving an account of DeSoto, "The Indian guide went mad, and when the priests had conjured the evil spirit out of him, &c."

The Huguenots are represented not as a turbulent political party, but as persecuted Christians.

On page 34, Champlain is called "an earnest Protestant." Think of an earnest Protestant discovering Lake George, and naming it "Lake of the Blessed Sacrament!"

On pages 36 and 37, the effort of the Pope to act as arbitrator between the

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discoverers is sneered at, after being unfairly stated. The usual bosh about the Plymouth Pilgrims, and their love of liberty, will not answer for a Catholic text book. The Puritans wanted the freedom to domineer over others, as their history demonstrates.

The plan of the charts and the style of the texts are good, but no man can write the history of any great work of modern times, who ignores the Catholic Church. A History of the United States, with the Catholic Church in, would be good for Catholic schools. This is not.

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Lecture, *The Catholic Columbian*, February 7, 1878

*The following synopsis was provided to the The Catholic Columbian in a letter from Portsmouth.*

Dedication of the Organ, St. Mary's Church, Portsmouth

Sunday Evening, February 3, 1878

#### **[The Church's Attitude toward Education]**

...the Right Reverend Bishop, standing directly in front of the Altar, delivered his lecture. He spoke concerning the relation which the Catholic Church sustains to education, and showed that from the very earliest day of the Church she has ever regarded the enlightenment of the human mind as one of the accompaniments of her mission on earth among men. In the middle ages, when the outside world, nominally Catholic, it is true, but not in deed or works, were engaged in wars, and worldly pursuits, who were the custodians of learning and literature? The "idle and lazy monks," that the average historian delights to slander. Within the quiet monasteries and convents were the busy and intelligent clergy of the Catholic Church; thousands of humble "clerks" were engaged in translating and transcribing the old Roman and Greek masterpieces of literature; and what thanks do they receive from an enlightened nineteenth century? They are denounced as lazy and of spending lives of ease and luxury. It requires no keen reader to see the absurdity of the accusation that the Catholic Church is opposed to education. Who charges this upon the Church? The very party that burned, demolished, and confiscated every Catholic nursery of learning in Europe. The very party whose record of power is marked by the ruins of colleges and universities; the very party who enacted penal laws making it a capital offense for an Irishman to be educated. It comes in very bad grace for the Catholic Church to be charged with opposition to education by this party.

The Rt. Rev. Lecturer then proceeded to define the doctrine of the Catholic Church upon the question of education. He claimed that it was a usurpation on the part

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of the State to claim the education of a child; that that was all the despotisms of the old world asked for. The Czar of Russia or Bismarck asked no more than that the training of the physique of the mind be according to the ideas of the state. He said this style of education was contrary to the ideas of the Revolutionary fathers; that it is in spirit opposed to the American ideas, and in the establishment of the American principle of liberty, was never contemplated. All the Catholic American citizen asked was that he be allowed to educate his child as he pleased; that he have the right to pay for his child's education, and for no other man's child. If this be fanaticism, as is charged, why then we are fanatics. But not fanatics for ignorance, but in favor of education. A great deal has been said in relation to the "designs" of the Church upon the common schools of Ohio. The Bishop said the Catholic Church has no designs whatever upon the common schools; that it was political trickery; and that the men who perpetrated it knew that it was a trick. He related an incident of a political leader's explanation or apology for the wholesale attack on the Catholic Church: that in view of the necessity for a party triumph, something had to be gotten up to fire the American heart, and as a lucky and afterwards fortunate hit, they struck upon the "Pope's Toe."