

ADW 12116
350738

EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

*A. Sermon Preached in
Rome, March 21, 1900*

BY

THE RT. REV. J. L. SPALDING, D. D.,

BISHOP OF PEORIA

THE AVE MARIA PRESS

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA

EDUCATION
AND
THE FUTURE OF RELIGION.

EDUCATION
AND
THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

*A Sermon preached in the Church of the Gesù, Rome, March.
21, 1900, for the benefit of a Free Night-School.*

BY

THE RT. REV. J. L. SPALDING, D. D.

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA, U. S. A.:
THE AVE MARIA PRESS.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

OPPORTUNITY AND OTHER ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. 12mo. \$1.00.

EDUCATION AND THE HIGHER LIFE. 12mo. \$1.00.

THINGS OF THE MIND. 12mo. \$1.00.

MEANS AND ENDS OF EDUCATION. 12mo. \$1.00.

THOUGHTS AND THEORIES OF LIFE AND EDUCATION. 12mo. \$1.00.

A. C. McCLURG & CO.
CHICAGO, ILL.

EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE OF RELIGION.

It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.—ST. JOHN, VI, 64.

RELIGION is life in and with God through Christ Jesus; and the stronger, the purer, the more loving the life, the higher and the holier is one's religion. The Saviour came that men might have life and have it more abundantly. In Him the life of the Eternal is made manifest. He has given to the world a truer idea of life's worth, of its sacredness, of its meaning and end than without Him it is possible to have. His words are spirit and life, the preaching and practice of life. They that know and love Him are refreshed by rivers of living water. They that follow Him have the light of life. He is the way, the truth and the life. His whole work is in favor of life. He gives sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, strength to the weak, courage to the despondent, faith to the doubting, pardon to sinners. He lays down His life that men may have immortal life. He is the resurrection and the life and they that believe in Him, though they be dead shall live. He is a vital principle for the whole human race. He answers the deepest cry of man's nature, which is for life and liberty. The highest life is the highest we can know. It is perfect power, knowledge, goodness, beauty, love. In God it is revealed as a trinity; on earth, it appears as a trichotomy. It is vegetable, animal, human: it is physical, intellectual, moral. It manifests itself in faith, hope, and love; in art, science and religion, in the individual, in the home, and in the social aggregate. All values derive their worth from their power to sustain and develop life, and the importance of institutions is measured by their influence on life.

Life, more life, ever-increasing life, is the end; as absolute infinite life is the cause and beginning of all things. All else is but a means. A soul that thinks and acts in the light of thought and love is more than a universe of suns and planets in which there should be no conscious life. Hence material progress is good only in so far as it serves spiritual ends. The world exists for man, and man exists that he may know and love God, and thereby ceaselessly grow in power and quality of life, become more and more like unto the eternal and all-perfect Being, by whom and in whom and through whom and for whom he must live or else dwindle and perish.

The law of man's life therefore is growth. He must continue to grow, or he will lose vital force: and as he develops, the institutions whereby his life is sustained and fostered must adapt themselves to his increasing wants. As in order to live he must renew himself, and therefore change, the environment in which he is placed must lend itself to his widening needs, and therefore change. As God gives to Nature the power of self-renewal, it is incredible that He should refuse this power to His higher spiritual creation.

Growth is development, and the universal means God has given us to unfold and strengthen our being, is Education. The noblest individuals, the noblest races, are those which have received the best education. Religion itself, the worship of God in spirit and in truth, can be maintained only by education. By doing, and by teaching, by suffering and by dying, Christ founded the kingdom of heaven. He commanded His Apostles to go and teach all men, having shown them first that they could be true apostles and teachers only by loving one another, by loving all men, by loving human perfection, the image of God in the soul. The secret of power lies in education, in the education which strengthens and illumines the mind, which purifies and enlarges the heart, which forms and confirms the conscience. To educate rightly, we must touch the depths of man's being; we must speak to him in the innermost recesses where faith, hope and love are born, where God is present and appealing. We may not lay the chief stress upon practices, however commendable; on usages, however venerable: we must address our-

selves to the mind and the heart more than to the senses and the imagination; to the reason rather than to the memory; to the whole man, if you will, but never to the logical faculty alone.

The truth which not only makes us free, but makes us strong and loving, is not a dead thing. It can not be ticketed and laid away like specimens in a museum. It is not a collection of formulas or a set of rules. It is life, the life of the soul; it is love and beauty and goodness. It is what we live by, and it is only by loving it that it can be possessed. If we are to educate aright, if we are to make men Christlike, we must not only help them to see God in all things, but help them to sympathy with all that He has made and makes: we must enable them to perceive and feel His presence not alone in the monuments and deeds of the past, but chiefly in the courage, wisdom, knowledge, love and power of those who are living and acting with us and around us. To be Catholic, we must accept and rejoice in all truth and goodness. We must love not only our friends, but our foes as well; knowing that they too, in ways beyond our seeing, help to fulfil the divine purpose. No human being knows enough, or loves enough, or hopes or believes enough, or is happy enough. Let us, then, without fear or misgivings, throw ourselves into the great world-struggle for truth, and justice and righteousness; do what in us lies, to make men Christlike, to bring the kingdom of heaven nearer; to make all understand that God is in the world, and that as man becomes more like to Him, the more shall he feel what a divine privilege it is to be alive here and now to work for the salvation of the race. To this end let us put away all narrow thoughts, all sentiments that divide and weaken. Let us be persuaded that God calls all men to a higher life even in this world; first of all the oppressed, the disinherited, the weak and abandoned. The greatest service we can do a human being is to give him a right education, physical, intellectual, moral and religious. If it be our duty to do good, as far as in us lies, to all, it is our duty to labor for the education of all; that no child of God may live with an enfeebled body, or a darkened mind, or a callous heart, or a perverted conscience. Since it is our duty to educate, it is

our duty to give the best education: and first of all to give the best education to woman: for she, as mother, is the aboriginal God-appointed educator. What hope is there of genuine progress, in the religious life especially, if we leave her uneducated? Where woman is ignorant, man is coarse and sensual; where her religion is but a superstition, he is sceptical and irreverent.

If we are to have a race of enlightened, noble and brave men, we must give to woman the best education it is possible for her to receive. She has the same right as man to become all that she may be, to know whatever may be known, to do whatever is fair and just and good. In souls there is no sex. If we leave half the race in ignorance, how shall we hope to lift the other half into the light of truth and love? Let woman's mental power increase, let her influence grow, and more and more she will stand by the side of man as a helper in all his struggles to make the will of God prevail. From the time the Virgin Mother held the Infant Saviour in her arms to this hour, woman has been the great lover of Christ and the unwearying helper of His little ones; and the more we strengthen and illumine her, the more we add to her sublime faith and devotion the power of knowledge and culture, the more efficaciously shall she work to purify life, to make justice, temperance, chastity and love prevail. She is more unselfish, more capable of enthusiasm for spiritual ends, she has more sympathy with what is beautiful, noble and godlike than man; and the more her knowledge increases, the more shall she become a heavenly force to help spread God's kingdom on earth. Doubtless our failure to win the hearts of all men is due in no slight degree to our indifference to the education of woman.

The Church, in virtue of its divine institution, has the supreme and absolute right to teach Christian truth and thereby to influence all education. To her alone Christ gave the commission to teach whatsoever He had revealed and commanded; and none who believe that He speaks the words of the Eternal Father may refuse to hearken to the voice of His historic Church uttering the things that appertain to religion and salvation. Christ did not send His Apostles to teach all knowledge, but to teach His religion: to teach the

worship of God in spirit and in truth, in lowliness of mind and purity of heart as men who hunger and thirst for righteousness. In all that concerns the religious life the Church has the office of Christ, represents Him and speaks with His authority; and to enable her to do this with infallible certainty, the Holy Ghost was sent and abides with her. But Christ did not teach literature, philosophy, history or science, and consequently He did not establish His Church to teach these things. He founded a Church, not an academy. *Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum.* He left natural knowledge where He found it; left it to grow by accretion and development, through the activity of special minds and races, with the process of the ages. He bade His Apostles teach whatsoever things He had commanded them—the doctrines of salvation and the principles of Christian living. These things He came to reveal—these He lived and died to plant in the minds and hearts of men as seeds of immortal life. God doubtless might have made known from the beginning all the truths of science; but this was not part of the divine economy. For thousands of years the race was left to make its way amidst the darkness of universal ignorance; and when here and there a ray of light fell from some mind of genius, it seemed quickly to be extinguished amidst the general obscurity. The philosophy and the science of Plato and Aristotle had been in the world for three centuries when Christ came, but He made no allusion whatever to them. He neither praised nor blamed these great masters of all who know. Those whom he denounced were not the teachers of wisdom, but the formalists, who, holding rigidly to the letter of the law, and adding observance to observance and rule to rule, had lost the spirit of religion, had apostatized from the infinite love which is God.

Christ came to bring immortal faith and hope and love to man. He uttered no word which might lead us to suppose that He considered literature or philosophy or history or science as an obstacle to the worship of God in spirit and in truth. He denounces greed and lust and indifference and heartlessness; but He does not warn against the desire to know, the desire to upbuild one's being on every side, to become more and more like unto God, in power, in wisdom, in

goodness and in beauty. He lays the stress of His example and teaching upon religion, upon eternal things. He tells us that we can not serve God and Mammon, but He does not say that faith and reason conflict. We are human because God is present in the soul. We have reason because the divine light shines within us—the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. There can be no real contradiction between God and His universe, between nature and the supernatural, between faith and knowledge. On the contrary, the universe is the manifestation of God's wisdom, goodness and power. Nature and the supernatural both come from Him; and in wider and deeper knowledge, we shall find a foundation for a mightier and more spiritual faith in the Eternal Father and His divine Son. Truth can not contradict truth, for truth is true because it is enrooted in God who is absolute truth, and at one with Himself. Things are what they are, and God has given us reason, that we may see them as they are. The false can never be proven to be true, and the Author of truth can not teach error or give grace to believe error. All truth is orthodox whether it come to us through revelation, reaffirmed by the infallible voice of the Church, or whether it come in the form of certain and scientific knowledge. Both the Church and the men of science must accept the validity of reason, and must therefore hold that reason can not contradict itself. Knowledge and faith both do God's work; both help to build man's being into ever-increasing likeness to Him. Let us not emphasize the opposition between the temporal and the eternal. God is even here, and even now we are immortal; and whatever helps us to do His will by serving more effectively our fellow-men, is sacred and of priceless worth. The giving of a cup of water in the right spirit is divine service; and so is the patient research which leads to a knowledge of the causes of suffering and disease, and thereby enables us to shut out pestilence or to make uninhabitable regions wholesome.

How infinitely difficult is it not to preach the Gospel effectively to those who live in ignorance and poverty as in the shadow of the darkness of death? All who have striven and who strive to educate the whole people, to bring opportunity of a freer and more human life to all, have been and are,

whether intentionally or not, workers in the cause of Christ for the salvation of men.

With what misgiving Catholics and Protestants regarded scientific astronomy when it first began to gain acceptance! And yet what has it done but make known to us a universe infinitely more wonderful and sublime than men had ever dreamed of? So it is with all advancing knowledge. In widening our view of God's work, it gives us a more exalted conception of His absolute perfection; and at the same time it puts into our hands more efficient means of working for the good of man. A truly Catholic spirit deems nothing that may be of service to man foreign to the will of God as revealed in Christ. We hold fast to the principle of authority: and at the same time we believe that man's mind is free, and that he has the right to inquire into and learn whatever may be investigated and known. If the Church is to live and prosper in a modern world, Catholics must have not only freedom to learn, but also freedom to teach. The spirit is not a mechanism, and when it is made subject to mechanical rules and methods it loses self-activity, becomes dwarfed and formal, and little by little sinks into impotence. A servile mind can never know the truth which liberates. Christ did not found His Church to solve philosophic, scientific or historic problems. These have been left to human research; but Catholics, if they hope to present effectively their supernatural beliefs to an age of civilization and culture, must not neglect the chief means by which the mind is made strong, supple and luminous. Our men of ability, whether priests or laymen, must be encouraged to put to good use the talents with which the Creator has entrusted them; and to prepare them for this all-important work we must leave nothing undone to provide them with schools equal to the best. If we isolate ourselves and fall out of the highest intellectual and moral life of the world around us, we shall fatally drift into a position of inferiority, and lose the power to make ourselves heard and understood. If in the early centuries of Christianity the Church was able to take to itself what was true and good in pagan philosophy and culture; if St. Augustine and St. Thomas of Aquin knew how to compel Plato and Aristotle to become helpers in the cause

of Christ, why should we lose heart and imagine that the Church has lost the faculty of assimilation? She is old, indeed, but she is also young, having the promise of immortal life; and therefore she can never lack the power to adapt herself to the requirements of an ever-evolving environment.

Since Christ has made the success of His religion largely dependent on human effort, not annulling nature by grace, but heightening rather the play of free-will, we must know how to make use of our best and strongest men; for an institution which can not make use of its best and strongest men is decadent. What is there to fear? Is it conceivable that human error shall prevail against God's truth? Does the religion of Christ, the absolute and abiding faith, need the defence of concealment or of sophistical apology or of lies? Truth is the supreme good of the mind, as holiness is that of the heart; and truthfulness is the foundation of righteousness. The most certain result of the philosophic thought of the last hundred years is that the primal cause and final end of all things is spiritual, not mechanical or material. If only we go deep enough, we never fail to find God and the soul. Shall we dread the results of historical research? In the Church as in the world, good has been mingled with evil,—the cockle with the wheat. What God has permitted to happen, man may be permitted to know; and if we are wise, we may glean, even from the least promising fields, fruits which shall nourish in us a higher wisdom and a nobler courage. A righteous cause can never be truly served either by the timid or the insincere. And what is true of the history of the Church, is true also of the history of the Bible. No facts connected with its composition can obscure the light of God's word which shines forever in its pages, to illumine the path that leads to a higher and more perfect life, and in the end to everlasting life.

The fundamental principle of the Catholic theologian and apologist is that there is harmony between revelation rightly understood, and the facts of the universe rightly known; and since this is so, the deepest thought and the most certain knowledge must furnish the most irrefragable proof of the truth of our faith. The Catholic who holds this principle

with profound conviction will not shrink from any test or any adversary. If faith does not give new strength to the mind, the heart, the whole man, is it genuine faith at all? Shall we cease to desire and to strive to know because we believe? Is it not the property of vital belief to impel to thought and action? Are not faith and hope and love, if they be living, the fountain-heads of the highest energy? Does not all history prove that right human life is possible only when men are self-active in a free and noble way, when they strive bravely for more real knowledge and greater virtue? Where we strive there is indeed danger of error and mistake; but where we rest in spiritual lethargy, decay and ruin are inevitable. A faculty unused dwindles until it ceases to be. They who dare, must take risks: danger can be overcome only by encountering danger. Shall the Church speak words of approval and cheer to all her children except those who labor with honest purpose and untiring zeal, for deeper and truer knowledge? Shall she permit Catholics to fall into the sleep of self-contented ignorance, while the great world moves on and leaves them in the cerements of the grave?

Opinion rules men, and opinion is nourished by beliefs, and beliefs are created and sustained by ideas. If we permit ourselves to fall out of the intellectual movement of the age, we shall lose influence over the minds that create opinion and shape the future. "One man of science," says Von Hertling, "who works with success in the fields of research, whose name is written on the page of history in far-gleaming characters, and who at the same time leads the life of a true son of the Church, outweighs whole volumes of apologetics." The truths of salvation are doubtless infinitely more important than the truths of science; but this natural knowledge so attracts the attention and awakens the interest of the men of to-day, it so transforms and improves the methods and processes by which civilization is promoted, that it has created a new world-view, not only in the minds of the few profound thinkers and original investigators, but in the general public of intelligent men and women; and if our words are to awaken a response, we must be able to place ourselves at the standpoint of our hearers. The theo-

logian, the apologist, the orator must be able to say to the children of this generation: 'We see all that you see, and beyond we see yet diviner truth.' Arguments and syllogisms have little power of persuasion. We win men by showing them the facts of life; and to do this we must be able to look at things from many points. This ability is precisely what the best education confers; for it renders the mind open, luminous, fair, supple and many-sided.

We believe that Christ is God made manifest, and that the Catholic faith is His revelation. If our belief be not vain, the more the light of the mind is thrown upon it—its origins, its doctrines and its essential tendencies—the more divinely true and good and beautiful shall it appear to be. In the depths and amidst the beginnings of things, even the most clear-seeing must grope their way; and instead of discouraging them by throwing suspicion upon their honesty of purpose, we should be quick to overlook their errors, receiving with gratitude even the feeblest ray of light they may be able to throw on the mysteries of life and being. The good and the generous easily overlook the faults and frailties of the wise and great.

To live in the mind, to strive ceaselessly to learn more of the infinite truth, is not easy for any one. It requires a discipline, a courage, a spirit of self-denial, which only the fewest ever possess; and when men of this strength and excellence devote themselves to the elucidation and defence of the doctrines of religion, we must honor and trust them, or they will lose heart or turn to studies in which their labors will be appreciated. If mistrust of our ablest minds is permitted to exist, the inevitable result will be a lowering of the whole intellectual life of Catholics, and as a consequence a lowering of their moral and religious life. If we have no great masters, how shall we hope to have eager and loving disciples? If we have no men who write vital books—books of power, books which are literature and endure—how shall we expect to enter along an inner line into the higher life of the age, to quicken, purify and exalt the hopes and thoughts of men? Is the Bible itself written with the rigid exactness of a mathematical treatise? Is it not rather a book of life, of literature, full of symbols and

metaphors and poetry? What book has been so misunderstood and misinterpreted even by honest and enlightened minds, even by theologians themselves. Do not the method and style of its composition show that it was not meant to be a sufficient rule of faith? Nay, there is a wide divergence of opinion as to its moral teaching on important points, so that without a supreme and infallible living interpreter, there is no possibility of agreement as to what inspiration means, as to what the word of God really is.

Since the inspired writers may thus easily be misunderstood, may we not conclude that it is our duty to treat with good will and loving kindness authors who, not being supernaturally assisted, employ the talents which God has given them, and which their own tireless industry has cultivated to the highest point, to clothe the old truths with the light of the wider and more real knowledge of the universe and of human history, which the modern mind possesses? The new times demand new men; the ancient faith, if it is to be held vitally, must be commended with fresh vigor and defended with all the arguments which the best philosophy, science and literature may suggest. Christ came to cast fire on earth, and what does He desire but that it be kindled? *Currit verbum Dei*, says St. Paul; and again: "Woe is me if I do not preach." He is debtor to all men. On Mars Hill he speaks to the most enlightened minds of his day. He is a reasoner as well as a preacher. He places the lines of a Greek poet among his own inspired words. To his intellectual, moral and religious activity, heightened and intensified by supernatural faith, we owe the spread of Christianity throughout the Gentile world, more than to the zeal and labors of all the Apostles. Is it credible that if St. Thomas of Aquin were now alive he would content himself with the philosophy and science of Aristotle, who knows nothing either of creation or of providence, and whose knowledge of nature, compared with our own, is as that of a child? St. Ignatius of Loyola says that to occupy one's self with science, in a pure and religious spirit, is more pleasing to God than practices of penance, because it is more completely the work of the whole man. Is not theology, like the other sciences, bound to accept facts? To deny a fact is to stultify one's

self. But how shall we know what is, if we are ignorant of the world-wide efforts of men of learning and intellectual power to get at the facts of the universe? The supreme fact is life and only that is true, in the best sense of the word, which is favorable to life, to its growth, its joy, its strength, its freedom, its permanence. Whatever dwarfs, whatever arrests, whatever weakens life, is evil.

The great purpose of genuine education is not to store the memory or to accustom to observances, but to strengthen man with his own mind, to rouse him to higher self-activity, to vivify him, to give him fresh faith, hope and courage, to deepen the foundations of his being, to give faculty, firmer grasp of truth and a clearer view of things as they are. Whatever narrows, whatever hardens, whatever enslaves is foreign to the purpose of education. We should dread nothing so much as what undermines spiritual energy; for unless man's highest powers are stimulated and kept active, he falls into sensual indulgence, or becomes the victim of a weak and sceptical temper, no longer able to believe anything, or to hope for anything, or to love anything with all his heart. It is the temper of decadent races, of perishing civilizations, and of dying religions. Losing the power to believe with vital faith in God and in the soul, men cling to the phantom life of cheap and vulgar pleasures. They seek gold and position; they trust to mechanical devices, to political schemes; they worship the rising sun; their truth is what is popular, their good is what makes for present success. Having no firm hold of the Eternal and Infinite, they believe in human cunning, not in the might of divine truth. They forget that all truth is orthodox, and that behind all truth stand the veracity and the power of God, who makes himself known in the laws of science, as in the majesty of the everlasting mountains and the starlit heavens. As a kind word spoken for the love of God and man becomes religious, so a right spirit consecrates human action in whatever sphere. "Whoever utters truth," says St. Augustine, "utters it by the aid of Him who is truth itself." A devout and illumined spirit sees all things bound together in harmony and beauty about the feet of the Eternal Father. Knowledge confirms faith, and faith impels to knowledge.

Religion nourishes morality, and morality strengthens and purifies religion. Art, in reflecting some feeble rays of the infinite splendor, opens vistas of the diviner life. Science in showing that order reigns everywhere, even in the midst of seeming discord, that all things are subject to law, gives us a clearer perception of God's infinite wisdom and power. Material progress itself in making earthly things subject to human knowledge and skill, fulfils the will of the Creator who made all things for man.

Thus science and art and progress, all conspire with religion to upbuild man's being and to mould him into ever-increasing likeness to God. It is in religion, however, that the conquering might of the spirit is best revealed, and this of itself is sufficient to give it supremacy. It is not merely a world-view, a creed and a worship: but an original and historic manifestation in human life of the primal Power, which transforms and liberates. It is the breaking through of the inner source of being, of God, who reveals Himself to the lowly-minded and the pure of heart, as the beginning and end of all that exists; as the One Eternal Absolute, in whom and by whom and for whom all things are. The soul that is conscious that religion rests upon this everlasting foundation is not troubled by misgivings as to its truth or usefulness. It is God present in the innermost part of our being; it is Christ working with the Almighty Father to redeem man from subjection to the transitory and apparent, from the lust of the flesh, from greed for what ministers to the senses alone. Thus it is an independent world, a kingdom in itself, able to endure and to remain the same in the midst of an order of things that is forever changing and passing away. Whatever alteration may occur in the views of the intellectual, whatever decay or transformation of political and social institutions may take place, religion, the Catholic religion of Christ, shall abide, still endowed, after the lapse of however many ages, with its original freshness and vigor.

As our faith in the Divine Master and in His work becomes more vital, more radically part of all our thinking and doing, the more able shall we become to transcend the seeming contradictions and obstacles, from whatever source

they spring; the more clearly shall we perceive that our radical experiences and highest intuitions are in harmony with His truth, without which all life, however happily environed and attended, is inchoate, and meaningless; for if there is no possibility of a living union of the divine and human in the innermost depths of being, all hope and faith and love are vain, possession a torment, and knowledge a deceptive light that lures to destruction: and as the craving for redemption from death, the craving for immortal life becomes more deeply and livingly inwrought in human consciousness, the more shall we be brought to look on religion as our most essential need, as the soul of life, and the less shall we be willing to identify it with political institutions, or to degrade it to a means to worldly ends. Religion shall be dear to us not chiefly because it comforts and consoles, not because it conserves and protects our temporal interests and possessions. We shall love it for itself, as that for which a man should be willing to sell all that he has: as the most priceless gift of God, the gift whereby He bestows Himself. Then again men of might shall learn to love us; kings shall come to offer homage, not with affected reverence or for selfish ends, but because they shall feel that in the Church there is an open fountain of life,—of the life which, in their best moments, all feel to be the essential need of man.

Then above all the poor, the afflicted and the disinherited, who heard Christ gladly, and who have always loved His Church, when she has not been presented to them in some caricature, shall gather round us; feeling that in us the purest and tenderest love is wedded to the highest thought and the most certain knowledge; that the essential point is good-will and righteousness, that the creation of a right heart is the end of ends, compared with which the most splendid achievements of worldly knowledge and power appear theatrical and unreal, an unsubstantial pageant which dissolves and leaves not a wrack behind. From us they shall learn to understand that a man is worth what the things are worth which he knows, and loves and believes in with all his heart; that his life does not consist in what he possesses; that to be, is more than to own; that place and

pomp and ceremony are superfluous where great souls live and act. We shall be able to teach the multitude to look above and take new heart in a world which has never yet been theirs. We shall not walk as though we made apology, we shall not speak with bated breath, as though we feared lest the great world hear us; we shall know and be able to make men understand that the life which is guided and controlled by the ideas of truth, beauty and goodness, as these are revealed in Christ Jesus, possesses absolute and indefeasible worth. As the great minds of the early Church sought their mental culture in the philosophy and literature of Greece and Rome, deriving from them, despite the errors by which they are disfigured, fresh vigor and new arguments wherewith to defend the faith, so shall we learn to find in the philosophy, literature and science of our own day, whose intellectual, moral and religious content is so much richer than that which gives value to the writings of the ancients, helps to higher education and wider views. The wise are willing to learn from every man, and the good convert what is evil to divine uses. An empire must continue to conquer, or it shall be brought to ruin. A spiritual power must bring forth new things, or the old will fall into discredit. If we suffer ourselves to grow timid, if we become confused and hesitate, if we turn away from the foe instead of confronting him, how shall we hope to inspire confidence in our own sincerity, or in the righteousness of our cause? If we would spread the faith, we must go forth into the world where men think and act; we must be prepared to meet all adversaries and to make reply to all objections. We must think before we can think alike. We must strive to understand those who differ from us, for agreement is possible only when we understand one another. If it is a Christian's duty to have sympathy with men in their sins and miseries, can it be right to refuse sympathy to those who are in error? Are we not all weak rather than wicked; ignorant and blind rather than perverse? Let us draw closer together, let us believe in the good-will of the most, which is the essential good. If we are Catholic, shall we not first of all be Catholic in our love, in our readiness to accept all truth, and to do good to all men? The surest way to improve our fel-

lows is to treat them as though they were what they should be. It is our duty to make appeal to the best that is in man, to encourage all, individuals and peoples; to put whatever gifts God has bestowed upon them to the best uses.

Let us not believe that a dead uniformity is the sovereign good. With St. Paul, let us recognize a variety of gifts, and be glad that it is possible to serve God and man in many ways. There was never yet genuine thinker, or poet, or artist whose work may not be brought, if we are strong and clear-sighted enough, to contribute to the cause of pure religion. The theologian, the preacher and the apologist who are ignorant of the best that has been thought and said by the makers of the world's literature, can not have the culture, the intellectual vigor, the openness and pliability of mind, without which, short of miracle, it is not possible rightly to commend divine truth to an enlightened age. They whose vocation it is to be public teachers, to mould opinion and to direct thought, must have more knowledge, a wider outlook, a firmer grasp of spiritual realities than those whom they seek to enlighten and guide. The deepest truth seems shallow when uttered by the frivolous; the holiest things seem to lose half their sacredness, when they are entrusted to the coarse and ignorant. It is not enough that the minister of religion have a pure and loving heart, a strong and disciplined mind: he must also have the breeding and culture of a gentleman. Manners are not idle—they spring from inner worth—they are the flower of high thinking and plain living. Christ, it has been said, was the world's first gentleman, and they who live and act in His spirit must be gentlemen. If we build majestic temples, if we construct our altars of costly marbles, if our sacred vessels and priestly vestments are made of gold and silk and studded with precious stones, why shall not they who offer sacrifice and who preach the Gospel be required to be clean and decorous, fair and gracious? If it is vanity to speak with ease and elegance, to pronounce with correctness and distinctness, to read with right intonation and emphasis, then must we not say that it is vanity also to erect gorgeous edifices wherein to worship God who, as St. Paul says, may not be shut in houses made by human hands? If the priest

is to be educated at all, he must receive the most thorough and complete education. He must trust wholly to grace, or he must spare no pains whereby endowment may be developed into faculty.

Thomas à Kempis speaks truth when he says that an humble peasant who serves God is better than a proud philosopher who, neglecting his own perfection, considers the course of the stars. But they who seek to know the best that is or may be known, need not therefore neglect their own perfection; while they who are content with ignorance are necessarily careless of the true self. To labor in the right spirit, to strengthen and illumine the mind, is to strive to make one's self more like unto God, more capable of doing divine work. Does not the Saviour teach that they who make the best use of the talents confided to them receive the most gracious approval? If God chooses the weak to confound the strong, He does not refuse the service of men of exceptional intellectual power and moral energy, as the calling of St. Paul proves. The supernatural transcends nature, but does not annul it, as God is transcendent and yet immanent. He is the power behind the material universe, as He is the power within the soul of man. Revelation can be made only to rational beings, and reason impels to the investigation of all that is intelligible. To forbid men to think along whatever line, is to place one's self in opposition to the deepest and most invincible tendency of the civilized world. Were it possible to compel obedience from Catholics in matters of this kind, the result would be a hardening and sinking of our whole religious life. We should more and more drift away from the vital movements of the age, and find ourselves at last immured in a spiritual ghetto, where no man can breathe pure air, or be joyful or strong or free.

The young, who are the hope of the future, can be won and held only by the highest ideals, in the light of which they may thrill with hope, and feel that it is a blessed thing to be alive and active, to fight the good fight and, if needs be, to perish in a worthy cause. To speak to them with contempt of what the nineteenth century has done, of its science and literature, of its truer knowledge of the past, its keener critical sense, its amazing progress in carrying out the divine

command that all things be made subject to man, of the success with which it has battled against ignorance, poverty and disease, would be to fill them with contempt for ourselves, as being men without understanding and without heart. We must indeed warn them against pride and conceit and halfness and dilettantism, against irreverence and knowingness; but it were a fatal mistake to imagine that we can do aught but harm, by seeking to inspire them with a distrust of science and culture, or with a dread of their influence on religious faith. We of all men should be able to walk with confidence in the paths of knowledge, for, in the matters of absolute and everlasting import we have an infallible guide to lead us. Since we are glad to receive money and to have the favor of men in high places to assist us in our spiritual work, how shall we be willing to lack the help of thoroughly disciplined and enlightened minds, to lack the power of thought which is the most irresistible force God has given to man? If we look upon theology as merely a system of crystallized formulas, as a science which need take no cognizance of the general culture of the age, content with presenting the old truths in the old way, as merely a larger catechism, with a more detailed exposition of definitions and refutations, we deprive it of power to influence men who are all alive with thoughts urgent as the growth of wings; who in the midst of problems which the new sciences raise and accentuate, have grown confused and begin to doubt whether human life shall not be emptied of its spiritual content. All knowledges are related, as all bodies attract and help to hold one another in place: and if we hope to commend and enforce revealed truth with efficacious power, we must be prepared to do so in the full blaze of the light which research and discovery have poured upon nature and the history of man. If in consequence, we find it necessary to abandon positions which are no longer defensible, to assume new attitudes in the face of new conditions, we must remember that though the Church is a divine institution, it is none the less subject to the law which makes human things mutable, that though truth must remain the same, it is capable of receiving fresh illustration, and that if it is to be

life-giving, it must be wrought anew into the constitution of each individual and of each age.

Only that is properly ours which is assimilated into our religious and moral life, by our own thinking, praying and doing. What we hold but formally, is as a garb which may be thrown aside as easily as it is assumed. The soul, like the body, needs to be nourished and refreshed ceaselessly, or it becomes enfeebled and falls into apathy. Only those are sources of spiritual power and influence who continue to drink from the great fountain-head of truth and goodness. Hence the best education, that which, whatever the method or process, we should always and above all seek to give, is the education which creates within the soul a quenchless thirst for knowledge and righteousness. Our young men when they leave our schools cease to be self-active, and become helpless because we have failed to inspire them with a divine discontent, an ever-present yearning for higher wisdom and worthier action. If we are to hope for improvement in this all-important matter, we must begin by providing our colleges, seminaries, universities with a body of thoroughly trained and cultivated teachers. Every animal begets its like—the strong call forth strength, the loving inspire love, they who continue to grow, awaken in others a desire for ceaseless growth.

One of the five wounds of the Church, as Rosmini sees them, is the inferior kind of professors to whom we entrust the training of those who are to be the guides, instructors and models of the multitude. Things have hardly improved since his day. Those who hold chairs in our institutions of learning still lack the best pedagogical knowledge and skill; still lack thorough acquaintance with the best philosophic, theological, scientific and literary thought of the age. They lack the wisdom which only long and deep experience of life can give; they are, with few exceptions, still insufficiently remunerated and still look longingly to the time when they shall be permitted to take up some other kind of work. To make the situation worse, there is a tendency to confine clerical education exclusively to the seminaries, the result of which must be a lowering of intellectual and scientific culture in the priesthood. "The Church," says Cardinal Her-

genröther, "could not give greater pleasure to its deadly enemies than by destroying the theological faculty of any university, or by calling away from it its ecclesiastical students." In the days of their greatest power, the Popes deemed it a privilege and an honor to foster and protect the universities which have had so great a part in creating our Christian civilization. What was good and necessary in an age of comparative ignorance is even more desirable and indispensable in our own, in which education has become the most potent factor in the world's progress, in which our manifold and ever-growing science has placed in our hands new and undreamed-of forces wherewith to direct and control political, social and economic life.

There is nothing now that is not investigated and discussed, nothing that is not called in question, nothing that is not considered from every point of view. We know vastly more than the Alexandrine, Cappadocian and Antiochene doctors, who built the foundations of theological science; more than St. Augustine and St. Jerome; more than Alcuin and Scotus Erigena, more than the great Masters of Scholasticism, who were almost wholly unacquainted with the Christian literature of the second and third centuries, who had little Hebrew and Greek, and but an imperfect knowledge of Aristotle himself, whose philosophy formed the groundwork of their teaching. The ancients belong to the world's youth, while we are old with the wisdom and science which the experience, the research and study, the defeats and victories of thousands of years have brought us. We have not only greater knowledge than they, but we have developed a critical and historical sense which they had not, and which gives the student a clearer view of the meaning and content of Scripture, of the development and history of the Church than hitherto it has been possible to have. It were idle to deny that the mighty movement by which the age is impelled is not a menace to much that is precious—nay, of vital and absolute worth. The uttermost truth, we are told, is sad. God is a myth, and consciousness a curse; or, in another mood it is affirmed that nothing can be known save what we see and touch, and that our first and only duty is so to shape the world that it shall be well with us

here, for there is no reason to think that there is another and better life. The Eternal is but a stream of tendency, whose general drift seems to associate right conduct with happiness. No voice from heaven has ever spoken, and the divinest truth we know is that which genius utters. We are under the fatal sway of a mechanical universe, and free-will is a delusion. Hence some turn to the worship of Mammon, and some to that of the goddess of lubricity, while the great multitude are losing hold on eternal things and are wandering aimlessly, without God and without hope. Here men fall into indifference and formal observance; there they follow credulously every advocate of a new belief. No opinion is too shallow or too absurd to gain adherents; no scheme too visionary or too fantastic to win helpers. As the world is filled with advertisements of remedies for all bodily ills, so on every side, men come forward with panaceas for all our political, social and moral diseases. In the midst of the universal confusion we are ready, like the ancient Greek, to cry to God to come to teach and deliver us.

Is it possible to look on the great, eager, yearning, doubting and suffering life of man, and not to feel infinite desire to be of help? Can we believe in our inmost being, that we have the words of eternal life, and not be roused as by a voice from heaven, from our indifference and somnolence, from our easy contentment with formal education and half knowledge? We do not need new devotions and new shrines, but a new spirit, newness of life, a revivification of faith, hope and love, fresh courage and will to lay hold on the sources of power, that we may compel all knowledge and science to do homage to Christ, and to serve in the noblest way all God's children. We must be resolved to labor to see, not only things as they are, but ourselves too as we are. Where self-criticism is lacking, whether in individuals or in social aggregates, decay and degeneracy inevitably set in. If there are true and wholesome developments of life and doctrine, there is also a false and morbid evolution, against which we must be ever watchful. Ceaseless vigilance is not the price of liberty alone, it is the price we must pay for all spiritual good: and how shall we be ever vigilant, if we are forbidden to criticise ourselves and the environment by

which our life is nourished and protected. As walking is a continuous falling and rising, so all progress is an upward movement through error and failure toward truth and victory. As the decay of races, the ruin of civilizations, the downfall of states, are seen in the end to be helpful to the progress of mankind, not perishing wholly, but contributing something of their vital substance, to those that follow; so the history of human thought shows that while systems rise and pass away, even the errors of sincere and original minds, associated as they are with truth, aid in some way, the general advancement of knowledge and culture. All things work together for those who love God. Action may not be dissociated from thought, nor thought from action. Doubt is overcome, not by abstracting and arguing, but by doing the thing which is given us to do. The intellect is not the centre and soul of life; and knowing is not the whole of being. Faith is not a conclusion from a line of reasoning. We can not bind our destiny to the conquest of the mind. We have power to think, but our chief business is to act: and therefore we must forever and forever fall back on faith, hope and love, and on the conduct they inspire, or we shall be driven forth into the regions of mere speculation, into a dreary world of empty forms.

Nevertheless, in an age like the present, the doctrines of revealed religion can be rightly presented and enforced by those alone who know philosophy and science, history and literature.

Hence the education which once may have sufficed, is no longer sufficient. The old controversy between Catholics and Protestants has, to a large extent, lost its meaning, because problems of more radical import have forced themselves on our attention. In the presence of the criticism to which the Bible is now subjected, we are less concerned to show that it is not an adequate rule of faith, than to defend its authenticity and inspiration. The discussion of its dogmatic teaching, which, without an infallible authority, can never be satisfactorily concluded, is giving place to a more earnest desire to make ourselves acquainted with the spirit and life that breathe in its pages. Too long have we all, Catholics and Protestants alike, busied ourselves with

disputations about the meaning of texts, while we have drifted away from the all-tender and all-loving Heart of Christ! We have been too eager to make the Scriptures a pretext for argument and contention, and have forgotten the love by which alone men may know that we are the followers of Him who died for all. The Bible, considered as a rule of faith, has been so misused, that many of us have lost sight of its divine use as a book of religious education, as a book of life, of the highest, holiest and most blessed life.

No merely human writings, however pious, devout, enlightened and profound their authors may be, can take the place of the Sacred Scriptures, of the words of the Holy Ghost Himself: and the more this fountain-head of religious inspiration is neglected, whether by priests or laymen, the more shall we sink into mere forms and observances, into a mechanical and lifeless worship, into casuistical inquiries into what is or is not permissible, the tendency of which is to narrow minds, to deaden consciences, and to make us oblivious of the fact that the sacraments themselves require right dispositions in the recipients. Where such a temper prevails, where religiosity is substituted for religion, conscience loses its meaning as God's primal and most authentic voice, character is undermined, and individuals and peoples degenerate and are brought to ruin. The preacher ceases to have faith-inspiring, life-giving power, and contents himself with commending ceremonies and practices, or with the commonplaces of moral homily, unable to find words which well from the innermost parts of his being, where God speaks to the soul and enforces the message it utters. The great truth that Christian piety is fostered rather by the prevalence of spiritual ideas than by the predominance of ecclesiastical persons, no longer determines our course of action.

Not at the altar, or in the pulpit, or in the confessional alone, must the priest be prepared to show himself as Christ's minister: he should possess the breeding and culture needed to make him a leader in all spiritual movements, whether for wider knowledge, or larger liberty, or sweeter and purer life. On whatever subjects are of vital import to human welfare, the people should be willing to hear him, as

the multitude flocked to the Saviour, not in the synagogue, but on the sea-shore and the hillside, and in the desert, to drink eagerly the words of life. In giving his countenance and aid to the cause of temperance, of public morality, of law and order, in laboring to uplift the poor, to do away with political corruption, to secure the enforcement of the principles of sanitation and hygiene, and thereby to help prevent the spread of contagion and pestilence, in seeking to correct the abuses of the theatre, and to restrain the license of the press, in striving to promote good-will and Christian charity by coöperating with his fellows in worthy enterprises, whether or not their creed is his own—in all this he works with God for the welfare of men. If it is part of Christian duty to give alms, to build hospitals and asylums, to instruct the ignorant and to counsel the doubting, it is not less so, to seek out with diligent industry and patient research, the means whereby sin and misery and poverty may be prevented.

The priest best commends his sacramental power and authority, not by emphasizing it, not by calling attention to it, but by leaving nothing undone whereby he may make himself a true, noble and helpful man; by so ministering in all things that men shall see in him a follower of the mild, meek and serviceable Master; a child of the Eternal Father, who is all-wise, all-strong, and all-loving. He may not confine himself within monastic walls, may not rest content with a culture and discipline that are merely theologic and ascetic: he must go forth into the great world as a guide and leader—into the world that is controlled by opinion, dominated by aims and ideals, which it is his business to bring more and more into harmony with the truth and love revealed in Christ. He must know that to win men, we must have sympathy with them; that to gain their good-will and confidence, we must make them understand and feel that we are able and eager to help them. So only shall it come to pass that laymen shall again take an active interest in the welfare and progress of the Church, and again find it possible to coöperate with the priesthood in whatever may in the welfare and progress of the Church, and shall again find it possible to coöperate with the priesthood in whatever may further the cause in religion and civilization.

I have spoken of what is required of Catholics in the

present age, from the point of view of an American Catholic. This point of view, it seems to me, is that which is, or should be, taken in the English-speaking Catholic world; for in every part of the earth where English is the language of the people, there is a similarity of political, social and religious conditions, so far at least as Catholics are concerned. In the ever-widening domain of the British Empire, in the ever-growing territory of the American Republic, democracy is triumphant; and in all these vast regions, with the exception of the Anglican Establishment, which is an anomaly, confined to England, there is a separation of Church and State; a separation which those who are competent to judge recognize as permanent. There is everywhere freedom to write, to publish, to discuss, to organize; and there is no subject of thought, no sphere of action, no interest which it is possible to fence about and shut in from the all-searching breath of liberty. This condition of things exists; every influence maintains and strengthens it; and so far as we are able to see, it does not appear that any earthly power can change or destroy it. It is a state of things English-speaking Catholics accept without mental reservations, without misgivings, without regrets, which are always idle; and the common rights which are ours in the midst of a general freedom, have stirred in us an energy of thought and action, which have led to triumphs and conquests that have not been achieved by Catholics elsewhere in the wonderful century that is now closing, or already closed. A hundred years ago those who spoke English did not count at all in the Catholic Church. They were few, poor and ignorant. Their fathers had held to the old faith at the cost of all the earthly things that men most seek and cherish. In England they were a handful, forgotten and forgetting. In Ireland they were ground by the penal laws, a system of tyranny the best adapted of any ever contrived by the ingenuity of oppressors to degrade and dehumanize a people. In America they were a small body confined to a few counties in Maryland and Pennsylvania, without education, without influence, without consideration. It would have been deemed as probable that the worship of Jupiter

should revive among us as that the Catholic religion should reflowerish.

What a marvellous transformation has taken place in the last fifty years, for it is scarcely longer than this since the Catholic revival in the English-speaking world began. More than one-fifth of the bishops who govern dioceses are now found in the British Empire and in the United States. The Catholics who speak English are twenty millions or more. In the last half century they have built probably as many churches, schools, convents and institutions of charity as the two hundred million Catholics besides. There have doubtless been losses, but in the midst of struggle and battle loss is inevitable. Has there, then, been no falling away from the faith, no decay of spiritual life among the Catholics of other nations? Are not our losses in America to be attributed largely to the indifference or ignorance of many of those who have come to us from countries that are called Catholic? The root of the evil lies elsewhere than in our own country. Nevertheless, the history of the Church in the English-speaking world during the nineteenth century is one of real and great progress; and there is good reason to think that we shall continue to advance, since both priests and people are animated by the spirit of confidence, of courage, of generous zeal and devoted loyalty to the faith. Both alike are persuaded that it is not possible to defend and spread the kingdom of heaven unless they themselves make ceaseless efforts to walk in the light of the ideals revealed in the words and life of the Saviour of men. They feel that the Church must be a school as well as a house of prayer; a source of knowledge, wisdom and power, as well as a fountain-head of faith, hope and love. They believe that God is in the world, ready to help those who are willing to help themselves. They live with the old truths, while they walk unafraid in the midst of the vast development of science, culture and material wealth, that is part of the environment by which they are nourished and made strong. They love the countries where they were born or which they have chosen; they love Christ and human perfection; they love the Church which He founded; and therefore are they resolved to spare no pains to give themselves and their

children the best education, to upbuild their being to its full height, that they may the more efficaciously work for truth and justice, for peace and righteousness, for liberty and life eternal. They recognize that the Catholic religion is a life to be lived, more even than a doctrine to be taught and believed; for only they who seek life in life, whose faith is action, whose hope is joy and strength, whose love is fruitful, can rightly understand and hold the divine truth which Christ came into the world to make known.

AVE MARIA PAMPHLETS

How I Became a Catholic.

By Olga Maria Davin. 47 pp. 10 cts.

Christian Science and Catholic Teaching.

By the Rev. James Goggin. 48 pp. 15 cts.

The House of Mourning.

By the Very Rev. R. O'Kennedy. 28 pp. 10 cts.

The Isle of Apple Blossoms.

By John Talbot Smith. 38 pp. 10 cts.

The Passion Play at Brixleg.

By Charles Warren Stoddard. 23 pp. 10 cts.

Father Jim.

By J. G. R. 27 pp. 10 cts.

The Coin of Sacrifice.

By Christian Reid. 60 pp. 15 cts.

The Question of Anglican Ordinations.

By Abbot Gasquet, O. S. B., D. D. 52 pp. 25 cts.

The Church and Our Government in the Philippines.

By the Hon. William H. Taft. 60 pp. 10 cts.

Some Duties and Responsibilities of American Catholics.

By the Hon. Charles J. Bonaparte. 32 pp. 10 cts.

Are Protestants Catholics?

By the Very Rev. R. O'Kennedy. 24 pp. 10 cts.

The Proof of Miracles.

By Henry F. Brownson, LL. D. 16 pp. 10 cts.

Unbelief a Sin.

By the Rev. Edmund Hill, C. P. 16 pp. 10 cts.

A City of Confusion.

By the Rev. Henry G. Ganss. 63 pp. 25 cts.

Views of Education.

By the Rt. Rev. J. L. Spalding, D. D. 31 pp.
10 cts.

What the Church has Done for Science.

By the Very Rev. Dr. J. A. Zahm, C.S.C. 63
pp. 15 cts.

For distribution and especially for the Church Rack nothing could be better than these pamphlets. All are neatly printed, thread stitched, and supplied with an attractive cover. A special discount is allowed when ordered in quantities.

THE AVE MARIA

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA, U. S. A.