

## The Life and Catholic Journalism

OF THE LATE

## JAMES A. McMASTER,

*Editor of the New York Freeman's Journal and  
Catholic Register.*

Edited by REV. MARK S. GROSS.

*For the Carmelite Review.*

## CHAPTER II.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO McMASTER'S CAREER AS A CATHOLIC JOURNALIST.—HIS TRIP TO EUROPE.—CARDINAL NEWMAN AND McMASTER.—HIS INTIMATES, WADHAMS, WALWORTH AND HECKER.—HE ENTERS THE NOVITIATE OF THE REDEMPTORISTS TO BECOME A LAY-BROTHER.—HIS PROVIDENTIAL CALL TO JOURNALISM.—ARCHBISHOP HUGHES AND McMASTER.—HE IS, AT FIRST, SUB-EDITOR OF THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL, THE REV. JAS. ROOSEVELT BAILEY, D. D., BEING CHIEF EDITOR.



OD does not guide all souls in the same manner. There are many before whose view he opens out but one path; they find themselves on it of necessity and without choice. They are thus freed from all responsibility and perplexity in ascertaining the divine will. Their heavenly Father has Himself put them upon the road which they should travel.

But there are others whom He seems to leave entirely to their own ignorance. He knows, indeed, the precise position of life in which He would have them serve Him. His graces await them, and all is prepared along their path just as preparations are made along a road on which a prince is about to pass. But to ascertain the divine will is often an affair of great difficulty. When a youth makes his final choice of a state of life, he knows that upon that act he stakes his happiness in this world and in the next. No wonder then that the choice of a state of life is regarded as a vital question. It is also the dividing line between the dependence of childhood and the responsibility of manhood. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that we make no mistake in the

choice of a state of life, but above all things, no one should dare enter the ecclesiastical state unless clearly called thereto by God Himself.

When a government levies soldiers to recruit an army for war, it must have weapons wherewith to arm them. It would be absurd to send soldiers to battle without arms. It would be simply to sacrifice its men to no purpose, and to invite defeat. Surely God acts with at least equal wisdom. "God does not call," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "without giving, at the same time, to those whom he calls, all that is necessary to accomplish the end for which He calls them." (Serm. I. de S. Joseph.) If God, then, call a young man to a certain state or position in life, He gives him the physical, intellectual, and moral qualities necessary for that state or position of life; that is, God endows him with the ability to perform the duties of that state or position in life. With regard to *ability*, the physical constitution of James A. McMaster was very strong. He was a commanding figure on the street. He was more than six feet in height, of large, but spare frame, and until within a period of two or three years before his death, he walked as firmly and as erect as an athlete.

As to his mental qualities, they were extraordinary. He was endowed with an unusual power of intellect, a remarkably sound, practical judgment, and an astonishing retentiveness of memory.

As to his moral qualities, he was blessed with great love for truth, and with an intrepid courage to make it known and to defend it. He feared no mere man, and he was as courageous to dispute in a crowd on matters of personal conviction as he was through the medium of his pen. He was of social disposition, and was accustomed to resort to places where men were wont to assemble, who have opinions to express, or to gather the ideas of their fellow-citizens on matters of public discussion. In the Astor House he was often to be found in the centre of an interested group. Bad language was his only bane in such a place. He would, without hesitation, rebuke the profane and vulgar tongue. McMaster seemed to have had all the physical, intellectual, and moral qualities required in a candidate for the priesthood.

So, in the beginning of August, 1845,