we must remember that the Church had existed longer than the State. This, after three hundred and fifty Surely the Anglicans are years! Surely the Anglicans slowly drawing nearer to a full preciation of the wisdom, truth and justice of the Catholic Church.—
Catholic Bulletin.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONVERSION

Ave Maria Broadly speaking, there are two classes of converts: those who come to the Church, and those to whom the Church comes; or, to be more explicit, those who, realizing that truth is somewhere to be found, seek diligently until they find it; and those to whom, without any or with-out much searching of their own, the Church reveals herself as the mouthpiece of God and the dispenser of His graces. We find illustrations of both classes in the New Testament. We read, for example, that Nicodemus came to Jesus, realizing that He was a teacher from God, and discussed with Him questions of religion; and after a close observation of Jesus and His work, he was, according to tradition, baptized by the Apostle St. Peter. He came to the Church. Again, we read of St. Paul, who in his blind zeal was breathing out threatenings and against the disciples of the Lord, and whose conversion was looked upon by the faithful as be-yond all hope; yet, even while he was on his way to work further evil against the Christians, "a light from heaven shined round about him," and he became a "chosen vessel of election," and labored more abundantly than all the Apostles. The Church came to him.

So has it been ever since, at least to our eyes. But at present we shall confine ourselves to the former class—namely, to those who came to the knowledge of the truth by a process which, on its human side, may be traced out step by step, and actually has been described for us either by themselves or others. In "Roads Rome in America" we have at hand a record of the experiences of forty-eight such wayfarers to the City set upon a Hill"; and a general survey of these records is in the highest degree edifying and instructive.

Reading over the book, there are several general impressions which add very much to the value of the collection. First of all, the writers are, in nearly all cases, men or wo men of high intellectual gifts, and are drawn from almost every walk It is not a case of a number of individuals from one community or class or place, who might there-fore have come under the influence of one particular phase of the Church's work, or of one great personality within the Church. Every profession and class in the country is represented; every conceivable combination of religious and social circumstances contributes a narrator; every imaginable obstacle has been met and overcome by one or other of the adventurers. Each one represents an individual history, and has travelled by a special route to the one great haven of rest.

In the next place, all the converts were persons who desired to know God's truth, and were willing to embrace it when discovered. They had acquired as a family inheritance, or they should find it. With reverent minds and persistent efforts they prosecuted the search, and when their labors were rewarded they sat down under His shadow Whom they had desired; they laid hold of Him and would not let Him go.

Again, another general impression they are all convinced that they have found the "treasure"; that they are at last in their Father's house; that the Catholic Church is the True Fold, whose shepherd is the Living God, and whose sheep can hear the Master's voice, and be fed with the supernatural food. Here is the testi-mony of one of them: "Many years have passed since my baptism, and in the meantime I have seen the Church in many climes and among many nationalities; I have read hundreds of lives of her saintly children; I have partaken of her sacraments, tried to live her life; and now I have but one testimony to give: 'How beautiful art thou, my love!— how beautiful art thou!

Thou art all fair, O my beloved, and Thou art all fair. O my beloved, and there is no spot in thee—fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array." Another says: "Yes, I knew it when I had says: Yes, I knew it when I had found it. And I found it, as in the parable, like a treasure hidden in a field—in the selfsame field up and down which I had wandered for years and where I had often trampled it under my feet. And when I had found it I hid it, scarcely daring to gaze at its splendor, and crying as another says: "Thirty-three have passed since this great years the majestic form of God's one true Church has stood clearly before me—the Church as He promised it: one, indivisible, infallible, against which the gates of hell never have prevailed and never shall prevail."

real. Like Jacob awaking from his dream, they cry out: "Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I know it not. This is no other than the House of God and the Gate of Heaven." Then and there the star arises on their horizon; if they follow, it will their horizon; if they follow, it will conversion.—T. J. Brennan, S. T. L. came to me; and through all these

Such are the characteristics and the sentiments of these strangers within our gates. How and by what roads did they come to us? This is an important question, the answer to which must be of intense interest to ourselves, and ought to be of great help to others.

Our Divine Lord says: "No one Our Divine Lord says: "No one can come to the Father but by Me."
And St. Paul, one of the first of those who did come, tells us: "By the grace of God I am what I am." This is the spirit of one and all of those who traveled these forty eight "Roads to Rome." They can indeed and do record for us the various and do, record for us the various steps of their journey; but both for the light by which they saw and the grace by which they moved, they give all the glory and the praise to God. "Every convert," says one of them, "the moment he enters the fold of Christ, and begins to live a life of faith, feels and recognizes how little he has had to do with the blessing that has come to him: therefore it is much easier to give the reasons why he is a Catholic, and why he became one." The late Hon. Henry Clay Dillon, of Los Angeles, said: "All conversions are the direct result of interposition of the Holy Spirit. Not even the great apostle of the Gentiles attempted to formulate his reasons for his change of faith until long after the light of heaven fell upon him, and time had been given him for mature study and reflection."

Notwithstanding this, however, God sometimes uses human agents. the Church's life which compels submission; or sometimes shows an in-dividual soul that among the many mansions of His earthly house there is one just suited for giving rest and light to one of her religious bent. It is to an enumeration of those cases we shall devote the remainder of this

And at first sight it seems strange how few of them were drawn by any personality within the Church. In human vanity, we sometimes think that most conversions are due to some great preacher, or some sister, or some friend. Occasionally we read of a seeming justification for the assumption; but this is very exceptional, and more apparent than "Paul, indeed, may plant, and Apollo may water, but it is God Who must give the increase." One instance of personal influence is thus described: "I early made the ac-quaintance of Father Gordon, of the Oratory, whose conversation and friendship were most helpful to me. He was a confrere of Newman, had been with him at Oxford, and had een in and of the Oxford Movement. He was not only a man of God of exceptional spiritual force, but he was also a man of exceeding personal charm. It was easy to think as he thought; and what we talked about and what he said to me helped me to solve many difficulties, both intellectual and spiritual."

Another instance, and one illustrating by what strange ways the Spirit of God may work, is the following: It must have been about the 10th of October, my twenty-first birthday. My mother expressed dissatisfaction at my way of doing up my hair, and said that Miss H. R. must come and show me how to make the puffs or bands, or whatever girls wore at that time. So one morning there appeared in my room a lovely young woman who looked like one of Fra Angelico's angels. I can see her now —her rippling hair, her shining eyes, religious belief and practice was according to the will of God, and for the spiritual good of man. This is a constant of the spiritual good of man. This is a constant of the spiritual good of man. This is a constant of the spiritual good of man. according to the will of God, and for the spiritual good of man. This definite form of religion they regarded belongs only to those of Celtic blood. as a "pearl of great price," and they were willing to search eagerly until that H. R. was a Catholic, and possessed of faith such as I had never seen. We became intimate friends and she took me with her to visit her sick poor, to whose desolate rooms she brought cheer and sunshine. Surely charity had not often appeared in so fascinating a shape as it did when she encouraged the weary to bear their suffering a little longer, or taught the earth-bound soul to long for heaven. The seed thus planted was watered by a good bishop and bore fruit in due season. With the exception of these and a few other instances, the personal element does not seem to have entered perceptibly into the conversions under

One of the most frequently mentioned influences was the piety of Catholic congregations, and the many helps to devotion which abound in the Catholic Church. The various non-Catholic religions described in "Roads to Rome" seem to hold their own either because they are family heirlooms, or because they are an element in the social life of the community. To a soul deeply religious, seeking for intimate union with God, they seem unable to dispense the bread of life; their children ask for bread and receive a stone; they come to the fig-tree seeking fruit and find none. Such souls always find them selves dropping into Catholic churches at Mass, or at Benediction, or in the quite hours of the day. They see around them men and wo-St. Augustine cried, 'Too late, alas! have I known Thee, O ancient and eternal Truth!' 'And then, for joy hear His voice that with God and thereof, I went and sold all that I sorbed in prayer, or visiting the thereof, I went and sold "And yet blessed Sacrament, or some favorite another says: "Thirty-three years shrine or image. It is a revelation to them that devotion should be so real. Like Jacob awaking from his

bring them where they should be.

Let us quote from one of them: In the various Protestant churches to which I went, I found an edifying diversion and pleasant gathering of friends, good music, a beautifully written, if not always beautifully read, service in the Episcopal church; lots of sentiment and emotion in the Methodist; frequently a dignified and scholarly discourse in the Presbyterian; and in the Unitarian, a lecture of the intellectual philosoph ical kind." Later on he meets a Catholic young man. He continues: "I went to Mass once or twice with him on Sunday—to Solemn High Mass. It was about as interesting as a Chinese puzzle, and quite as understandable. I determined, mainly from motives of curiosity, to find out what it was all about. And I did,—thank God, I did! I found out what the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass meant, the idea of it all—the Blessed Sacrament with Jesus really, objectively present on the altar Here was love indeed—love only the heart of God could conceive, only the omnipotence of God could effect. Here was God-not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality; God Incarnate, divine and human, and never more divine than when most human. Here at last was the vital power to here the eternal spring to make a desert earth bloom like a rose." He followed the star and offered the gift and was accepted.

Another speaks thus of his first visit to a Catholic Church: "I can well remember being taken to that balcony on Sunday afternoon and looking down on a devotional con-gregation in attendance at Benediction, while I enjoyed the fragrance of the incense that ascended from the altar, I then observed for the first time that the congregation was kneeling most of the time, instead of being seated; that the benches on which they knelt seemed more important than the seats of which they formed a part. Prayer almost en-tirely replaced the sermon as the essence of the service." This man, to judge by his narration, has also followed where Jesus pointed, and the last words of his story are: "His way is easy and His burden is light."

Of all the influences mentioned in this book the most powerful and fre-quent was the teaching authority claimed and exercised by the Church Most of these converts were men and women who had been "tossed about by every wind of doctrine," yet who would gladly serve the Lord in the manner and place He desires if they could but find them. They had as-similated the principle that is com-mon to the whole English-speaking world—namely, that God spoke to us through Jesus Christ. They went further and asked: "Is the religion of Jesus Christ still preserved on the earth? And if so, Where?" This is the turning-point. Those who come to this point rarely remain there: they pass either to the Catholic Church or to indifferentism. Let us hear how the question was settled by

'Protestantism is in its essence religious anarchy. I saw that the Protestantism of Luther and Calvin with us quickly became the Protest-antism of Wesley and the Baptists; and that that of Wesley and the Baptists soon grew into that of Brigham Young and of Alexander Campbell, of Dowie and of Mrs. Eddy. system of religion in which I myself eem to have as good a right as Luther or Wesley, or any Puritan, or Mrs. Eddy, to start a sect or to promote a schism, seemed to me no system at all. If there is no final or authoritative interpretation of Holy Scripture, if each man may and must interpret for himself, if one man's good as another man's gloss, and if there is no one to decide finally, no source of authority which is infallible and supreme and ultimate and of divine sanction, then it seemed to me that there is abso lutely nothing in Christianity. The mind rejecting that system turns necessarily to the one thing that is left—namely to Catholicism. If any. thing in Christianity is true, Catholicism is that thing. It is rational and reasonable, and what serious men would expect of a wise God. It works order in religion, and works along lines that in other spheres commend themselves to sane men. The Catholic system is what we have in the home and in the State; it provides an authority from which there is no appeal.'

These are illustrations of the way in which this central doctrine appeals to minds disposed to think seriously of religion.

There are many other causes mentioned in this book as contributing to the happy results described; but we can not analyze or classify them all. The two mentioned—namely, the devotional life of the Church, and her teaching authority—seem to have been the most frequent and the most powerful. Other causes contributed, but they were always sub-sidary to one or other of these two. We shall conclude in the words of one of the converts: "The soul in one of the converts: "The soul in its ignorance, searching for truth, lays hold of so many notions that when truth is fully attained, it is difficult to sort out from the vast heap of ideas those which have had special importance in the process. Having groped its way through a labyrinth of darkness, it scarcely could be expected to remember clearly the various directions it took before coming to the light. The

A RICH INHERITANCE

The writer of a recent magazine article pays a well-deserved tribute to a woman of her acquaintance who to a woman of her acquaintance who has a large family to bring up, and for the most part must do her own housework, but finds time, nevertheless, to read the best literature, to study Shakespeare, and to help her boys with their Latin. Her cares, of course, are many, but she has made it a custom to have near at hand a good book she can pick up and read at odd moments. She feels that one of the first duties a mother owes her children is the cultivation of her-self, so she is determined to keep her mind active and open and her taste correct and refined. Then her boys and girls as they grow up around her will never find that she s incapable of sharing in their intellectual pleasures, nor will they eel that she is unable to guide and direct their reading.

That woman is right. For after the blessing of having parents who are staunch Catholics, and who transmit to their offsprings sound bodies and keen minds, a child can enjoy no greater advantage than that of being born in a home where the best books are read and discussed. Such a child is reared in an environment that gives him even in his early years an appreciation of good litera ture, and that is a gift which is almost a grace. For the boy or girl who has learned to enjoy the companionship of a great author, and can always find in the study of a literary masterpiece a pleasant occupation for hours of leisure, is sure to be safeguarded from most of the temptations that beset the idle and empty-minded. This is no small blessing in days like ours. But besides that signal benefit, lovers of good literature learn from the kings and queens of the domains of letters admire and imitate high ideals, to discern the beautiful in the commonplace, and to realize vividly the value and significance of life. study of a great author also widens, as is plain, a youthful reader's knowledge of human nature and of the world's past, and gives him a share of the literary master's gift of expression and power over words.

These objects are so worthy of parents strive to create in the home a literary atmosphere." Consequently a handsome sideboard is not considered a more valuable possession than a library made up of those books which have been declared masterpieces by the verdict of time. Nor are these volumes gazed at only through doors of glass: they are taken out and read. For the family aims to be conversant, not merely with the names of good books, but with their contents.

This familiarity with what is most excellent in literature cannot be acquired just by perusing works of criticism : it must come from a firsthand knowledge of the books themselves. Nowadays many people display an intimate acquaintance with the life, habits, idiosyncrasies, and even the vices of authors, but betray amazing ignorance of a writer's best works. They know, for instance, that Charles Lamb was rather convivial, but they are not at all familiar with his essays. They are aware that Byron led a profligate but they have never read the

children of the household be intropersons are expectgood proportion of these books have equipment for this office. been given to a child before his six-teenth year there is little likelihood of his ever reading them at all.

ful; or a selection of masterpieces in prose and verse, such as that Father ment at almost all times and in near-Edward Connolly has left us in his admirable "English Reader." The leading characters in the Bible and in most of Shakespeare's plays the delight of old age; the ornament of prosperity, the refuge and combould be completed. prose and verse, such as that Father should be as well known to our boys and girls as are next-door neighbors. The best of Dickens, Thackeray, Scott, Eliot, Macaulay, Hawthorne, Stevenson, Newman and Ruskin should be given in due season to the children of the household. Let them learn their history to a large extent through the attractive medium of biography by reading well written lives of the world's great captains, saints and sages. The memories of our boys and girls should be richly stored with passages from the poets, and even little children can be led captive with the stories of Joan of Arc, Godfrey de Boullion, Don Quixote, and Sir Galahad.

The best that comes from the pens of contemporary authors need not, of course, be neglected. Here, however, great caution is required. much trash that will be completely forgotten in a year or two is pouring daily from the press, and is being so widely advertised as "epoch-making books," that much precious time may

be wasted in reading such works. Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of Catholic children growing up with a due appreciation of our best Catholic literature, past and our best Catholic Heathers, pass and present. The works of yesterday's Catholic writers lie unread because unknown, and the excellent books of many a Catholic author of to-day disdainfully neglected just because they are not puffed and exploited as "best-sellers" are. For instance, take our poets. How many

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of those reading this article have

ever opened Southwell, Crashaw or Patmore? Or how many Catholics realize what a high place the late Francis Thompson or Mrs. Alice Meynell hold among modern lyricists. Why, we might inquire, is Winston Churchill read by Catholics, but not John Ayscough? Why are Arthur essays familiar to them, bnt not Agnes Repplier's? Why is Morley's "Gladstone" spoken of with bated breath and Snead Cox's "Cardinal Vaughan" left unmentioned? Why are Froude's or Motley's biased works called "standard histories' and Lingard's or Pastor's scholarly volumes seldom named? Why should the "Encyclopedia Britanica" have access to Catholic homes from which "The Catholic Encyclopedia" is excluded? Why is Preserved Smith's worthless "Luther" referred to with respect, while the value of Father Grisar's life of the heresiarch is little realized? Why are J. Howard Moore's dangerous books on pedagogy found on Catholic teachers' desks from which Mother Stuart's "Education of Catholic Girls" and Father Swickerath's "Jesuit Education" are conspicuously absents Why are the vagaries of every evo-lutionist, from Darwin to McCabe familiar to so many Catholics who are strangers to the writings of Father Gerard, Dr. Dwight, Dr. Walsh and Sir Bertram Windle? Why are Mrs. Humphry Ward and Miss Marie Corelli read by Catholics who never heard of Mrs. Wilfrid Ward and Mrs. Hugh Fraser? Why is the alluring picture of Socialism that Hillquit and Spargo paint, believed by some Catholics to be a truer likeness of the system than that given by Vaughan and Husslein? Why, too-but enough. More questions have already been asked than can be readily answered, though another paragraph of these pertinent 'Whys" could easily be written. The practical conclusions to be drawn from the foregoing remarks

and queries are plain as day. must enter eagerly into their rich literary inheritance. The Church's laity in this country must be a cultured, well-read body. from the systematic study of the world's best books they can derive to a great extent that discipline, breadth and refinement of mind that are the marks of the well-educated. This love for good books should also be imparted to the young. Let parents then exercise a strict supervision over their children's reading, banish absolutely from the nursery the 'comic supplement" and all abominations of the kind, and provide instead books that will develop character and set forth lofty ideals. If fathers and mothers but realize the importance of fitting themselves inprofit are almost numberless, yet the time of life is very short, so let the children of the household be interested in the choice of the children of the household be interested in the choice of the children of the household be interested in the children of the household be interested in the children of the children lazy perusal of several Sunday papers duced early to good authors, and let a few cheap magazines, and a halfparents assist their boys and girls in dozen "best-sellers" can supply the forming a correct taste in literature. mental culture required for the task. There are many standard works that The study of great authors' master pieces, however, will go far toward ed to be familiar with, but unless a furnishing parents with a proper ing constantly the best that the world's keenest and most gifted minds have written we rise nearer To train the taste of the young an anthology like Palgrave's "Golden Treasury" will be found very useof prosperity, the refuge and comfort of adversity; a delight at home, and no hindrance abroad; they are companions by night, and in travel and in the country." Then why not enter into so rich an inheritance?— Walter Dwight, S. J., in America.

> Cold is the Catholic heart that is not stirred by the Church's dedica-tion of this month to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Nothing makes the soul so pure, so religious, as the endeavor to create something perfect, for God is perfection, and whosoever strives strives for something that is God like.—Michael Angelo.

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