

# Northwest Review.

Senate Reading Room Jan 7

"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

THE ONLY CATHOLIC PAPER PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH IN NORTH-WESTERN CANADA.

VOL. XII, No. 10.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1896.

\$2.00 per year.  
Single Copies, 5 cents.

## THE CRUCIFIX CONQUERED.

How the Rev. Harmar C. Denny, S. J., Became a Catholic.

In the Messenger of the Sacred Heart for June, the Rev. Harmar C. Denny, S. J., recites the story of his conversion and gives his personal impressions of Cardinal Manning, who had gently led him into the Church. He writes:

The recent publication of a life of Cardinal Manning has called forth so much comment, both favorable and especially unfavorable, that I have been asked to jot down my impressions of him. Impressions they are, and of a most lasting kind, for he was my friend and guide in the most eventful period of my life.

My acquaintance with him began in 1857, when I was a student at the University of Oxford. I was then 23 years old and a member of St. John's College. My first two years at Oxford had been passed at St. Mary's Hall, where one of my intimate friends was Walter J. B. Richards. He was two years ahead of me, and, having been dissatisfied with the claims of the Church of England, had become a Catholic, and was then a member of Cardinal Manning's community of Oblates of St. Charles, at Bayswater, London.

I had been brought up a Presbyterian, but at Oxford all my associates were Anglicans. Without any study of Episcopalianism—in fact, very little attention was given to dogma in those days—I decided to conform to the established church. I also concluded to become a clergyman, and applied to Dr. Samuel Wilberforce, then bishop of Oxford. He accepted my baptism and agreed to receive me as a candidate for holy order, which implied a curacy. This was quite a condescension on his part, as Americans are rarely adopted. Having thus settled my future career, it was time to prepare to take the degree of B. A.

The Christmas vacations had just begun, and my plan was to go to Brighton to be coached for the examination by Mr. Austin, a scholar at St. John's College, Oxford, when who should appear upon the scene but Walter Richards. He came, he said, to visit his friends and talk over old times. He was going to London that afternoon and I arranged to accompany him. When he got to the station I noticed that he bought a second class ticket. I followed suit. It was my first lesson in poverty. As it happened, we were the only passengers in the railway compartment.

Naturally, the subject of our conversation was religion. I declared that I had three insuperable difficulties to becoming a Catholic. He only laughed and inquired what they were. First of all, I said, I could never accept Papal infallibility. It had not been defined, but I knew that all Catholics believed it. Difficulty number one was soon dissipated, for it was an imaginary one. I had thought that infallibility meant impeccability. The explanation of the real doctrine was quite satisfactory. Then came the second obstacle. I can believe, I said, in the God-man, but I really cannot believe in the God-woman. I thought that this was a poser. But Richard only laughed, saying that the glory of the Blessed Virgin was in being a creature and yet mother of our Creator, to whom she gave human nature inasmuch as being a creature she had it to give. So my imagined doctrine of a second incarnation of God in Mary was exploded. Then came difficulty number three. How about keeping feasts and fasts and forbidding to marry? Before I knew it, Richards had convinced me of speaking like a Manichee. The ground seemed to be crumbling beneath me.

When we reached London we went to Bayswater, and I was introduced to Dr. Manning. What were my impressions? First of all I was struck with the simplicity and poverty of the little house then occupied by the Oblates. It was a great contrast to the quarters of the Oxford dons, and no less was the contrast between the gentle and cordial manner of Dr. Manning and his companions and those of the dignified and cold university dignitaries.

Dr. Manning himself was then in his prime and extremely handsome. One

could not help but remark the intellectuality of the forehead and the tenderness of the nose and mouth.

He received me very kindly and took me up to his room. I remember how I had to wade through piles of books to enter the rather small room he occupied.

My friend Richards had told the Doctor that I had made up my mind to be a minister. "There is no use in doing that," he said. "You might as well stay as you are." "But were you not happy at Lavington?" I asked. "Yes," he answered, "those were happy days. There is only one thing better, and that is to be a Catholic priest."

"How long will it be before Richards will be ordained a priest?" I asked (he was then in minor orders). "In a year or so," was the answer. This rather encouraged me. It would not take me so long if I decided upon the step, thought I to myself.

Dr. Manning did not press me but gave me two or three of his tracts to read. One was on "The Grounds of Faith," and consisted of four lectures delivered by him in St. George's Cathedral, Southwark. The other was on "The Office of the Holy Ghost Under the Gospel." This he afterwards developed into two volumes: "The Internal and External Missions of the Holy Ghost." As it was December 10, consequently in the octave of the Immaculate Conception, there was to be a procession in honor of the Blessed Virgin in the Church that evening. I was present, but did not take part in what I considered carrying around an idol, the statue of Our Lady.

I took temporary lodgings in Albany street, at a safe distance from Bayswater. I intended to carry out my plan of going to Brighton to prepare with Mr. Austin for my degree.

I kept away from danger until Christmas, when I went to St. Mary of the Angels for service. I was impressed at the sight of so many clerics in copes assisting at the office, but I saw no one to speak to. In January I called at the house, but Richards was out. I next made up my mind to have another interview with Dr. Manning. It was a Saturday night, and he was in the sacristy on his way to the confessional. The Blessed Sacrament must have been there temporarily, for I remember that he genuflected, and I thought to myself, what is he worshipping that vestment case for?

The Doctor was very friendly and took me to his room. I had been reading and getting up objections. So I opened on him with the difficulty: If I stay as I am or if I become a Roman Catholic, it is only the result of exercising private judgment. Therefore I am just as well off as I am.

He was attentive and repeated the objection, making it appear even stronger than I had put it. He then pointed out that, if by private judgment I meant using my reason, I was bound as an intelligent being to do this; not indeed to sit in judgment of religion, but to examine the proofs of the existence of a divinely appointed guide in all the doctrines of religion. In other words, that I was bound to examine the credentials or motives of credibility for accepting the claims of the Church. He showed me how Christ Himself had appealed to His credentials that he was a teacher sent from God. People were to believe the works they saw; the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the lame, the sick were cured, and the dead were raised.

I was convinced that the Church was the divinely-appointed guide. So I returned to Oxford, sold off my furniture, talked the matter over with my friends and went back to London. A change was worked in me, so this time I hired poor lodgings close to Bayswater. The final step must soon be taken. I went to say good-bye to Dr. Manning before going to my old tutor, Dr. Stocker, at Draycott rectory.

"Why are you going?" he asked. "To prepare for my degree," I answered.

"Why do you do that?" he inquired. "Because it is my duty," I replied.

"What is duty?" he continued, but explained it himself by quoting a passage of St. Cyrian. The gist of it was that when the intellect is convinced the will must act. I knew well what he meant.

Dinner time came. He gave me the key of the sacristy and said: "Go over there and pray." I went. I was probably the bluest mortal in London, because I realized the hour for decision had come.

At the entrance of the sanctuary of the Church was an arch bearing the Rood. As I prayed there the figure of Christ seemed to be hanging on the cross in midair. You believe in Christ, I said to myself; which church has kept bright the true idea of Him—which church has the crucifix? Only one. This settled the matter for me. The crucifix had conquered.

I then went to Dr. Manning's room and knelt down on the prie-dieu. Soon after he came in and found me kneeling. I first became aware of his presence by feeling his arms around me. "You have had a hard struggle," he said: "tell me all about it." Why, thought I to myself, I can talk to him as I would to my mother, and before I realized it I had made a general confession of my whole life.

"Now," said he, "you are tired; get your dinner, rest yourself and come back this evening." So I went to the Great Western Hotel at Paddington and carried out his injunctions.

That very evening, before the altar of St. Charles, I was baptized conditionally, adding the name of Charles to my own.

In those days a reception into the Church was quite simple; there was a profession of faith, but there was no supplemental ceremony in baptism, merely the pouring on of the water with the formula and then conditional absolution. There was benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, as it was Jan. 21, feast of St. Agnes, and this was a fitting close of a momentous day for me.

The next day I received a visit at the hotel from Mr. Palin, dean of the faculty of St. John's College, Oxford. He had been sent by Dr. Wynter, president of the college, to interview me.

Mr. Palin said: "I understand you are going to the spinal column of Catholicity. The church of England has also a part of the verberate system. Of course coming as you do from Presbyterianism, you might as well go to the column, but for me, I shall stay where I am. You have got the impulse; I have not. Take the leap, but don't come back."

I assured him that I would not. I returned to Oxford to make my final settlement and called on Dr. Wynter, who was of the old school, wore a very stiff high collar and was extremely dignified. Although there was no religious test in vigor, subscription to the thirty-nine articles having been abrogated, still St. John's College would not shelter within its venerable walls a convert to Rome. This the president gave me to understand. As my mind had already been made up, it did not affect me at all.

My old tutor Austin is reported to have circulated the following as the awful verdict of Dr. Wynter: "Mr. Denny has risked his eternal salvation, has lost his place in the university and has forfeited my favor."

Among my friends at St. John's was R. F. Clarke, now well known as a Jesuit Father and writer of philosophical and religious books.

He belonged to the same "Breakfast Club," and was one of the "tintinnabulators," whose duty it was to call the club members to breakfast held in turn in our different quarters.

He remained a couple of years longer at St. John's, took his degree of M. A., and became in turn scholar and fellow of his alma mater. I bade him good-bye in '58, and did not see him again until he came to New York in 1884, when we met as members of the same religious order.

Having taken leave of all my Oxford friends, I went back to London and settled down in a lodging near St. Mary's of the Angels, Bayswater. I became an Oblate of St. Charles, and began to study with the other young members of the community.

After a few months of happy life at Bayswater, it was decided that I should go to Rome to complete my studies. So in October 1858 I took up my residence in the Collegio Pio, attached to the English college in Rome. I enjoyed great freedom. I went when I pleased to the lectures of the Jesuit Fathers in the Roman College.

My life in Rome was drawing to a close. I had been ordained deacon on the eve of Trinity Sunday, 1860, by Cardinal Patrizzi, in the venerable Basilica of St. John Lateran. Dr. Manning thought it advisable for me to go back with him to England for the summer, saying that I might perhaps return in the fall. I remember the farewell visit we paid Cardinal Franzelin. He was very gracious and said: "This is your Bethlehem, your house of bread, where you are to lay in your supply for future needs," and urged my return. But this was not to be. In October I made a retreat with the Passionists at Highgate, London, in preparation for my ordination. On the feast of All Saints, 1860, I was ordained priest by Bishop Morris, being assisted at my first Mass by Dr. Manning, who had been made a monsignor and protonotary apostolic during his last visit to Rome. I sang my first High Mass on the feast of my patron St. Charles, in the Church of St. Mary of the Angels, so dear to me by associations, for there I had been received into the Church and had made my first communion.

The elevation of Dr. Manning to the Archbishopric of Westminster occurred in 1865, and Father Denny resolved to leave England. He came back to his native city of Pittsburg, where he founded a branch of the Oblates. This did not succeed, and in 1871 he entered the novitiate at Frederick, Md., and became a member of the Jesuit community.

## CATHOLIC TOLERANCE IN IRELAND.

Evidence From History of the Fairness of the People of the Old Land.

The fact that the Catholics of Ireland return to Parliament so many Protestant representatives has recently been somewhat extensively commented upon as a pleasant example of a liberality which might with advantage be imitated by communities of other races and other creeds. It is well to have it brought to mind, however, that although this is a striking instance of liberality, when viewed in connection with the too frequent manifestations of intolerance which still mar the conduct of more favored peoples, it is not by any means an isolated example of large mindedness on the part of the Irish race, writes J. A. J. McKenna in Donahoe's Magazine for August.

In the sixteenth century, when the world was darkened by bigotry, the Catholics of Ireland showed that they had no disposition to make the Christian precept of charity coterminous with the purviews of their creed. If intolerance can ever be excused, that was an age in which it might plead palliation. Had the Irish followed the examples which the times afforded, they could not have been greatly blamed. It had been held that the command to present the other cheek when one had been smitten does not apply to nations; and by parity of reasoning, the Irish might have claimed that where a race was concerned the old law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth had not been abrogated. Before Mary's accession they had tasted the bitter fruit of the religious revolution which was "to deliver up their children to famine and bring them into the hands of the sword." It is true they had suffered ere the advent of the new theology; but the change in religion added fanaticism to racial animosity, and it required no prophetic vision to foresee that, if Protestantism was fixed in ascendancy, the last stages of the Reformation would be incomparably worse than the first.

In the light of the history of that period, it would not have been surprising had the Catholics, on getting hold of the reins of government in Ireland under Mary, given the new religionists a dose of their own medicine. The Protestants of England who had sown the wind during the reign of Henry and Edward, were reaping the results under the Catholic Tudor. In Ireland they were the merest handful, utterly unable to offer resistance to persecution. They were at the mercy of Catholic rulers, at the mercy of a Catholic majority; but

they did not have to ask for mercy. It dropped upon them like "the gentle rain from heaven." During the five years that Mary reigned and Catholics ruled in Ireland no one suffered for religious opinions. Not a single act of persecution stains the history of those years. So complete, indeed, was the immunity enjoyed by the Protestants of Ireland that many of their co-religionists went over from England to share with them the privilege of practising their religion without let or hindrance. "It is a positive and absolute fact," says Mr. Gladstone, "that from Chester to Bristol, the two British ports from which was carried on the principal communication with Ireland, the Protestants of England fled in numbers to Ireland because they knew that the public spirit and public feeling in Ireland would make them safe when they touched that shore." The families of Agar, Ellis and Harvey are the descendants of Protestant refugees from Cheshire, who, under the lead of their pastor, sought and found a safe asylum in Ireland. No wonder Mr. Gladstone exclaimed:

"Is it not rather too much, is it not cruel, is it not shameful, when the antecedents of the people proved so splendid, and they showed so well their aversion to persecution in the days when persecution was almost universally carried on, is it not rather too much, ought we not to blush for ourselves when we charge upon those people, in defiance of their own assurance, as well as the teaching of their history, an intention to persecute the Protestants in Ireland?"

It may be urged, however, that the rebellion of 1641, which certain writers have made the reproach of Irish Catholics, affords a better criterion of their tolerance than does the reign of Mary. Carlyle commenting on the massacre of the noblesse by the French insurgents makes this significant remark: "Horrible in lands that knew equal justice; not so unnatural in lands that had never known it." And his dictum should be borne in mind by students of the history of the Irish rebellion. No judgment worthy of consideration can be given of any historical event unless full account be taken of formative causes and concomitant circumstances. Unfortunately, much that still passes for Irish history is the work of deliberate conspirators against truth; but, through the labors of men with whom the writing of history is the relation of facts rather than the making of special pleas for a party, the conscientious student can form an accurate opinion of events long misunderstood. It has been charged that the rebellion was born of bigotry and resulted in the massacre of Protestants through what is paradoxically called religious hatred. The true record shows that it was evoked by terrible injustice and was marked by marvellous examples of Irish Catholic moderation.

No one will accuse Lecky of any bias toward the Catholic side of a question. It is no injustice to him to believe that he would have been more pleased had his researches tended to substitute the ordinary anti-Catholic version of the story of the rebellion. But the facts constrained him to express it as his "firm conviction, that the common assertion that the rebellion of 1641 began with a massacre of Protestants is entirely untrue," and to declare that "nothing can be more scandalously disingenuous than the method of those writers who have employed themselves in elaborating ghastly pictures of the crimes which were committed on one side, while they have at the same time concealed those which were committed on the other." "From the very beginning," he adds, "the English Parliament did the utmost in its power to give the contest the character of a war of extermination."

Goldwin Smith corroborates Lecky, and testifies that acts of vengeance were opposed to the policy of the leaders of the rebellion. The original sources from which material is drawn for blood-curdling chapters on "The Popish Massacre," are certain manuscripts in Trinity College, which Edmund Burke in a letter to his son, described as the "rascally collection in the college relative to the pretended massacre of 1641." But in spite of their patent rascality, the eminent statesman, on close examination, found that they "refuted fully the false stories (Continued on page 2).