



Forty Years in the Church

A Convert's Long Experience.

The Hollowness of Protestantism: The Necessity of an Infallible Authority on Earth.

The following splendid letter from a convert, dated Boston, January 25th, 1892, appeared in the "Catholic Columbian," and is well worth reproduction and careful perusal:—

Forty years ago to-day, by the great mercy of God, I had the inestimable privilege of being received into the Catholic Church, after having officiated for ten years as pastor of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in your city.

It seems a long way off but I have a vivid recollection of the scenes and incidents connected with that eventful period of my life, especially of my struggles of mind and heart while undergoing the great change that finally landed me in the blessed bosom of Holy Mother Church. I have a lingering affection for the members of my old congregation. I often think of them, recalling with pleasure the happiness I enjoyed during all the years of my intercourse with them, and I wonder how many of them have gone to their account in the world, and what is the condition, mental and spiritual, especially spirit, of those who are left behind. I remember well that when I became a Catholic more than one of my old friends...

He is decided, he doesn't know what is best for him when he has had time to become thoroughly acquainted with the Catholic Church he will find that it is a very different thing from what he now supposes it is, and he will be sure to be a Catholic.

Well I have been forty years in the church and I have had pretty extensive opportunities of study, observation and experience in various parts of the country, and now if I could reach the car or the very glad to give them the result of my experience.

It is undoubtedly a very serious and important question, and one upon which eternal interests are suspended. Believe me, then, when I say, from my heart, that instead of being disappointed at my disavowal of the Catholic Church I am very sorry from day to day, as I have become more and more acquainted with it, multiplied causes for devout thanksgiving to Almighty God for bestowing upon me such an inestimable blessing, and I feel like crying out with the prophet Isaiah when she came to visit King Sargon, "surely the half was not told me." For forty years I have been studying the Catholic Church, both theoretically and practically, — its system of teaching, its devotion and its wonderful organization; and I must say its magnitude, its beauty and its glory have grown upon me continually till I am ready to declare that there is nothing like it in all the world. It bears unmistakable evidence of the divinity of its origin and the supernatural wisdom of its organization and development. The only wonder is that a system so grand, so venerable, so fraught with all that is intellectually great and devotionally beautiful and attractive should not have commanded more attention from intellectual men and more general investigation of claims whose proof lies in it were on the surface and is so easily accessible to any candid, honest enquirer.

I am looking back on the past I am struck with the wonderful change which forty years have brought about in the religious world—a change which has only served to realize my anticipations and confirm my conclusions at the time that I was compelled to make the change from Protestantism to Catholicism. What caused me to make that change was:

1. The logical weakness, confusion and hollowness of Protestantism, and
2. The absolute necessity of an infallible authority to interpret to us the truth of the divine revelation, and to decide disputes in regard to faith and morals.
The development of Protestantism has been very rapid, and is now progressing with accelerated speed. It is really sad to witness the anxiety, the agitation and alarm with which the various denominations are at last awakening to the consciousness that their creeds and confessions of faith are not the infallible expositions of divine truth that they were formerly accustomed to consider them, but are full of defects, and that if they are any longer to command the respect and assent even of their own people, they must be renovated and reconstructed more in accordance with modern thought; as if divine revelation were a matter to be changed with each successive generation. It is openly confessed that many preachers have felt obliged to conceal their real sentiments while professing to adhere to their standards, and some even justify such a course on the ground that it is impossible for all men to think alike, and on some Protestant principles each man has a right to his own opinion.

But the saddest phase of the development is the result of the so-called "higher criticism," which is undermining faith in the very Bible itself, which has heretofore always been considered the infallible rule of the Protestant faith. It is a noticeable fact that whereas for the last three hundred years the Catholic Church has constantly and most persistently been accused of being opposed to the Bible and of using all its influence to misinterpret and keep it from the people, at the present time the Catholic Church is laboring to defend the Bible from the destructive criticism of Protestants. Leading Protestant theologians are keeping up the agitation, and adding to the general confusion by giving utterance to the most novel and often radical views of divine truth, which furnish most convincing evidence of the fact that the legitimate, logical tendency of Protestantism is to scepticism, doubt, infidelity and agnosticism.

When I was officiating as an Episcopal clergyman with strong High Church proclivities, I tried hard to persuade myself that we had great advantages over the other denominations, and I put on airs, and rung the changes on our being true Catholics—not Romanists, you know—the *Via Media* and all that. But I could not always blind myself to the absurdity of that position. I saw clearly that we were in the same boat with the other denominations. In fact, there was greater confusion of doctrine among us than among them, because while the Presbyterians, for instance, had their unique, consistent, flat-footed Confession of faith, which, in theory, at least, all were bound to adhere to, the Episcopal Church, which was originally founded in compromise, was bound to tolerate a wide latitude of opinion. So that while High Church and Low Church Broad Church and Ritualist contended earnestly each for the supremacy of its own peculiar views,—each accusing the others of teaching a gospel which was not the true gospel of Christ,—neither party really had any right to say to the other, you have no right in the church. I got sick and tired of this everlasting warfare of brethren upon one another and I could not help asking myself if this was really the normal condition of the Church of Christ? Was it possible that Almighty God had given us a revelation without at the same time giving us the means of ascertaining the true meaning of that revelation? It was folly for us to contend that we were united in essentials. In the first place there was no authority in the Church to decide what were and what were not essentials, and the fact was patent that the two main systems, High Church and Low Church were as incompatible as oil and water and they were correct in saying that if one was true the other must necessarily be false. I saw and felt the necessity of an authoritative tribunal to decide disputes and assure us of the true faith. I followed the lead of the Oxford men and it was in reading their arguments against the doctrines of the Catholic Church that I became acquainted with those doctrines and finally became convinced of their truth.

The Scriptural argument for the supremacy of St. Peter especially came home to me with great force, was surprised that I had never realized the full force and significance of those striking passages which in the light of Catholic teaching appeared so plain, so reasonable, so irresistible. "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not and when thou art converted confirm thy brethren." "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." And to crown all, "Thou art Peter (a Rock) and upon this Rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it." The Scriptural argument was complete. The necessity of a head and centre of unity and a supreme final court of appeal to decide disputes was manifest on the slightest candid reflection. The syllogism—every organized body must have a head; the Church is an organized body; therefore the Church must have a head; and, *seu deo*, incontrovertible. I became convinced that a supreme tribunal of final resort, to interpret the law and decide disputes was just as indispensable in the spiritual order as in the natural order. As without the supreme civil court of final resort there could be no order, or agreement, or harmony among the people in what concerns their temporal happiness; so without the Supreme Spiritual Court, the tribunal of final resort to decide questions of faith and morals, there could be no unity or harmony in those things which pertained to their eternal happiness.

These truths which are so familiar to me now, then came home to me with great freshness and power and I could no longer resist the conclusion. Every day's experience only serves to convince me of the wisdom of my choice, for the temptations to scepticism—"scientific" scepticism—at the present time are very great and I thank God from the bottom of my heart that in the midst of these powerful temptations I have the consolation of knowing that I am safe and at peace in Holy Church. I feel that in her my feet are planted upon that impregnable Rock which for two thousand years has defied the storms of error, heresy and schism, and that she is destined to outlive all the ephemeral opposing associations which have been leagued against her.

My race is nearly run. I shall probably never have the opportunity to address my old friends again. But I shall not forget them. I would to God they could be brought to see things as I now see them and to enjoy the inestimable privileges which are my inheritance. But in any case I pray that Almighty God may bless all the survivors of that dear old flock of St. Paul's with the choicest of His graces and blessings.

H. L. RICHARDS.

RELIGIOUS NEWS ITEMS.

Cardinal Moran, of Sydney, is writing a history of the church in Australia. A Protestant family rents a pew in the Catholic church at Eagle Grove, Iowa. The popular Portuguese actress, Miss Simoes, has joined the Sisters of Charity. There were 9,000 baptisms in the archdiocese of Baltimore last year; 685 were those of converts from Protestantism. The recent Jesuit mission at St. Aloysius' church, Washington, D.C., is credited with one hundred and twenty converts. Samuel Lachman, the millionaire, who died recently in San Francisco, bequeathed \$1,000 to the Catholic Orphan Asylum of that city.

John B. Cahlan, Philadelphia, died recently. He was one of 19 men who held the church of St. Philip Neri against the mob in the riots of 1841. The Catholic Order of Foresters has a membership of 22,000 in the United States and Canada. Cook county, Ill., has 175 courts and 10,000 members. A church is to be erected to the memory of the late Cardinal Manning at the boom bank, Kent, Eng., where his booby days were spent. It will cost \$75,000. In some places in Texas, in Bishop Brennan's diocese, Catholics go twenty miles to hear mass. Their's is the faith which shall avail them unto life everlasting.

The Holy Father, speaking to an English priest said: "I appointed Mgr. Vaughan to the see of Westminster because he is a man of so much energy and zeal." Brazil has resumed amicable relations with the Holy See by appointing as its ambassador at the Vatican the same man who in that capacity represented the Empire under Dom Pedro. Four sisters of the community of St. Anne de Lachine—Sisters Winifred, Rogation, M. Jeanne Damascene and Antone—left Montreal recently for the far away missions of Victoria and Alaska. All four are young sisters, the youngest being only eighteen.

Rev. G. Sorrentini, of Salinas, recently received into the church Lorenz P. Tibbitt, Esq., a well-known literary man of San Jose, Cal. Mr. Tibbitt was a prominent Freemason for ever a quarter of a century. He will soon publish over his own name the reasons which led him to embrace the faith.

It is thought in England that Canon Gadd will succeed to the see of Salford made vacant by the promotion of Bishop Vaughan to the Metropolitan See of Westminster. Canon Gadd attended the Catholic Centennial and Catholic Congress at Baltimore in 1889 as the representative of Cardinal Manning. Archbishop Slattery, addressing the Catholics of Geelong, Victoria, Australia, on March 12th, said that for the last 17 years they had put into his hands sufficient money to enable him to support all their schools. In round numbers they had given him \$5,000 per annum during the past 17 years for the education of their children.

A letter published by the Rev. Father Luigi da Palma, General of the Franciscan Order, addressed to all the members of the Order, announces to them that the Holy Father has assumed the protection of their Order. Father Luigi ordains that a solemn "Te Deum" will be sung in all the churches of the Franciscan Order throughout the world.

The Rev. Francis McKenna, of Moberly, Mo., died on Friday, April 22, and was buried in the Catholic cemetery there on the Monday following. The mayor of the city and the council turned out and followed the remains to the grave. All business was suspended and in every way the deep sorrow felt by those of the community was shown.

The installation of the Right Rev. Henry Gabriels, as Bishop of Ogdensburg, took place in that city on the 11th May, instant. The episcopal party arrived from Utica on a special train provided by the New-York Central free of charge and was met at the station by the clergy of the diocese, various Catholic societies of Ogdensburg and surrounding cities and towns, and delegates from numerous Canadian towns in Ontario and Quebec. The installation services were conducted by Rt. Rev. Patrick A. Ludden, Bishop of Syracuse. A purse of \$4000 was presented to Bishop Gabriels in the name of a general reception was rendered to the bishop, to which the public were invited. A display of fireworks took place in front of the bishop's residence. Everybody was in gala attire.

A GRAND CEREMONY.

BLESSING AND LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE.

Archbishop Fabre O.M.I. — The Church of the Holy Sacrament.—The New Monastery.—Sketch of the Superior-General.

On Sunday morning, the laying of the corner stone of the monastery and Church of the Blessed Sacrament, situated on Mount Royal avenue, near St. Denis street, was performed amidst imposing ceremonies. His Grace Archbishop Fabre assisted by the Superior-General, Father Tesnier, and Father Esteven of the new order performed the blessing of the corner stone. The following detailed report is from the Herald:—

Although the services were not to start before 10 o'clock, as early as nine the basement or foundation of the new church was filled with people. There were seats placed in the front part for the ladies, and enough room left behind for the men to stand, but this was not sufficient, as crowds lined the foundation and hundreds watched the proceedings from the large open space which surrounds the building. An altar had been erected in the open air, where mass was celebrated. The choir, in which was represented almost every French Catholic church in the city, sang Gounod's solemn Mass, with full orchestral and brass accompaniment. St. John Baptiste choir was represented by W. Proulx, J. Lagace, D. Pillet, O. Terreaux, N. Beau and J. B. Confois; St. Louis choir by Jos. Hudon, L. Labrie, A. H. Ducheneau, A. Labelle, A. Fournier, J. A. Martin, N. E. Giroux and others. Dr. Avignon supplied the music.

The scene was beautiful with artistic decorations, and the residents of the neighborhood had scores of flags flying from the house tops. The buildings are being erected on the city side of Mount Royal avenue, on the site directly adjoining the premises occupied by the fathers on their first establishment in Montreal. The buildings are to be of rough-hewn gray Montreal stone, and as in the design, will be plain, though substantial in construction. The monastery proper, which faces almost due north on Mount Royal avenue, will have a frontage of 50 and a depth of 30 feet, and will be four stories in height. On both the north-east and south-west sides two wings of three stories in height are to be subsequently added.

In rear of the monastery proper, will be the spacious church, or rather church and chapel, of the order, for the plans allow for the erection of two places of public worship, a lower and upper church.

The lower one, or crypt, will have a seating capacity for nearly 1,000 persons. The height of the ceiling to the church above will be seventeen feet, and the inside dimensions of the church will be 50 by 130 feet. It will have four annexes or small side chapels, in which will be eight apartments devoted to the confessionals. As it is for only temporary use and for early morning and evening services it will be plainly finished, and the altars, though substantial, will also be plain and almost entirely without architectural ornamentation.

The main building, or the church proper, will be a sanctuary of great beauty. Its interior dimensions are 55 by 130 feet, with a vaulted roof fifty feet above the flooring. The Byzantine style of architecture has been strictly adhered to by the architects, who have spared no pains in carrying out the wishes of the Rev. Fathers. The interior, when finished, will be very similar in appearance to the celebrated chapel of the Hotel Dieu. There will be two large galleries and organ loft, one above the other, and the columns supporting these and the broad dome above the sanctuary will be light and graceful. The shafts are round and plain, with ornamental capitals, and in order to offer the least possible obstruction to the view, the columns will be but 18 inches in diameter. A double flooring of marble will be laid, and the balusters, both for the sanctuary and the galleries, will also be of hard woods.

The altars will be of marble and bronze, the design of the main one beneath the dome being of great beauty. Behind the main altar will be a throne, 35 feet in height, exactly similar in design to the one in the church of the mother house of the order, at Paris France. At the top of this throne will be a repository, in which the Holy Sacrament will be continually exposed. At each side and in rear of the throne will be two spiral stairways by which the fathers will gain access to the repository referred to. It is not the intention of the fathers that the interior decorations will be completed at the same time as the church, these will come later, and will be proceeded with as the funds will allow. The entire building, when completed, according to the designs and plans of Messrs. Restier, will have cost between \$40,000 and \$45,000. The main church, which will have a seating capacity for 2,000 people,

ST. BRIDGET'S PARISH.

First Communion and Confirmation.

On Tuesday morning, at seven o'clock, the ceremony of First Communion took place in the St. Bridget's Parish Church. Over 300 children approached the Holy Table. The Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father Lonergan, and the Rev. Father Salmon, parish priest of St. Mary's, was present. At eleven o'clock His Grace the Archbishop administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to a still greater number of young people. The church and altars were beautifully decorated and the music was very fine. It was a pretty sight to see so many young boys and girls bending before the altar and receiving, for the first time, the Bread of Life, and the strength of the Christian soldier in the Holy Confirmation.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

Excursion and Picnic to Highgate Springs by the C. Y. M. S.

The annual excursion and picnic of the Catholic Young Men's Society will take place on the 24th May to Highgate Springs and the prospects for success seem to be brighter this year than ever before, besides the games, races, etc., there will be two lacrosse matches, the Maple and Oriole will play in the morning, and the Victors and Lilacs will play in the afternoon.

The prizes received this year are very valuable all of them being gold or silver cups and medals. Amongst those who have already donated prizes for the games are: J. J. Ryan, Pres. C. Y. M. S.; Jus. O'Brien, Hon. Ed. Murphy, J. J. Curran, M. P., Dr. Hingston, M. Foron, W. E. Doran, H. Birk & Co., Mr. White, Mr. Dwane, E. Kennedy, Ald. Cunningham, F. J. McKenna, M. P., Ryan, J. Bolger, N. J. Britton and W. Allen. Two special trains will leave Bonaventure Station at 9 a. m., in the morning and return at 7 p. m. Mr. Stonegrave Sup. of the C. V. R., placed a private car at the disposal of the president for the committee and the invited guests.

A GRAND CONCERT

By the St. Mary's C. Y. M. S.

On Monday evening, the 16th inst., the members of St. Mary's Catholic Young Men's Society gave a splendid musical and literary entertainment in their hall, on the corner of Craig and Pinet streets. The stage and surroundings were beautifully decorated, and the seats were all filled by an appreciative and enthusiastic audience. Prominent amongst the invited were the Rev. Father Salmon, P.P. of St. Mary's, and the Rev. Father O'Donnell, the curate. Father Salmon is to be congratulated upon the great and good work he has done since his arrival in that East-End parish, and not the least of these is the successful and prosperous society for Catholic young men that he has so encouraged and assisted.

The programme of Monday evening was lengthy and varied. The remarks of the president, Mr. Bannerman, were timely and encouraging. His address was "short and sweet," his ideas practical and couched in very choice language. Between the first and second parts, Mr. W. E. Burgess convulsed the audience with his wonderful display of ventriloquism and ventriloquist imitations. To refer to each item of the well-executed and faithfully carried out programme would be simply a repetition of the same adjectives, good, splendidly and successfully. The following is the programme and the mere mention of the items and the names of the performers should suffice to indicate what an enjoyable evening was spent:—
Song, Mr. James Kennedy, Sketch—
"How I Recited my first piece," Mr. W. E. Burgess, Ventriloquist and Humorous. Song, Mr. F. Harkins. Recitation—"Maclean's Child," Mr. P. Hunt, Banjo Solo, Mr. J. H. Parker. Specialties, Mr. R. B. Milloy, Comedian and Mimic. Song—"Irish through and through," Master William Kennedy. Violin Solo, Mr. Wm. Phelan.
Song, Mr. E. Duquette; Irish Jig, Messrs. Eug. Mitchell & E. D. Egan, Song, Mr. John Rodick. Second Part—Merry Moments—"Ventriloquism and Ventriloquist Imitations," Mr. W. E. Burgess, Song—"When the Tide comes in," Master Joseph Dillon, Recitation, Mr. N. J. McIlhose, Song (Comic), Mr. W. J. Traynor, Piano Solo, Mr. E. Brennan, Sketch, "The Bowery Bum and the Broadway Swell," (by request), Messrs. Milloy & Hunt, Song, Mr. E. Duquette, Banjo Solo, Mr. J. H. Parker. Song, Mr. John Rodick, Monologue, "How I was Entertained at an Evening Party," Mr. W. E. Burgess, Sailors' Hornpipe, Messrs. Mitchell & Flynn.

A. D. McDougall has been appointed

governor of the Brookville jail, and Mrs. McDougall matron, in place of John White, resigned.

Forty of the leaders rioters in Lads, Poland, including a number of Socialist agitators, have been sentenced to long terms in prison.

Argument of the Manitobans school case will take place before the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council at the meetings commencing June 15.

THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SACRAMENT.

The congregation of the "Very Holy Sacrament," is of but recent foundation.

The Rev. Father Eymard in 1856 founded the order in Paris. Father Eymard decided to devote his new order for the greater honor of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, a project which when laid before the Holy See received the sanction of His Holiness Pope Pius IX. In 1863, six years after its foundation, the Holy Pontiff granted permission to the Fathers to take perpetual vows. And it was Pius IX, who again in 1875 gave his full approval to the constitution of the order. In 1868 the new order suffered a serious loss in the death of its venerable founder. The society continued to flourish, having at times besides the parent house in Paris, houses at Rome, Marseille and Brussels. The noviciates of the order was in the Belgian capital. The rules recognize no corporal punishments but directs all efforts towards the perpetual adoration of Christ. The society is principally composed of priests, but lay brothers are also admitted. Each of the members has to kneel three hours, two in the day and one at night in adoration before the Holy Sacrament, while the priests recite appropriate offices. The chapters of the order are opened day and night to give the faithful opportunities to assist at the perpetual adoration practised by the members, and wherever houses have been established the society, has sprung immediately to great favor with both the ordinary clergy and laity.

The very Rev. Father Tesnier, the Superior General of the order, is a worthy successor to the venerable founder. He has his head quarters at the parent house in France, but to show his appreciation of the great god to follow from the establishment of a house in Canada he came to Montreal, to be personally present at the laying of the corner stone of the monastery and church, and was present at Sunday's ceremonies.

THE ORDER IN MONTREAL. The establishment of the order of the Very Holy Sacrament in Montreal is comparatively recent date. On November 21, 1890, the Rev. Father Esteven, with four other Fathers, arrived here from Paris. His Grace Archbishop Fabre granted permission for the establishment of a branch house in Montreal. Father Esteven secured the building, No. 50 Mount Royal avenue, at present occupied by the order, and a sanctuary for the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament was constructed and consecrated built. Success has crowned the mission. The original little chapel long since ceased to be able to accommodate all these who desired to visit it, which led to the project to construct a monastery and large church, the laying of the corner stone of which was accomplished yesterday.

OBITUARY. Mrs. Quinn. Universal regret was expressed in the city on Wednesday, the 11th inst., at the announcement of the death of Mrs. Quinn, widow of the late Michael Quinn, a member of the family of the TRUE WITNESS. The deceased lady, who had been suffering from (grippe) since January last, passed away on Wednesday morning, surrounded by her sorrowing family. Her illness was attended with much suffering, which she endured with Christian fortitude. She was in her sixty-seventh year, when it pleased God to call her away from this world of sorrow to the reward, certain and unending, which He has promised to "the good and faithful servant." She had the great consolation of receiving all the sacred rites of the Church of which she was a life-long and devoted member. Her funeral was a life of constant duty nobly fulfilled; an affectionate wife and a fond mother; in a word, she was an example of what has been properly styled "God's fairest creature," a good woman.

The funeral took place on Friday morning last, from her late residence, corner of Park and Mount Royal Avenue, to St. Patrick's Church and thence to Cote des Neiges Cemetery. The cortege was lengthy, and the large attendance of friends and sympathizers indicated the high esteem in which the deceased lady was held. The church was heavily draped, and the altars, pillars and galleries were decorated with the ornaments of mourning. A grand Requiem Mass was celebrated at five o'clock, being offered by the Rev. Father Toupin, S.S., of St. Patrick's, assisted by the Rev. Father McCallan, S.S., as deacon, and the Rev. Father James Callaghan, S.S., as sub-deacon. After the *Libera* the funeral procession proceeded to the place of interment, where the relatives and friends bid a last farewell to the remains of one whom, in life, they loved as a mother, or respected and honored as a kindly and devoted friend. In the words of an Irish-Canadian bard, we can say:—"Naught can avail her now but prayer," and while tendering our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family, in the hour of their sorrow, we desire to offer up a sincere prayer for the eternal repose of the gentle soul that has gone from our midst. May her rest be unending and glorious!

Church Services.

The Sunday Morning, the new Sunday publications of the hours of service in the different city churches. Amongst others it informs us that at St. Patrick's Church there is "Mass with Sermon, 8 a.m.; High Mass with Sermon and Benediction, 7.30 p.m." This announcement has been published for three Sundays consecutively, consequently it is not a mere lapsus plumarum.

The Childs Drexel home for union printers was opened at Colorado Springs yesterday. Mr. George W. Childs spoke briefly and other speeches were made.