

WHO MAKE THE BEST CONVERTS?

Asked suddenly, "What kind of Protestants make the best converts?" the hereditary Catholic answers almost instinctively, "The Anglicans, or Protestant Episcopalians." These have retained much both of Catholic doctrine and ritual. Within their ranks is a strong and constantly increasing element which likes to be called "the Catholic party." The houses of worship under its control are almost indistinguishable from those of Catholics; it believes in Christian education; it has religious orders of men and women; and Catholic-wise, it gravitates to the poor. There is probably no distinctive Catholic doctrine at which it hesitates over much, except the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope; and Lord Halifax, the leader of the Church Union, would find there not altogether re-affirmation of Pope Leo XIII. of previous Papal decisions against the validity of Anglican orders.

The religious life of the sincere Anglican or Protestant Episcopalians finds its only logical termination in the peace and certitude of the Catholic Church. Most Catholics know so many fervent converts who a few years ago were fervent Episcopalians that we naturally look to them as the most promising field for recruits. But the Rev. M. I. Bearman, S. J., of Chicago, a most experienced missionary, answering the question put at the outset of this article says:

"It seems to me that converts from Lutheranism are, as a rule, the best. Lutherans seem to possess more truth than other Protestants; and they seem, when converted, to bear more easily the obligations of Catholic life."

Whereupon, our esteemed contemporary, the Catholic Transcript, of Hartford, Conn., comments: "There are not a few who will acquiesce in the opinion here expressed. The reason for the Lutheran's readiness to accept the teaching of the Catholic Church may be attributed to one or more causes, but, in the last analysis, it will be seen that early in life the Lutheran child is inured to the practice of his faith. He goes to a school from which religion is not banished. Nay, religion is the very life of the Lutheran school."

A well-read Catholic at once remembers the school controversy in Wisconsin, nearly a decade and a half past, where a coalition of Catholics and Lutherans on the school question took that State for the time being out of the Republican and into the Democratic ranks. As a rule, Germans, Catholic or Protestant, cannot conceive of education without religion; and the Lutheran parochial school, like the Catholic, in a new settlement, goes up brick for brick, or stone for stone with the house of worship. The Lutherans in the United States have probably as many children in their parochial schools proportionately as have the Catholics in theirs; and while, among the Episcopalians, there is evidence of divided counsels on the school question, there is unanimity among the Lutherans for denominational schools.

The Lutherans revere the Crucifix as a reminder of man's redemption. Luther himself, even after his apostasy, proclaimed the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mother of God. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden the churches divorced at the time of the so-called reformation to Protestant uses, retained much of their Catholic aspect; while a larger proportion of Catholic doctrine lingered among the people than in Germany itself. We all remember the Christian and fatherly address of the German Emperor William to his sons before they were confined as members of the Lutheran body.

A correspondent of our esteemed contemporary, the Catholic Transcript, has a letter well worth quoting in this connection:

Dear Sir:—There is a Lutheran church near here, recently built, which has a large cross on its steeple. This is a new departure, at least as far as my experience goes, and I was wondering if it is the opening wedge, and if other Protestant churches will follow this example.

This Lutheran church has quite an interesting little history. Some years ago the pastor preached strenuously against Freemasonry. Nearly half of his congregation were Masons, and these left the church at once. As the pastor refused them burial in the Lutheran cemetery they bought a piece of property adjoining the church, which they turned into a grave yard for their own. The faithful remaining members have just built themselves the new church which is crowned by a cross.

SUNMAN, IND.
This instance is confirmation strong of Father Bearman's experience, showing as it does that "private judgment" is much more in abeyance on religious matters in Luther's own special sect than in many other Protestant bodies, and that consequently Lutherans find it easier to submit to authority as embodied in the Catholic Church.

But who among us, especially in New England, has not known of fervent Catholics from the Congregational, Methodist and Baptist denominations? Nay the writer can find none to excel in unquestioning faith and exemplary practice, a group of converts who were Unitarians. The Spirit of God bloweth where it listeth. The sincere Protestant, of whatever denomination, who lives up to all the light he has and holds himself in readiness to do God's will at any cost is sure to make a good Catholic. Hosts of such Protestants have come into the Church in America from every denomination, often putting to shame by their piety and sacrifice those to whom the Faith is an inheritance.—Boston Pilot.

The smart of poverty is allayed even more by one word of true sympathy than by the alms we give. Alms coldly and harshly given irritate rather than soothe. Even when we can not give, words of kindness are a precious balm; and when we can give, they are the salt and seasoning of our alms.

WORDS OF A PROTESTANT MAYOR

The Seneca (Kansas) Tribune gives the following fine tribute of a Protestant mayor to the Catholic Church uttered in presence of Bishop Lillis of Lawrence and an assembly of priests and laymen under the auspices of the Federation of Catholic Societies of Nemaha county.

The Mayor spoke in part as follows: "You represent the mother Church of the Christian era—the pioneer Christian missionary organization of all the ages. Born at the foot of the cross, your nineteen centuries of holy endeavor give glorious proof that your grand mission shall never cease till time shall be no more, and till your work shall be crowned amid the glories of the eternal morning."

"You never wait for civilization to conquer the waste places, but you move forward and civilization follows in your path. You do not pause to await the movements of commerce, but you cross the deserts, the seas and the mountains, and commerce finds its way where you have led."

"So long as the starry banner of 'our own Columbia' kisses our skies it will be remembered that a brave Catholic mariner, under the auspices of a devoted Catholic queen, first sailed in American seas, and first planted a Christian emblem upon American soil. That mariner and his queen 'built' better than they knew. Your flag was planted on this continent more than four centuries ago, and the savage wilds of 1492 will soon be the homes of more than one hundred and fifty million people, whose commerce girdles the globe; whose missions, homes, schools and church spires, with the ever-inspiring cross, are blessed of God from the Polar regions of British Columbia to the sun-gilded mountain peak of Mexico. How little we know that a train of momentous events may start from one holy thought, from one heroic deed—what grand lessons we learn from brave self-sacrifice for others."

"Your history is a most honorable one in American annals. Your name is upon the Declaration of American Independence. Your brothers fought with 'Marion and his men'; with Gates at Saratoga; were with Washington at Valley Forge, and helped win the crowning victory at Yorktown."

"An insult to the American flag, an act of war touching our national interests, always find you ready to shed your blood and give your lives for American honor and American liberty. So long as the heroic deeds of Shields, Sherman, Sigel, Rosecrans, Sheridan and Corcoran endure in the annals of American fidelity and courage, the Americanism of your membership will remain as a synonym for national patriotism and honor."

"You are not believers in race suicide. You obey the Scripture in junction—'multiply and replenish the earth.' Your most enduring work is in the purification of the hearts and the homes of the people. You do not teach that men can be made pure by legislative enactment, but you lead all to Him Who said: 'Come unto Me and I will give you rest.'"

"Not upon fields of battle, not in hot disputes upon the rostrum, but in the tender ministrations of the home; in the mother and child; in the wise counsels of the Church, stand your towers of strength, your citadels of beauty and wisdom. Speaking as a Protestant of Pilgrim origin, it is a privilege to say that your religious zeal brings to mind the enthusiasm and love of St. Peter, and the eloquence and courage of St. Paul. It is no mean honor to be placed by you upon this programme, and it is a genuine pleasure, in the name of the City Council and in behalf of our people, to publicly thank you for giving to this city the honor of the first Catholic congress in Kansas, and in behalf of the city of Seneca to bid you earnest welcome to our hearts and homes, and to bid you all God-speed in your efforts for the upbuilding of humanity and the widening of the spheres of love and fraternity on earth."

OPPRESSION OF THE POOR.

According to God's commandments we are rigidly enjoined to the obligation of giving to everyone that which is due him. Therefore, injustice of any and every description is a sin against God's holy law. When this injustice assumes the form of oppression, especially of the poor, it then becomes a sin which appeals to Heaven for vengeance.

Oppression of the poor, therefore, is defined as an unjust, cruel and tyrannical treatment of inferiors but particularly of the widow, the orphan and the needy. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say, notwithstanding its rightful character, that it is one of the most common sins of the day.

It has been made common by our modern methods of commercialism and the money-and spirit which has seized upon the people. Justice has been flung to the winds. Business has become a system of sharp practices the largest returns going to those who are most proficient in its deceptions and pretensions. In the multitude of poor may be counted thousands of victims of its shrewd manipulators. Widows and orphans are fleeced by its iron-hearted experts with no qualms of conscience. Honesty and honor have given place to their opposites, and financial obligation knows no higher sense of satisfaction than that which the courts can enforce.

Such are the conditions. But there will come a day of reckoning. If it does not come to the sabbatic devotees of Mammon in this life they must face it in the next. This is certain upon the authority of God Himself. In the twenty-second chapter of Exodus we read: "You shall not hurt a widow or an orphan. If you hurt them, they will cry to Me, and I will hear their cry and My rage shall be kindled; and I will strike you with the sword." Furthermore, God thus exhorts us against this sin through the Prophet Jeremiah: "Execute judgment and justice, and deliver him that is oppressed, out of the hands of the oppressor; and afflict not the stranger,

the fatherless and the widow, nor oppress them unjustly."—Church Progress.

INTERVIEW WITH PIUS X

A NON-CATHOLIC IS HONORED WITH A PRIVATE AUDIENCE.

Not only is Pope Pius X accessible at all times to his own people, but he is also very kind in receiving non-Catholics, for whom he has a very warm place in his heart, as his children just outside the fold. All Americans of whatever creed, who go to Rome have one consuming desire and that is to see the Pope; but not all are as fortunate as the non-Catholic young lady in the following chronicle who in a letter tells of a most delightful little visit which she enjoyed with the Holy Father.

The circumstances which led up to the private interview were as follows: Some years ago the young lady, who is a resident of Chicago, befriended a poor Italian who was eking out a livelihood by teaching there. Later she saw a sign of him, and two years ago while in Italy was surprised to meet her quondam teacher in the person of a prominent Count. He had come into his inheritance, and as he is a cousin of Cardinal Rampolla he offered to secure her an interview with the Pope. On her visit to Rome this summer she decided to take advantage of his kind offer, and the charming description of her visit to the Vatican is as follows:

Rome, August 1, 1905.
I received my invitation yesterday, hours from 9 to 12 a. m. I left my party in the forenoon at 10 o'clock and took a carriage by the hour, drove to a church supply store, bought rosaries, then to the hotel to dress. I had on black shoes and skirt and belt, a white shirt-waist and hat, which latter I now took off and pinned a long lace shawl on most picturesquely, put on my black silk coat and black high collar, no gloves, according to regulation, no handkerchief in sight, no watch or rings. Then I went up the stairs to the rooms—all the girls in the party wanted some—and drove to the Vatican. My driver had been telling the others waiting in front of the hotel whether I was bound, and when I came out between the long curtains which serve as doors here, they all arose and bowed, likewise the hotel employes. I felt like a church dignitary, I assure you.

Twenty minutes later, at 11:10, I stopped at the bronze gate of the Vatican, walked through the lines of Swiss guardsmen and up the stairs into the private court. From here I was shown up five long flights of stairs, sixty steps each low and wide, of light marble, at each landing were guardsmen with pikes who saluted me. At last I came into the first ante-chamber where the sentinels were pacing to and fro by twos; from there into another curtained red silk room, where three men in wine colored silk suits received me and escorted me into a third room, where Monsignor Bressan, the private secretary, came to me and told me that foreign matters made it impossible for His Holiness to see me and he would take my message.

This did not suit me at all and I said, "I must see him myself," and could not tell M. Bressan my message. I said a few minutes would do and so I was turned over to a tall young man in full dress who was talking to a monk in brown and he took me into room No. 4 where I sat a quarter of an hour admiring the beautiful gobelins carved ivory crucifix and red silk lining of the room.

Suddenly a whole family of nobles called in and were taken through to another waiting room. After five minutes more a foreign embassy, prelates and monks, etc., all came out, in lively discussion and left after hurrying to and fro and carrying documents in and out of the private secretary's room. Next a general appeared, all stiff with medals and gold and beckoned me into room No. 5, where a beautiful gold throne stood, the arms of which were angels and the back a dove in rays of gold, the room was done in red velvet, chairs and all. Here the military dignitaries parade and I waited with some Bishops.

The Italian family now swept out and I began counting the stars on the uniform of the general when a master of ceremony, all in uniform, appeared with a cane and a knob on it and after a few moments the general came to me and announced that the Holy Father wished to see Signorina Maria A. I walked through six more ante-chambers, he ahead, and in each a dignitary in purple, bowing and pointing to the next room. At last the large library was opened and the general fell on his knees, pointed at me and cried out: "Be seated, your Holiness, to present Signorina Maria A. I could not see the Pope on account of the open door but when I stepped to the side of the general (on his knees) I saw Pius Tenth on a little raised platform in a white broadcloth gown and cap, long golden chains with green stone cross and his famous Peter's ring on his hand.

I bowed deeply and he immediately made a sign that I should not attempt to kneel, but drew a chair up to his and said: "Come and sit down beside me and be comfortable." I ascended the steps and the general left us and shut the door so that we were all alone. The Pope looked very kind and gentle and said: "Did you not understand me? Do sit down."

"After you, Holy Father," I replied and he smiled and sat down. I sat close beside him and I saw him as near as if I had sat on a sofa with him. He is small and chubby, very good and noble looking, fine character lines in his face. I said: "Excuse me if my Italian is poor and I do not know what to say. I am an American."

"Oh! I know all about you," he replied. "My friend wrote to me and said you were coming. How are they all?" Now my tongue went pretty fast and I had a quarter of an hour's chat with him. He complimented me on my Italian, and said it was "Carina," which means 'nice' or 'dear' and "so

was I." Then he asked about my home and travels, all the news of Venice and laughed heartily at some things I said. I took out my photographs, which were hidden in my dress, as I was not allowed to have anything in my hands when entering, and he wrote a Benediction on each for me to see for the poor artists. Then I asked him to bless my rosaries and he said:

"Why I did that when you spoke of them before."

"Did you?" said I, "I did not notice it and I thought you would touch them and I could see you do it."

He laughed and put out his hands, gathered them all in a bunch around my wrist, where they hung and said: "There now, watch me do it, here is the best thorough blessing I can give."

I thanked him and said I would now go as he was so busy. He replied I must come again when I came to Rome and he was glad to meet an American who spoke such good Italian. When I arose to go he raised his hand, and as I liked him well, I said: "I know it is considered the right thing here to kiss your hand," but before I could finish my sentence he said: "You do not need to do it my dear," I took his hand saying: "But I like you because you have been very kind to me and helped the poor artist." Then I pressed it lightly against my cheek and said: "Good bye." He laughed evidently amused, and said: "A rivederci!" ("Hope to see you again). I bowed and went out. Now all the people were watching me closely in the adjoining room and I heard some one say: "She is an American." "I ok out, she understands you," said the General. "She speaks Italian." I left quietly without a word more and well pleased with my novel experience.—Catholic Columbian.

MARRIED.

MCMANON FRANKLY.—In Orlinda, on Oct. 13, at the Church of the Anze's Guardian, Dr. John McManon, of New York, to Miss Mary Amelia Franky, of Orlinda.

DIED.

FORBES.—A London, Ont., on Oct. 9, 1905, widow of the late Wm. Forbes, in her seventy-fifth year. May she rest in peace!

MULLARKEY.—In East Nisouri on Sept. 28, Mr. John Mullarkey, aged ninety-two years. May he rest in peace!

FALLOU.—Of your charity pray for the repose of the soul of the late Mrs. James Falloou, who died in London, Ontario, on Friday, Oct. 13th. May his soul rest in peace!

GOLDEN.—Of your charity pray for the soul of Madam Gold, nee Madam de la Roche, who died in London, Ontario, on Friday, Oct. 13th. May his soul rest in peace!

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