

DIFFICULTIES OF A CONVERT.

Keeping the Faith in the Face of Family Persecution—To Mass on a Hand-Car—Catholic Isolation in Arkansas.

A few weeks ago after we moved to Arkansas, I was informed that my parents had decided to come here partly to get me away from the Church. They thought I would get better if I did not run around so much. Before we came I had gone to Mass twice a month, once at home and once in a town four miles away and occasionally visited my friends for a day or two at a time; the getting better meant that I am crazy as long as I am a Catholic, and that if I should lose my Faith I would be well. Of course, they do not realize what they are doing when they reason so, but it is very common and it is just such reasoning that is so sore a thorn in the side of a convert to the Faith and to some who are not converts. I suspected from the first that part of the motive in coming here from Ohio was to get me out of reach of the Church. In one sense I was glad of the opportunity to show them that I would be essentially the same whether I went to Mass or not. As to being crazy, if I am so I am incurable, for I keenly realize my condition and deliberately step in it. I was a little surprised to hear that part of the motive acknowledged so frankly, however. They had told me, also, before we came that there wasn't a Catholic within twenty-five or thirty miles of the place; they mentioned it more than once; I remembered it very distinctly for I was very much alive to everything I could learn on the subject while we were preparing to come. I studied the directory to find out exactly where I would be "at" as to Church privileges, when I reached my new home. I have found out conclusively that they must have deliberately lied to me in the matter. My father and sister are physicians and often stayed and visited a couple of hours at a time, because the people were so frank and friendly, as Catholics are apt to be; I have heard my sister speak of going to Finlays and the good times she had there. Mrs. Finlay told me that hers was the only house my sister, Dr. Lill, ever visited, and the only one at which she called to say good by when she left the town. My father and sister were here two years before the family came; but they were at Searcey, the county town. We settled four miles away where there seemed to be a good location for a doctor. My people are good, honest, intelligent people and fairly well educated; but are all warped out of shape on the religious side; they probably consider it no wrong to lie to children, enemies or lunatics, and placed me into the latter class. I had no reason to not believe what they told me and did not look for any Catholics here, but felt that I must stir around and do something to make my presence known to my Catholic neighbors however far away they might be. I had no money to get to Little Rock, the nearest church, so I wrote to the Bishop, telling him I was in his dominion without money to go very far to Mass. I thought, possibly, a priest might pass near here on his way between his missions and might easily come here if he knew of me. I told him, too, that I could not look to my people for help in that direction because they were so inimical to the Church. I think that was some time in January. Week after week passed and as I did not hear from my letter, I finally concluded that the Bishop had tossed it into the waste basket. Not more than two or three weeks after I wrote to the Bishop, I was over to a neighbor's house, making a little visit and we got to talking a little about religion and it soon came out that I was a Catholic; it mostly always does come out; I don't seem very well able to keep it in, and I don't know that I try very hard. The lady herself is a "saint," believing in Joe Smith and the Book of Mormon, and yet not a Mormon as she repeatedly assured me. It did not seem to hurt her very much, for she is a very nice person; nor did it seem to help her, either, because she is not so much better than the rest of us. When she learned that I was a Catholic, she told me that the engineer on the Searcey Branch was a Catholic also. The Searcey Branch is a small railroad eight miles long, made to connect the county town to the big road, the Iron Mountain; it has a little engine to run from Searcey here and a mule car from here to West Point, the other terminus. The lady must have thought me crazy or very ill-mannered when she told me about the engineer being a Catholic, for I stared at her in blank surprise, and asked her two or three times was she sure. I fancied the engineer very likely an "ought-to-be" one and my people had not heard of him, but then she told me that he had given her husband books to read, relating to the Church, and that certainly sounded practical. I have learned since that he is such an aggressive missionary Catholic Pole that it does me good to think of the hard hits he has given some of the people about here in religious affairs. I heard of his warning the blood and stirring the temper of a "saint" who is supposed to never get mad or have any other inclination to sin. I always did admire the Poles, the same as the Irish, for keeping the Faith so nobly; this is certainly a good specimen. I finally concluded that it must be so, and thought I would very soon go over to the engine or depot and get acquainted with him. Time passed, and the proper opportunity did not come. I was afraid my people would notice it, and take steps to prevent a probable

conspiracy. But May-day the Searcey people came down here to picnic and there were many people about the depot all day, so I seized that opportunity to go and seek acquaintance with Mr. Finlay. I was getting uneasy about my Easter duty, for it was already two weeks after Easter, and I seemed not nearer than six months ago getting to Mass. I had heard from a neighbor only a few days before that Mr. Finlay intended getting a priest to come to Searcey some time this spring and that he knew about me and intended letting me know; but then, I thought, Searcey is four miles away and I have no money to go on the train and I hate to walk across a strange country. It costs a quarter to get to Searcey on the train and another quarter to get back; it doesn't cost me anything now. I went to see him anyway and found that the arrangements for Mass were made, and that the time was the next Saturday, and that they had been fretting about how they were to let me know. They thought best to not write me a letter; yet, still, how was I to know? But lo! That, too, had been provided for as by the work of a fairy. The section-boss on the Searcey railroad, who is also a Catholic, but, I regret to say, not very practical, had arranged to take me on his velocipede. Yes, and almost the first thing Mr. Finlay told me after he had climbed down out of his engine, was that the Bishop had referred my letter to him; or not to him directly, but to Father Brady, the priest who usually came up here, and he had sent it to Mr. Finlay. And so, I thought, you are the White county Pope. I spent a very anxious week, waiting for the eventful Friday, for I was to go on Friday and stay all night at Mr. Finlay's, since I had to steal off and could not well accomplish it sufficiently early in the morning and the trains were all too near meal-time. Mr. Finlay had told me, too, that he might get a letter from the priest changing the time for Mass, so I was on edge all the time, wondering how they would get word to me if it were changed. In the meantime, Mr. Devlin, the section boss, had gone to work on the road. His eight miles did not keep him busy all the time. Yet I feared he might not be able to take me. But I need not have worried for Providence was arranging it. Thursday a show very charmingly came along, and, under cover of listening to the band, I went out and very easily found my way to Mr. Devlin's to ascertain if there was any news. That week, too, I had a couple of beats, a thing that has not happened to me before in a long time. Any extra stirring around on my part might have been attributed to that, moreover, a neighbor's girl came over several evenings for treatment and I would go "a piece" with her when she went home, and come back by the depot to try and get a glimpse of Mr. Finlay. Mr. Devlin was not at home when I got there and his wife did not know whether he could take me now or not, since he was working on the road. Mrs. Devlin is not a Catholic, but she is a quiet, mind-your-own-business person, and I easily confided my secret to her. She thought my people were foolish to remember their sentiment so long. I promised to return again in the evening after Mr. Devlin came home from his work. The band began to play again about 7 o'clock, and I started towards it, but soon found myself at the depot, looking for Mr. Finlay, whose train comes down again at this time. There he was leaning against a pile of pea boxes and not another soul near, just like it had been all pre-arranged. I hastily told my business. The time for Mass had not been changed. But how about Mr. Devlin working? "He will take you just the same; he will not work tomorrow afternoon." I do not know yet whether he stopped his work on purpose to take me. I was too much occupied with other things then to ask, and have had no opportunity since it was all right then as Mr. Devlin and I had arranged a week ago, for I had gone to see him as soon as possible after seeing Mr. Finlay the first time; but then I had promised to go down to Devlin's again and must do so for fear of a misunderstanding. I went, although it was now quite dark, and Mr. Devlin lived a half-mile down the railroad track past some woods. I felt afraid, but said a short prayer and started with a pale, patient, three-days old moon for company. Three o'clock Friday, the time for departure, came at last, and I started for the bend of the road, beyond the town, the place of meeting. I met Mr. Devlin exactly at the bend, but he was walking and told me he saw some boys craw fishing a short way ahead but could not tell whether they were Ken-sett boys or not, so I walked on past them, for we did not want any of the Kennett people to know of my going to Searcey on the velocipede. I walked about a mile, when he overtook me and I gathered my clothes around me to keep them from getting greasy or tangled in the wheels and got on and away we sped. The road was not very smooth, and I felt fearful of being shaken off, but it wasn't. We met a wagon and Mr. Devlin said, "Keep your face turned away from them." As we got to town there is a sharp turn and we had to "lean in" to keep our one-sided boat from capsizing. We had arranged that Mr. Devlin was to take a note from me to my people on his way home, telling them where I was, why I was there and when I would return. I wanted them to know, but not in time to defeat my object. We concluded, however, that we would rather they would not know that he had anything to do with

it, since he was a neighbor. Then I thought of Mr. Simms, an extra operator at the depot, filling the place of the regular, who is sick. Well, the velocipede did not capsize and no other casualty happened, so I got to Mr. Finlay's all right. There are not half a score of Catholics in Searcey, so we had Mass at his house with the dressing-case for an altar. Father Brady came up from Little Rock on the 8 o'clock train. Few as the Catholics were some of them did not get to Mass. They wanted to make their Easter duty very bad indeed until they got the opportunity. "This ever thus." "If not so frequent, would not this be strange? That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still." We had a pleasant visit as well as a profitable one. We walked out in town, visited the great spring, took a drink and moved on according to directions; this is the springiest place I ever heard of; about every fifty miles there is the best spring in the world for rheumatism, stomach trouble and nerves, and there are as many funerals here as anywhere. Everyone knows of Hot Springs, Ark., but when you get here it seems to have no more prestige than Gum Springs, or Armstrong Springs, or Searcey Springs, or Sweet Springs. I came home on the noon train, penniless as I was and I did not ride the bumpers, either. I rode in the coach with the quality, college professors and directors, Bishops, preachers, etc. This is a great place for colleges, too. The coach was a small affair with seats along the side like an old-time horse car and was but little larger, but it had its pen at one end for the "niggers." I can't get used to such things; they always set me to reflecting. This is a great nation, altogether non-partisan, non-sectarian and impartial in its government, but then you mustn't be a Catholic or a "nigger." We might make a new deal for you in that case. I read in one of the "great dailies" no longer ago than this morning that the governor of Mississippi vetoed a bill for a reformatory to be attached to the penitentiary in which the prisoners would receive two hours a day schooling on the ground that it would cost too much since no whites would be benefited by it! The only boys in the penitentiary under seventeen being colored and of the most vicious class, it would look to my simple, old-fashioned Catholic mind that because they needed it badly was all the more reason why they should have it. Maybe if I were a "new" modern philanthropist or reformer I would be able to see all these things right! But, some way, I am just contrary enough to be glad that I have brains enough to be in the depressed minority in some cases; I am used to it and expect it. I must not forget to mention the good times I had with the children at Mr. Finlay's. I enjoyed so much noticing the difference of disposition in many, earnest Willie, the oldest, a lad of twelve, Charlie, the quiet, good-natured observer, Manuel, or "boss," the bold, witty one, Lucy, the eight-year-old little woman, Veronica, or "Jess," the papa's curly-haired favorite, sweet, little, brown-haired, three-year-old Maggie, the mother's pet, and baby Leo. They are very bright, active and clever children. Father Brady, a big, young, black-haired Irishman, who talks with a slight brogue, very pleasant to hear. I told him what I had thought about not hearing from the Bishop and he took it up very quickly, and said, "Oh, no, he always pays attention to such things; he did not write to you thinking you would probably not get the letter." I think myself it would very likely have been so, particularly if his business had been hinted at on the envelope. It has been eleven years since my baptism and my people will not contemplate it coolly yet. They still insist that the priest who baptized me imposed on me some way; the circumstances of my baptism were peculiarly adverse, and I would not blame any one, knowing them, to stumble on my individual case and hesitate for five or six, or eight or even ten years, but when it gets to be eleven it seems to me they might begin to look into this thing which the child has found and see what it is she sticks to so tenaciously under such trying circumstances and which enables her to so well keep down a naturally wild and gipsy-like temperament; I often think, myself, that if I had found the Old Church, like Madame Diss Debar or Margaret L. Shepard; but having found the Truth it is abundantly able to hold me steady, and the same bold gipsy qualities, turned in the right direction make me what my Catholic friends will persist in terming a little too stiff and strict a Catholic. If my friends find my conversion so very strange I would like to cite them to the many thousands of others who did and are doing every day, under every variety of circumstances, the same thing I did. But they will not hear me. I have quite a number of good books, quite a number, considering my age and income, but they will not read them. I often think of St. Monica and her illustrious son and am consoled. I have trouble with my Catholic friends, too, some of the same ones who scoffed and sneered at me for going to Mass every morning and receiving Holy Communion every Sunday and holiday when I had opportunity, now say it doesn't hurt me a bit to live away from the Church. I have heard of spoiled converts; if my experience continues to the end as it has been in the past I don't think I will ever be spoiled. No one has yet thought it worth his while to try to give me the idea that I have done any-

thing extraordinary or am likely to do so. I have been made to feel very bad at times by my Catholic friends and have sighed "O, that an enemy had done this." I did not come here deliberately and I think I can keep my Faith for a while under these circumstances, as they are the very same under which I found the Truth—no church, no priest and very few Catholic people. I have my Catholic books and periodicals now and read them and feel more fellowship with the persons and principles I read about in them than with those around me. I know nothing can take the place of the Mass and the sacraments, but it is the will of God that I am here, and that will I am following to the extent of my poor ability. So I feel at peace with myself and all mankind. I conclude that any one can be a Catholic if he desires and can get to Mass once in a while, however adverse the circumstance.—Camilla, in Catholic Universe. BISHOP SPALDING'S TEMPERANCE TALK. What I am, I owe to a thousand influences not my own, and I am the shallowest of men if I imagine that it is possible for me to take care of myself without caring for others. What injures the neighborhood, the city in which I live, injures me, and when my faith or my country suffer wrong I also am wronged. A man becomes a total abstainer, not necessarily because he has been a drunkard, or has special reason for fear he may become one, but because he loves his fellow-man, his religion, his country; because he pities women who are the wives of brutal husbands and the mothers of the helpless children of drunken fathers, and mothers who are the victims of men for whom love means only lust. Though he does not condemn those who go no farther than to persuade men not to drink in saloons, or not to invite others to drink, or to drink nothing more intoxicating than wine or beer, still he holds, since alcoholic liquors are not necessary to health, and since they are the cause of three-fourths of the crime and misery which disgrace religion and society, that the proper thing is to abstain altogether, because, though we grant that many may drink with impunity, yet a number of moderate drinkers will infallibly produce a given number of drunkards, and another given number of incomplete and crippled lives, as a given number of typhus fever cases will cause a given number of deaths. I, of course, speak of countries where drunkenness is a national vice, for if I lived in Spain I should not think of practicing or preaching total abstinence. But where drunkenness is a national vice, moderate drinking tends to excessive drinking, and to encourage moderate drinking is one way of encouraging drunkenness. And in our country, at least, efforts to induce people to drink only wine or beer are not likely to produce good results. The adulteration of beer, which makes it more difficult to get pure beer than pure whiskey, and which in a government like this cannot be prevented, renders beer more hurtful, both morally and physically, than probably any other drink. Between this stuff and the pure light beers of Germany and Belgium there is nothing in common but the name. There may be no worse criminals than those who adulterate food and drink, but it is easier to punish the president of a bank than one of these. Another consideration which has a bearing upon the work of temperance societies may be brought from the relationship which exists between the occupation and mode of life of people and the temptation to drink. In great cities allurements to dissipation is not only stronger and more constant, but the wretchedness, the scant food, the impure air that so often in crowded districts surround the poor, superinduce a chronic state of bodily enfeeblement which makes the craving for stimulants a physical disease. Among such populations it is manifest that moral remedies must necessarily in great measure prove ineffective, and if any great improvement is to be hoped for, it must come from a change of work and place. Hence our societies, so densely of which are found in the most densely populated portions of our country, cannot labor more effectively in the cause of temperance than by using whatever influence they may have to give their friends and neighbors true views of this question. In the actual condition of our country it is sheer folly for laboring men, who are also heads of families, to continue to hire themselves to masters and corporations when it is not difficult for an industrious man to own his own home and to work for himself and his wife and children. How immeasurably more favorable to virtue, to sobriety, to independence and happiness, is not the life of one of our western farmers than that of a day laborer or a factory hand in a town or city. I often think that if I could persuade only one man to give up this foolish and dangerous kind of life and become a farmer I should die content. "Only nervous" is a sure indication that the blood is not pure. Hood's Sarsaparilla purifies the blood and cures nervousness. COLEMAN'S SALT. CELEBRATED DAIRY, HOUSEHOLD AND FARM PROMPT SHIPMENT GUARANTEED CANADA SALT ASSOCIATION CLINTON, ONT.

Our Blessed Mother. If there be one truth more solidly established than another it is, that Mary prays for the servants of her divine Son and that she is especially the refuge and advocate of sinners. The apostle St. Paul tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ is always living in Heaven to plead for our cause before His Father, and may we not believe that such is also the charitable office of His Blessed Mother? St. John tells us that we have in Jesus a powerful advocate before the Heavenly Father; in Mary we have a powerful advocate before the divine Son. When on earth our Blessed Saviour said: "I have not come to call the just, but sinners, to penance." He is pleased to add, "Who are they that have need of a physician?" He Himself adds, "Not they who are well in health, but the sick." Therefore in Heaven and on earth Jesus defends the cause of those who are spiritually sick before His Father, and it is precisely in favor of these unfortunate sinners that Mary employs her omnipotent intercession. Her solicitude is so great that she is interested in all, prays for all, with an affection which is wholly maternal. Mary is powerful enough to obtain for you the grace of conversion, and has so much love for you that she will extend to you thefulness of her maternal affection on your return to God. It is not enough for Mary to shield sinners for divine justice; her love prompts her to obtain for them favors of all kinds, of soul and body. Who is there that can say he has never received a blessing from her, spiritual or temporal? Hence St. Bernard says: "Let him who has not experienced the effects of her love after having invoked her cease to praise her. The world is full of proof of Mary's mercy to sinners. And even in the temporal order see the countless ex voto offerings hanging on the walls of all the sanctuaries consecrated to Mary. Do these not attest the innumerable favors obtained through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin? Do they not tell us of miracles wrought for the soul and the body of those who came to invoke her confidently? Sinners, have recourse to Mary, and do not fail to invoke her by the consoling title, Refuge of Sinners, pray for us. First Picture of St. Anthony. In October, 1895, a casual visitor to the Capuchin monastery in Sussex, England, was impressed by a square oil painting hung up very high on the wall, and, in consequence, the Fr. Guardian had it taken down and examined. The painting was found to be a very fine copy of the first known picture of St. Anthony, painted six centuries ago on one of the pillars of the basilica at Padua by Giotto, or of its no less famous replica, executed 400 years ago, which is one of the treasures of the church of St. John Chrysostom at Venice. The picture is fascinating in the extreme: the rather full face is beardless; the head shaven, except for a fringe of soft hair, the eyes, perhaps the most wonderful part, are full of life, and round the mouth lingers a faint smile suggestive of patient suffering. The picture was placed in a conspicuous place in the chapel. The devotion to the saint inaugurated by it resulted in the founding of the Guild of St. Anthony, an association similar to the Pious Union. Blood purifiers, though gradual, are radical in their effect. Ayer's Sarsaparilla is intended as a medicine only and not a stimulant, excitant, or beverage. Immediate results may not always follow its use; but after a reasonable time, permanent benefit is certain to be realized. Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Dysentery Cordial is prepared from drugs known to the profession as thoroughly reliable for the cure of cholera, dysentery, diarrhea, griping pains and summer complaints. It has been used successfully by medical practitioners for a number of years with gratifying results. If suffering from any summer complaint it is just the medicine that will cure you. Try a bottle. It sells for 25 cents. Chronic Derangements of the Stomach, Liver and Blood, are speedily removed by the active principle of the ingredients entering into the composition of Parmelee's Vegetable Pills. These Pills act specifically on the deranged organs, stimulating to action the dormant energies of the system, thereby removing disease and renewing life and vitality to the afflicted. In this lies the great secret of the popularity of Parmelee's Vegetable Pills. \$19.500 GIVEN AWAY IN BICYCLES AND WATCHES FOR SUNLIGHT SOAP WRAPPERS During the Year 1897. For full particulars see advertisements, or apply to LEVER BROS., Ltd., 23 Scott St., TORONTO.

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FIVE-MINUTE The Fourth Sunday THE TEACHING "Going up into one Simon's, and sitting down out of the ship. It was not without Lord whose Peter's teach the word of li By the mouth of F Father the Pop teaches the multitu And as told in the draught of fishes fol so whenever the Pet from Peter's ship our Lord then ma brother fishermen become fishers of ingly successful fis this day are with fulfillment of this ent Holy Father, I taken occasion to the true doctrine of the most importan cern the well bring ing their moral and rights as men to li pursuit of happin the divine institu which is the foun society, and defini ciples of education. It is no wonder own him as their should hear, and admonitions, astonishing is, to ary influence the exercises upon the olics; how unive edged that his weight than the thousands of ac together, who ar philosophy, theol By common cons seems to agree to the concerning the high interests of human thinks and says account. So pre perors, presiden leaders of great sing his counsel, or if they do not and spirit, as we do, they, at least, respect for it, an gize, so to speak, excuse to defend not in full accord All this is a ca to us Catholics. long as the wor follow the course from which Christ, or trim their hair sight of it, it w suffer shipwreck It does not al hear of the strifed many social, re questions. So l Christ is heard well. Of one thing, that there is no the ship of Pet ought to say tak olics who take cause the ship is safe, no matter they behave. I that there are practically do of Christ by Pet of their religio little pains to hardly ever h never read a g book. They do newspaper or instruction they ment. They re what they ough their Sundays doing what ple what ought to were faithful, Word of Christ If ever there Catholic ought works, now is Did, ever the such grand opp Well, then, a worldly, un Cat back and hin triumph, weigh responsibility, fo to give account There is no pitiful and so calls you His may fail, be st love will not f your struggle search for tru and loneliness hope, all your for what is ex come from Hin you your cap and His likene guide you to missive and of "One of m will hear peo the complaint. As a matter o only remove ally relieve tressing comp a permanent The Best P Sydney Cross been using Par by far the best Delicat and these Pills act doses, the effect last, mildly ex body, giving e gain, proved F Hood's Sarsa preparations f BLOOD Purifier 975-8