

next day I went to prayers at the General Theological Seminary and for the first time the service seemed flat and tame.

A scrap of Arabic poetry, quoted by Mr. Pagnier, runs thus:

"Not by chance the currents flow: Error mazed yet true directed, to their certain goal they go."

It may seem strange to some that the currents did not bear me straight into the Catholic Church instead of by the head of Anglicanism. Yet, strange as it is to the view of those who stand in a position to see the bend, others who are in it do not perceive the curvature. I did not regard the Anglican communion as a sect separated from the Catholic Church. Neither did I regard it as the entire Catholic Church, and therefore look on the Roman and Greek Churches as sects in separation. If I may illustrate my concept of the Church by a figure taken from a material temple, I looked on the Roman Catholic Church as the choir and nave, the Greek Church as a great transept, and the Anglican Church as a side chapel with its porch opening on another street. As I was born, bred, and then dwelling on that street it was more natural and easy to go by this side porch to the chapel than to go all the way around to the grand front entrance. If the chapel was served by priests, and one could have the sacraments and other privileges of the Church in it, he would not need to pass through into the nave or to distress himself because the passage was barred.

So long as one holds such a vague and imperfect conception of the essence of the Catholic Church, he can approach indefinitely near to it in his other conceptions of doctrine and discipline without perceiving any practical reasons for passing over to the Roman communion. The late Leonard Woods, Jr., D. D., and others have made a similar approximation, and have still remained—some for a long time, some until death—in one of the various Presbyterian churches. So long as one considers that intellectual, moral, and spiritual community in ideas, sentiments, sympathies, together with the reception of the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, in what he conceives to be a lawful and valid manner, make up the essential bonds of Catholic unity—i. e., that the tie which binds is invisible—he can agree with the Church of Rome very closely in faith and love he devotedly without thinking of stirring from his nook in the Protestant sect he belongs to. He may recognize the apostolic origin of the limited primacies of Alexandria and Antioch and the universal primacy of Rome, and may lament and condemn in great measure the so-called Reformation. And yet he will not admit that he is a heretic or even a schismatic, as he is held to be in the *foro externo* of the Roman Church.

The one practical and decisive point which is the pivot on which all turns is this: There is but one flock and one shepherd, the successor of Peter, and those bishops, priests, and people who are under his supreme pastoral episcopate. All who are not in this fold, whether they be gentiles, sheep and lambs, or wolves in sheep's clothing, are only scattered aliens and wanderers. There are bishops, priests and baptized Christians in great numbers who are outside the fold of Peter. But although these are gathered into communities, and even though their doctrine may be in great measure in accordance with the Catholic faith, none of these communities are organic portions of the Catholic Church. Even on the supposition, therefore, that the Protestant Episcopal Church, through the Church of England, had preserved the apostolic succession and an external connection with the ancient Catholic Church in England, and had retained the essentials of the faith, this would not suffice to establish the claim which is made for it by its so-called Anglo-Catholic members. It is not enough to profess the Catholic faith, to have received baptism, to be a member of a religious society whose clergy have received a valid ordination. The law of Christ requires, moreover, that we should profess the faith and receive the sacraments in the one true church whose pastors have a lawful authority under the supreme jurisdiction of the Chief Pastor of the Universal Church, the successor of St. Peter.

As I have said, I was about three years in reaching this conclusion. At first, I regarded the Anglican branch, as I esteemed it to be, of the Catholic Church, as being, in its ideal theory according to the interpretation of the most advanced High Churchmen, the nearest to the primitive standard. Next to it was the Greek Church, and the most removed by human additions and alterations the Roman. By a gradual change I came to regard, first, the Greek Church, and then to the model of ancient Christianity, and afterwards the Roman. The Anglican "branch," of course, fell away from its high place in my estimation more and more, as the most imperfect and anomalous of all the divisions of Catholic Christendom, just barely excusable from the charge of schism and heresy. The party with which I sympathized looked back to the epoch before the separation of East and West, and looked forward to an epoch when reunion would take place, by means of an oecumenical council, when Rome would abate her pretensions, modify and correct some points of her doctrine and discipline, and open the way to a universal reconciliation and reconstruction of Christendom. Briefly, and in a matter of fact statement, this is a project of bringing Rome down to a level of Constantinople, and all the Eastern and Western dissidents up to that level. Anglicans and other Protestants have often shown a banking after fellowship with the Greeks on account of their middle position between Rome and Canterbury. One of the schemes for attaining this fellowship was the location of a bishop with a small staff of clergy in Constantinople to cultivate the friendship of the Melchites and other Eastern sects. Dr. Southgate was appointed to this mission and he requested me to accompany him, which I consented to do; but my appointment was not ratified by the Missionary Committee, who distrusted my Catholic tendencies. While I was expecting to go on this mission I had a conversation on the subject with Dr. Seabury. The doctor inquired whether we expected to persuade the Greeks to change any of their doctrines and to concur in any respect to those of the

Protestant Episcopal Church. I replied that I supposed the basis of agreement must be laid on the foundation of the first six councils, and that the Greeks would have to give up the seventh, and their doctrine and practice concerning the cultus of the Virgin Mary, the saints, and images. Upon this the doctor argued very strongly and conclusively that the same reasons which establish the oecumenical authority of the councils of Lyons and Florence, and prove that the Greeks, and a fortiori the Anglicans, have no case against the Roman Church.

There were other things said by Dr. Seabury which I cannot distinctly remember, the effect of his whole conversation being to set my mind on a course of thought and reading which carried me onward to the last position which I rested in, so long as it seemed to be tenable. It has been, and still is, a position occupied by a certain number of the so-called Orthodox Orientals and Western Protestants—viz., that certain Christian communities separated from the communion of the Roman Church are in an irregular and anomalous condition, a state of secession and revolt which is wrong and unjustifiable, but not destructive of the essential Catholic unity, the organic identity of what they call the universal Church in all its parts and members, which, though severely wounded, are not severed. It is argued in this position that individuals are not responsible, and not to blame for the misfortune which was caused by the sins of their ancestors. They may, and even ought to, remain where they are, desiring, promoting, and waiting for corporate reunion.

Surely this notion that the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Episcopal Church are essentially one and the same is chimerical, and needs only an exercise of common sense to vanish like a bubble. However, we who were playing an ingenious dramatic performance as Catholics were living in a visionary, and not in the real world. It needed time and hard blows to break the spell of illusion. In my case experience proved that our Catholicism was an affair of books, of the imagination, of a certain set of individuals, and not the genuine religion of the Church of England and the American sect which has chosen for itself the name "Protestant Episcopal." These communities are Protestant, although, along with extreme rationalism, they tolerate a kind of Catholicism. They are not only estranged from the Roman Church, but engaged in an "irrepressible conflict" with it. I soon perceived in my bishop (Dr. Whittingham) an intensity of animosity against the Roman Church which was really violent. He, like many others of his kind, was anxious to make proselytes, and when one fell into his hands he would re-confirm him. This is but one instance among a multitude of facts which proved that a cordial sympathy with the actual, informing spirit of the Protestant Episcopal Church is in diametrical opposition to the Catholic spirit.

I will not analyze more minutely the process which wrought my total and final severance from the Protestant connection. John Henry Newman had just been received into the Catholic Church. I had been sent to a plantation in North Carolina, with symptoms which threatened a fatal issue within a few months. During that winter I had leisure to mature the results of study and thought of the several preceding years, and with the strongest possible motive to make a decision, which would endure the test of the divine truth and justice. From the last spot of sand on which I had found a temporary footing I made the leap across upon the Rock, an act which, of course, I was only enabled to make by a special aid of divine grace, but which, none the less, I consider as a perfectly reasonable act, and one which can be justified on the most satisfactory rational grounds.

In the foregoing matter I have sketched the progress of my religious convictions from Protestant Christianity pure and simple, in the form commonly called "orthodox" and "evangelical," through the middle ground of "High Church" and "Anglo-Catholic" Episcopalism to the perfect and integral Christianity of the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church. The justification of this process in a rational sense consists simply in this, that it is consequent and logical from the premises that God is; that the Godhead is in the Person of Christ; that Christ has proclaimed and established a religion of doctrines and precepts which is obligatory, universal, and perpetual in a manner which is certainly authenticated.

In respect to these premises there was no process to be narrated, since I began with and from them as undoubted axioms. Neither does it need the justification of the process of concluding a logical result from the admission of the premises belong to a mere piece of psychological history. I have not in view to prove the validity of the inferences which I draw from the assumed premises any more than to prove the truth of these premises. I aim only at relating in the manner in which the process went on in my own mind. And, in conclusion, I will sum up by a simple statement of my own religious convictions and beliefs as they are now, the result of nearly fifty years of study and thought, taking in the Theistic and Christian premises as well as the Catholic conclusion. I do not doubt my own ability to make satisfactory justification of all these convictions by evidence and reasoning, and I have heretofore written a great deal on several points of this argument of justification. But just now I merely intend to indicate the theses and order in which they are arranged in the general prospectus, which I should undertake to defend if I were writing a complete treatise of apologies, and which I am convinced have been amply defended by many men of greatly superior intellect and knowledge to my own moderate measure of these endowments. I mean this in respect to what is essential and substantial, for in respect to details and the relations which change with the varying conditions of times, there is always a new labor of progress and adaptation to be carried on, which is never actually complete and finished; just as in the case of science of military defence and attack there has been a continual change and improvement in artillery and fortification.

The general prospectus is included within the terms of these theses.

First. Every rational and instructed man ought to believe in God.

Second. One who believes in God ought to believe in Christ and his revelation.

Third. Whosoever believes in Christ and Christianity ought to believe in the Catholic Church, whose centre of unity and seat of sovereignty is the Roman See of Peter.—*Augustine F. Heintz, in N. Y. Catholic World.*

MR. WM. O'BRIEN'S LECTURE.

"The Lost Opportunities of the Irish Gentry."

United Ireland, Sept. 7.

An immense assemblage of people gathered in the Leinster Hall, Dublin, on Thursday night week to hear Mr. O'Brien's lecture on behalf of the Sacred Heart Home. The chair was occupied by his Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Walsh, and on the platform were several Irish and English members of Parliament. His Grace having opened the proceedings, Dr. Kenny, M. P., read a telegram from the Most Rev. Dr. Croke, "praying God to give all the strength to the pure-minded patriot who lectures this evening, so that he may come forth from his prison well, now open to receive him, as sound in health as he is brave in heart and unflinching. God Save Ireland."

Mr. O'Brien as he rose was greeted with a tremendous outburst of applause. After some preliminary observations, he proceeded to say—I remember not so very long ago "democracy" used to be thought an awful, almost a naughty word among genteel people in Ireland. Some of us had no more conception what sort of uncounted animal a democrat was than Mrs. Partridge had of the attributes of the allegory on the Nile. Irishmen were supposed to be nothing if not admirers of the old aristocracy. If you were to believe Charles Lever's novels, a man, if he were only one of ancient lineage, might, without detriment to his popularity, despoil a whole countryside, he might beggar his tenants and mortgage his property up to the eyes; he might get drunk every night of his life, and put a bullet through an unfortunate tradesman if he asked for payment of his bill. The Irish people were supposed rather to like that sort of thing from a gentleman of spirit, and the people put their hands to their hats for him, and voted for him, and fought for him, as if it were the best fun in the world to be evicted and swindled by one of the old stock. It is ironic of fate that the very practices which the Irish gentry rebuke with a celestial grace in the Irish peasants of to-day as crimes of the blackest dye are only faint imitations of the pastimes of their own fathers and grandfathers. Tarring a bailiff and making him swallow his own latrine is a proceeding copied from the highest aristocratic precedents. Mr. George Robert Fitzgerald was by no means the only man who mounted the stage upon his heels to give the ministers of the law a hotter reception than they encountered at Bodyske and Congreany. It was the regular way of discharging honest debts in well-bred circles. The noble family of Kingstown, who are at this moment so horrified by the people of Mitchels town barricading their homes and defending them, were themselves for many a day "Sunday men" and kept their castle provisioned for a siege. It is, indeed, because they did so, and left their debts unpaid—the debts they incurred to pauper their own bodies and fuddle their brains—that their noble descendant is now engaged in exterminating the unfortunate tenantry of Mitchelstown, not for repudiating any honest debt, but because they will not surrender the homes in which their fathers lived and their lands that are watered with their sweat to the poor for the claret and the dissipations of those old "Wolves of the Galtees." But undoubtedly the people did not like the Irish gentry the less for their contempt for the law and their way of dealing with bailiffs. Aristocracy was respected almost to adoration point. I remember when we were young fellows long ago in my native town of Malloy we used to think the Clubhouse there a kind of seventh heaven inhabited by beings of quite quite another order from mere people who worked for a living. It seemed as much a dispensation of Providence as that the sun should rise in the heavens every day that the gentry should lord it over us and look down on us. It seemed part of the order and arrangement of the universe. Well, I think we have somewhat moderated these gentlemen's estimate of their own importance. I can hardly ever pass that Clubhouse now without thinking that there is not a cabin in the poor suburb of Ballydane whose inmates have not as much influence upon the current of affairs as the whole galaxy of gentlemen who assemble on the Clubhouse steps put together.

Now, what is the reason of this extraordinary transformation? I often think that one of the bitterest reflections of the Irish gentry in these days of humiliation and helplessness must be that it is all their own fault—that they had the country and people for hundreds of years like potter's clay in their hands. If they had chosen to be the people's chiefs and leaders instead of being their slave drivers the Irish aristocracy might have had a great career. Unquestionably, rank and brilliancy and chivalry, and all the qualities that appertain to a privileged, leisure class, have always had a fascination for the Irish people. Men of that class who, instead of standing apart in cold and haughty isolation, have given their hearts and lives to the rescue of their downtrodden nation are the heroes and idols of our history—men like Sarsfield, Grattan, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Davis, Smith O'Brien, and Charles Stewart Parnell. Did the Irish people ever ask what was these men's religious faith, or in what century their ancestors came over? The Geraldines when they settled long ago in Malloy Castle did not take themselves up in a clubhouse, and give themselves airs. They fraternized with the people, they made themselves bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh; they fought for them and died with them. And I wonder which is the nobler field of ambition—which is the most likely to shed lustre upon our glory stability to an aristocracy—the career of one of these old Geraldines ruling like

a king over every peasant from Listowel to the Galtee Mountains, or the career of the present head of the Geraldines, barricaded in his castle at Carton, composing pamphlets for the L. L. P. U., and unable to return a Poor law guardian for his own electoral division? I venture to think that though the present Geraldine is a duke, and the old Geraldines used sometimes get a head chopped off, most of us would prefer to take chance with the valiant old chiefs who died with their faces to the foe and with their clans around them, fighting for their God and for their native land. If ever man were puffed as leader, and brought to become leaders of the Irish people it was the Irish gentry. It was fine of this folks, perhaps one of the vices of the Irish people, their fondness and yearning for leaders of birth and station. The aristocrats who led the Volunteers of '82, with the glorious exception of Grattan and half a dozen others, were bigots and rascals who had very little to recommend them except their voluntarism; yet their popularity largely knew no bounds. O'Connell tried to keep the Catholic lords and aristocrats in the van of the Emancipation movement until his heart was sick of their cowardice and meanness and sympathy—they have never to this day been emancipated in their souls. The Young Ireland movement was very largely a novel-made aristocratic aspirations. Mitchell and Lalor, indeed, knew the Irish gentry were made of, but most of the generous-hearted young men who sang and spoke in those days did not despair of bringing the gentry into the National ranks, and building up a nation in which landlord and tenant would clasp hands and blend as harmoniously as orange and green. One of the most amusing things we learn from Sir C. G. Duffy's book, "Four Years of Irish History," is that up to the very eve of the revolt of '48 Smith O'Brien and some of his colleagues nourished the extraordinary delusion that the Irish gentry were meditating going over on *massé* to the young men who were counting their plikes and guans for an insurrection. It was O'Brien's noble fault to believe everyone to be as open-hearted and as chivalrous as himself. He actually wrote, in letters which the gentry would be found to honor and the insurrection at the very moment when these same gentry were entreating Dublin Castle to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and only a few weeks before his own brother, Sir Lucius O'Brien, denounced and disowned him as a traitor on the floor of the House of Commons. Every opportunity the Irish aristocracy ever got of identifying themselves with the people, when all was said and done, was to follow their leaders who spurned with insult and disdain. They repaid their popularity in the Volunteer times by their murderings and burnings and floggings in '98. Their answers to all the melting appeals of the orators and singers of Young Ireland was to seize the crops for the rent while two millions of people were dying of famine, and then to exterminate a million more of them before 1848 and 1857, when all national spirit was extinguished and when the country lay gasping and helpless at their feet. Even in our own day, in the midst of the angry rush and roar of the revolution which their own folly brought about their ears, the Irish gentry obtained at least three separate opportunities of harmonizing their interests with those of the country of their birth and the people from whom they derived their living. It is only an ardent affection of becoming their leaders that they spurned with insult and disdain. They repaid their popularity in the Volunteer times by their murderings and burnings and floggings in '98. 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