

yet of the Fold he imposed the obligation of waiting, and working for his or her conversion. Singularly enough on this work so dear to his heart he wrote no pastorals and preached no sermons. From his point of view the great power in the hands of a Bishop was a pronounced unwillingness to grant a dispensation. His priests understood this and prepared the young and old of their congregations for the contingency; fathers and mothers soon understood it, and took precautions in due time. Company keeping of Catholic young people with non-Catholics became less common. This, however, did not prevent the evil but non-Catholic young people soon learned that there was no hope of the realization of their aspirations until they saw their way into the Catholic Church. The number of converts increased very materially and it is safe to state that at the close of Archbishop O'Connor's administration in more than one third of the Catholic marriages in Toronto one of the parties was a convert. By that time also a dispensation *Mixtae Religionis* was almost unheard of. The plan had succeeded; mixed marriages could be abolished.

Two great objections have commonly been raised to so stringent a policy in a matter in which Faith and conscience enter so intimately, first—would these converts persevere; secondly—would not many be driven to have the marriage ceremony performed outside of the Church. Time has answered the first and every one is edified by the example of those who became Catholics on the occasion of marriage. Some priests of the diocese undertook to inquire into the second, on examining the records in the City Hall it was found that the number of mixed marriages before a non-Catholic minister had gradually decreased, during Archbishop O'Connor's administration. (Marriages before a civil magistrate are not recognized by the laws of Canada.)

But even a life of abstemiousness, of early hours, and regular habits cannot always endure the strain of incessant labor much less the weight of responsibility always keenly felt. At the age of 67 Archbishop O'Connor—never of a vigorous constitution—was worn out. Many had suspected as much but he was not the one to speak of his health under any conditions. In the early part of the year 1908 rumors, which seemed to bear the stamp of authenticity, were abroad to the effect that already twice his resignation had been submitted to the Holy See. Nothing confirmatory appeared until on a certain day in May, the morning mail brought to each priest in the Archdiocese a copy of the following circular: