

Only a Song.

It was only a simple ballad, Sung to a careless throng; There were none that knew the singer, And few that heard the voice...

OBLATES OF MARY.

IN THE BLEAK NORTHWEST WITH THE SAVAGES.

THE RESOLVE OF THE TWO YOUNG MISSIONARIES.

IV.

The post from which he started lies perhaps three or four hundred miles away, he may have to pass two or three days without food...

Sometimes the missionary and his team lose themselves, and keep straying for a whole day and night over the frozen surface of some ocean lake...

On July, 1845, Father Tache was joined at L'Isle a la Croix by Father Farand, who was afterwards to become a true apostle in the lone north of America...

They were informed by their superior, Father Aubert, that owing to the decrease in the receipts of the "Work of Propagation of the Faith" in France...

"The news which your letter brings us afflicts us profoundly, and we cannot recover from it in the thought of abandoning our dear N-ophytes and our numerous Catechumens...

At that hour, in their distant homes fond hearts would beat quickly with joy at the news of their return. Mothers with delighted welcome would hail the coming back of their sons from their distant missions after an absence of years...

usual abode; and they declare their continued preference for the society of those poor wild children of nature, whom they are seeking to reclaim from ignorance and vice...

The position of Father Tache is about to undergo an important change, his virtues and merit mark him out as the fitting coadjutor to Mgr. Provencher, vicar apostolic of the North Western district...

When Mgr. Provencher unfolded to Father Tache the intentions of the Holy See to create him coadjutor bishop to Mgr. Provencher with right of succession, the humble missionary pleaded many reasons for not accepting the proffered dignity...

"It is that precisely," said Mgr. Provencher, "I wish you to do. But is not, rejoined Father Tache, the episcopal dignity incompatible with religious life?"

"No," replied Mgr. Provencher, "it is not. What," he said, "is it to be supposed that the plenitude of the priesthood excludes the perfection to which the religious man is called?"

Monsieur Tache would willingly have prolonged his stay in Europe had it not been for the engagement which he had entered into with some Indian tribes, to meet them at L'Isle a la Croix early in the following September...

Monsieur Tache, on taking his departure for his far distant home in the midst of the Indian tribes of L'Isle a la Croix, knelt to receive the blessing of Monsieur Provencher...

The privations which he habitually had to endure, not only when journeying through his own vast diocese but also when at home in his episcopal residence at L'Isle a la Croix...

Notwithstanding passing clouds of skepticism and aberrations into the region of pseudo-national philosophy I was too well grounded in natural theology, the evidences of Christianity, and the knowledge of the Bible to be swept off from those foundations into infidelity...

progress on its waters. On the morning of the 2nd of July, at 2 a. m., after a journey of ten days, he arrived at Our Lady of Victories. At the sound of their bishop's voice asking for admission in the early morning, Father Grollier and Grandin and Brother Alexis rose with out delay to receive him...

"At the approach of evening the strength of the whole party, dogs, Indians and bishop, being exhausted they halt for the night. An hour's labor suffices to prepare a mansion wherein his lordship will repose till the next morning. The snow is carefully removed, branches of trees are spread over the cleared ground...

"Having taken possession of their mansion, the proprietors partake of a common repast; the dogs are the first served, then comes his lordship's turn, his table is his knees, the table service consists of a pocket-knife, a bowl, a tin plate and a five-pronged fork which is an old family heirloom..."

"My father inherited his patronymic name from a Puritan minister in the Church of England who was expelled from his parish by Archbishop Laud, and who emigrated to New England soon after the first settlements were made in Connecticut..."

"This is not the description of an occasional journey made by Monsieur Tache in the wilderness, but of journeys habitually performed by himself and his brother missionaries..."

"A canvas tent in the midst of snow, even though it be planted on British soil, does not present a proper idea of English comfort. On the day of the arrival of their bishop they took possession of their poor cabin, which cost them much trouble to erect..."

"The missionary has further to act as mason, and carpenter, and blacksmith, and, according to circumstances. From Lac la Biche Monsieur Tache set out for the mission of Our Lady of Victories, Arthabaska..."

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AN INTERESTING BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. Since I began, with some reluctance, this piece of egotistical writing I have been consoled by some words of Cardinal Newman which have anew fallen under my notice...

HOW FATHER HEWIT BECAME A CATHOLIC.

There was one great practical difficulty in my way which my father removed by a happy inconsistency. The transition from the state of death to the state of life, which I had been taught in childhood must be effected by a act of God...

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"I never felt any sympathy with Puritanism. A spontaneous repugnance of mind and heart to this narrow, harsh, and dreary system of religion sprang up in me as soon as I began to have thoughts and sentiments of my own..."

"I was attracted to the Episcopalian form of Protestantism from childhood, and to no other. I was familiar with it from reading English history and literature, often attending its services, and even perusing some of its able works of controversial divinity..."

"From this time my respect for the Reformation as a general movement, and for all religious teachers and doctrines which were its legitimate offspring, was destroyed. I looked toward the church of the Fathers, to the successors of the Apostles, to that episcopal body which had inherited the divine commission of teaching and ruling for the genuine and perfect form of Christianity in respect to doctrine and order..."

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It was during the first year after my graduation that a crisis occurred which I look upon as really my "conversion." I was shut up in solitude with my law-books, and looking forward to my worldly career. My thoughts and aspirations were irresistibly turned from this earthly vision, which vanished like "a castle in the air," toward God and eternity...

"I determined firmly to follow the light of truth in my mind, and to obey all the dictates of conscience with the most perfect fidelity possible, recognizing also the veracity of God as the absolute standard of truth, and the will of God as the absolute rule of right..."

"I was loyal and true to my new allegiance so long as my conscience permitted me to acknowledge it. I travelled rapidly Romeward, followed the path of Froude, Alliey, Faber, and Newman; but I did not know where I was going until I suddenly came upon the gate of the city. I never harbored the thought of leaving my ecclesiastical position until within a few weeks of the time when I severed the tie which bound me to it..."

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obtained a wide circulation among Episcopals in this country. It obtained many adherents and advocates, and the so-called Anglo-Catholic movement not only rose to a great importance in England, but attracted general attention and exerted great influence in America. From this source I gained a much fuller knowledge of primitive and Catholic doctrines historically and logically connected with the one specially emphasized by the High Church party...

Some little time elapsed before I reached the conclusion that I must sever my connection with the ministry and communion of the Congregationalist sects. When I arrived at the conclusion I passed over to the communion, and in due time into the lowest order of the ministry, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, where I remained until the early part of the year 1846...

"I had seen the church of my boyhood reverence and love. I had plenty of relatives and friends in it, and the transition from extreme Protestantism to a Protestantism half Catholic was not so very violent when accomplished by easy stages. It was not so far a cry from Geneva to Canterbury as from Geneva to Rome. I did not once consider the idea of going to Rome or expect ever to get there. I thought that what I called in a loose kind of phraseology "the Anglican Communion" was a true branch of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church, of which the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Church, were also branches...

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next day I went to prayers at the General Theological Seminary and for the first time the poetry seemed fit and timely. A scrap of Arabic poetry, quoted by Mr. Palgrave, runs thus: "Not by chance the currents flow: Error mazed you thru directed, to certain goal they go."

It may seem strange to some that the current did not bear straight into the Catholic Church instead of by the bend of Anglicanism. Yet, strange as it is to the view of those who stand in position to see the bend, others who are in it do not perceive the curvature, 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, 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 from the nave. As I was born, bred, and then dwelling on the 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 distrust 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 some still remain—some for a long time 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 which binds indivisible—he can agree with the Church of Rome very closely in faith and love, but justly without thinking of starting from his perch in the transept and set to belong to it. He may recognize the apostolic origin of the limited principles of Alexandria and Antioch and the universal primacy of Rome, and lament and condemn in great part the called Reformation. And yet he will not admit that he is a heretic or even a schismatic, as he is in the *foro externi* 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 the bishops, priests, and people who are under his supreme pastoral episcopate. All who are not in this flock, whether they be shepherds and lambs, or wolves in sheep's clothing, are only scattered alien 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 they profess the same 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 communion with the Roman Church, and had retained the essential of the faith, this would not suffice to establish the claim which is made for it to be 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 the Church requires, moreover, that we should profess the faith and receive the sacraments in the one true church whose power and jurisdiction the Chief Pastor of the Universal Church, the successor of Peter, holds.

As I have said, I was about three years in teaching this conclusion. At first I regarded the Anglican branch as 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 primitive standard. Next to it was the Greek Church, and the most removed was the Roman Catholic Church, which was Roman. By a gradual change I came to regard, first the Greek Church as nearest to the model of ancient Christianity, and afterwards the Roman, the Anglican "branch," of course, fell away from its high place in my estimation, and more and more, as the most imperfect and anomalous of all the divisions of the Catholic Church, 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 a union 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 projected bringing Rome down to a level of Constantinople, and all the Eastern Western dissenters up to that level. Anglicans and other Protestants have shown a banking after fellowship with the Greeks on account of their position between Rome and Canterbury. One of the schemes for attaining fellowship was the location of a bishop with a small staff of clergy in Constantinople to cultivate the friendship of Melchites and other Eastern sects. Southgate was appointed to this mission and he requested me to accompany him which I consented to do; but appointment was not ratified by the Missionary Committee, who distrusted Catholic tendencies. While I was expecting to go on this mission I had conversation on the subject with Southgate. The doctor inquired why we expected to persuade the Greek change any of their doctrines and content in any respect to those of