



NOTED ENGLISH CONVERTS.

A London paper states that "the grandchildren of Charles Dickens are being brought up as Catholics — that being the faith of Mrs. Henry Dickens."

The great novelist, while professing himself a man of large sympathies and broad views, was at heart a bigot. I happen to have at my elbow an old number of *The Spectator*, says a writer in the *Sydney Freeman's*. The date is March 24, 1877. This is how one of the staff writers commences an article:

"The English press is still childishly afraid of saying anything that appears to favor a Catholic cause, however clear may be the justice of that cause. Miss Harriet Martineau tells of two occasions on which tales of hers were peremptorily refused solely on the ground that she had taken occasion to draw attention to the virtues of the Roman Catholics, and she declares that the late Mr. Dickens avowed to her his intention never to allow anything, however true, that could benefit the reputation of the Roman Catholics to appear in his journal. We must say we should have supposed that to be the policy not only of the past age, but of a blundering editor, unless, indeed, the journal in which such a policy was adopted had circulated chiefly amongst the ignorant and vulgar."

It is not out of the way surprising to find the name of Dickens among the roll of Rome's recruits. Take the names most familiar and sonorous to English ears. Nelson is the nearest still to the heart of the nation, and three of the present Earl Nelson's sons are among recent converts. Wilberforce is a word to conjure by; it stands for unselfish devotion to the public good, and three sons of the Parliamentary Apostle of the Emancipator of the Slaves became Catholics, throughout life following in all unworldliness the example of a father who refused Pitt's offer of an earldom. Even Samuel Wilberforce (son of the great man), whom an Anglican Bishopric detained, contributed a daughter and a son-in-law to the Church. A daughter of a step-child of the Rev. John Wesley became a Catholic, and so did a daughter of the Rev. John Owen, the founder of the Bible Society. Sir Walter Scott's descendants are Catholics, his daughter's daughter having joined the old Church. The present occupants of the old family seat at Abbotsford is a devout Catholic. In the daughter of a daughter of whom he was not worthy (Lady Anne Blunt) Lord Byron has his representative in the Church. Mr. Arkwright, of Sutton Scarsdale, England, is a direct descendant of the inventor of the world-famed spinning-jenny.

One can not touch the subject of English converts without naming Cardinal Newman. With his secession from the Church of England in 1845 the recruiting sergeant practically commenced his work of forming a new army of the Pope in England. Frederick

Faber, like Newman, joined the army as a humble private in 1845. Six years later what we may call the big boom in conversions set in, Cardinal Manning leading a brilliant following into the fold.

One by one there dropped into the ranks such men as the Marquis of Ripon, who has ruled as Viceroy in India, and who is still active in every Catholic movement in England; Lord Bury, who gave such good service as a member of Governments; Lord Emly, a Postmaster-General; Lord Lyons, the best British Ambassador of modern times; the late Marquis of Bute, scholar, author, and princely philanthropist; the Earl of Ashburnham, and Lord Braye. These may all be classed as public men of the first class. Other names which occur are the late Earls of Gainsborough and of Dunraven, the present Earl of Denbigh, who accompanied Her Majesty on her recent visit to Ireland; Lord Henry Kerr, whose Catholic namesake is now second in authority in the British admiralty; Lord North, Lord Charles Thynne, Sir Paul Molesworth, Sir John Croker Barrow, Sir Richard Hungerford Pollen, Sir William Percival Heathcote, Sir Vere de Vere, Sir Philip Rose, Sir John Simeon, the Hon. Colin Lindsay (a former president of the English Church Union), and Sir Henry Hawkins (the famous judge, now on the list of the Peerage).

Literary men and artists would prefer to make up their list of Rome's recruits from such names as Aubrey de Vere, Adelaide Proctor, Coventry Patmore, Sir Richard Burton (the most famous of Oriental travellers and writers), Fred. Burnand (editor of London *Punch*), Lady Georgiana Fullerton, Lady Herbert of Lea, Lord Archibald Douglas, Lady Gertrude Douglas, "Arthur Sketchley" (Mr. Rose), Frederick Lucas (founder of the *London Tablet*), Clement Scott (the eminent dramatic critic), Lady Butler (Elizabeth Thompson), the painter of "The Roll Call," "The Scots Greys," and other popular battle pieces; Pugin, the giant among modern architects; Sir Charles Halle, the pianist and conductor; Charles Santley, the singer; the brilliant Dr. W. G. Ward, and Burns & Oates, the big publishers. —*Standard and Times*.

FREEZING UPWARD.

Dear Sir,—A very interesting thing about our prairie province is the existence all the year round of frozen stratum not far from the surface. Late in the summer I have seen an excavation ten or fifteen feet deep being carried on in frozen soil. Another time, at Regina, I saw frozen clay coming from the bottom of a fifty-foot well; how thick the stratum was I could not say. In the prairie-like tundras of Northern Siberia an effort was made to get through and measure the similarly frozen layer; it was abandoned at a depth of fifteen hundred feet. What hyperglacial conditions must have obtained for winter to have got so deep into the ground!

We are put in the way of solving the problem by the consideration of certain observed facts. In the first place, in view of the rela-

tively shallow depths to which the ground is frozen by months of winter cold, say from 10 degrees to 40 degrees below zero, the intense cold necessary to freeze to the depths observed would have left an indelible mark upon the rest of the earth. We do not meet with evidences of any such intense cold, which would have been vastly greater than that required to produce any known glacial period. Furthermore, such a degree of cold would freeze the ground to approximately equal depths wherever the rates of conductivity of the soil are practically identical. Now it is noticed that the frost extends to great depths only in sedimentary or landslide deposits, and never in spots unfavorably situated for such overlaying. Hence it is possible that these deposits were frozen not from the top down, but from the bottom up, as they were formed by overlaying, and therefore without calling for any extraordinary degree of cold. The process of freezing from the bottom up is practically as follows: A given winter's freezing having extended to a certain depth, the spring thaw and rains bring down a sediment or landslide before the ground is completely thawed out, and protect it by overlaying, so that the summer's thaw fails to reach the limits of the winter's freezing. The cold of the ensuing winter freezes down to the old frost the more easily, as it is aided by the low temperature of the overlaid ground, which may have remained at a temperature many degrees below zero from the preceding winter.

Considering the great thickness of frozen layer on the alluvial plains of the north, it would appear that they were formed during a period of subsidence, when an abundant sedimentary deposit kept the level near the water surface.

This question has long lain in my always increasing collection docketed "Things to be Cleared Up;" whence I now withdraw it. The explanation will likely interest others besides

Yours truly,

ISI-KLAY.

Montreal, 25th Nov.

LOVELY IN DECAY.

Written for the *Northwest Review* by an English Banker.

The spring-time is generally considered as the most beautiful of all the seasons of the year, for it is the time when nature, awakened from the long sleep of winter, is clothed in an emerald garb of surpassing loveliness and grace. But surely the time when she is again preparing for her annually-recurring state of dormant hibernation, when the hand of death, before striking down her leafy adornments, imparts to them more vivid tints than any which they had heretofore possessed, decorating the forests and woods in a many-hued vision of almost fiery glory, is far more entrancing, far more fascinating and enchanting than can be any other season of the entire year.

And at this intermediate interval between the vigorous life of sum-

mer and the cold desolation of winter, a ramble along one of the many lovely lanes of leafy Britain is, to the lover of nature, a treat of superlative enjoyment. To take a typical country road in the pine country of Hampshire as an example. On one side of the way the ground is carpeted with the graceful feathered fronds of bracken in all their autumnal glory, ranging from a delicate sea-green, through various shades of gold, to a rich dark amber. Here and there amongst the pines, their sombre dark green enhancing by contrast the brilliancy of their fellows, are groups of graceful symmetrically shaped tufted birches, their silvery trunks shining in the glinting rays of the sun, which lights up the brilliant gold of their trembling pendent leafage. Here are some magnificent beeches, so gorgeous and superb in their glittering array of amber and ruddy bronze, that even they who have no more eye for the beautiful than the man with the muck-rake in our great allegory, could not possibly refrain from admiring. The oaks, too, are all aglow in their rich autumn habiliments, while the feathery larches vie in brilliancy almost with the pure gold of the neighboring maples and chestnuts.

And the hedgerows are also lavishly painted by the hand of nature in the richest of coloring. The humble blackberry, now streaked with orange and carmine, now a dark sumptuous ruby, or a florid cornelian red, hangs in festoons of vivid hues; dwarf willows tinted with bright sulphur yellow; dogwood, which, as its name — *cornus sanguinea*—implies, is now a flaming blood-red, perhaps here and there shading off to violet; some young mountain ash, their handsome pinnate foliage a sweetly-hued blend of salmon and orange; with many another beauty of the woods, all compete with each other in adding to the dazzling blaze of sun-lit coloring. Trailing down the hedge or erect on the bushes are many diversely colored berries; the black bryony with its long bunches of scarlet fruit; the wild euonymus, with its strange quintuple-formed berries of orange and coral pink; privets loaded with shining jet-black clusters; viburnums decorated with corymbs of vermilion, like almost transparent glass; while the wild roses and thorns provide a profuse supply of winter food for those songsters of the wood which have not migrated to more sunny climes.

Above all is the empyreal vault of heaven, its deep azure contrasting with the many-tinted beauties below, the whole scene forming a spectacle of surpassing loveliness equal perhaps to almost anything that the most lavish touch of nature could produce.

And as the entranced beholder contemplates it all, and realizes that in a few short weeks death will reign supreme until the glad resurrection of spring, he perforce remembers that a time will come when his corporeal frame too must assume the sere and yellow leaf, and, like that falling foliage, sink earthwards, wither and decay, until at the sound of the archangel's trumpet, he bursts forth rejuvenated from the rending tomb. Happy he, if during his earth-life his misdeeds had been obliterated

from the Great Record through the vicarious atonement of the Redeemer whom he had loved and served. For, if so, soon will he hear the welcome acquittal of the Eternal Judge—"Enter thou into joy."

A JUST REBUKE.

The *Freeman*, of St. John, N.B., speaking of the "intense race feeling shown by Irish-American Catholic newspapers," says: "It is needless to premise that this racial hatred is directed solely against Great Britain. We are not going to say," says our esteemed contemporary, "that there is not good reason for distrust and aversion on the part of Irish-Americans towards England. The crimes and injustices of centuries can not be forgotten by their victims in a day. Yet there is no justification in morality for the policy which closes its eyes to all that is noble, manly and exalted in English character; which can perceive nothing stable and uplifting in English civilization, and which would deprive English statesmen of the right to uphold the honor of the Empire against all odds, little or great. Then again, admitting that Great Britain should expect no consideration from the exiled Gael in the United States there is no reason why the readers of Irish-American journals should not be treated to fair and unprejudiced views, even of Great Britain's acts and policy. That seems due to the readers themselves, if not to an hereditary foe. A Catholic newspaper should try to tell the truth always, and it falls from its high estate and becomes merely Irish or German or American when it conceals or distorts truth for race or partizan purposes. Of course, where it makes no claim to being distinctively Catholic, it is no longer bound by religious obligations to be simply truthful. Nothing but the natural law and respect for its readers can then hold it to the path of rectitude. Where England is concerned, neither the sacred interests of truth, nor the demands of religion, nor duty towards their readers, can prevail to make the Irish-American Catholic newspaper give the facts without a squint."

BLESSING OF NEW CHURCH AT ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER.

His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface returned to his palace in St. Boniface last evening, after having officiated at the blessing of a new church yesterday at St. Francois Xavier, erected during the past summer. The new church, which is of brick, cost in the neighborhood of \$8,000, and is certainly a credit to the parishioners as well as to the community generally. It was built to replace a frame structure which has been in use for forty years. The new building was designed by Mr. J. A. Senecal, who was yesterday elected mayor of St. Boniface by acclamation, and it certainly reflects great credit on his ability. It may be said in passing that the parish of St. Francois Xavier is, next to St. Boniface, the oldest parish in Manitoba, having been established in 1824. The services in connection with the opening were of the most impressive character, the archbishop having been assisted by a dozen priests, from different points in the archdiocese, including the parish priest of St. Francois Xavier, Rev. Father Kavanagh, who has spent 35 years in church work in Manitoba, and Mgr. Richot, of St. Norbert. Immediately after the services the archbishop set out for home, driving a distance of some nineteen miles, to St. Boniface.—Morning Telegram.