

A CONVERT FROM THE ANGLICAN MINISTRY

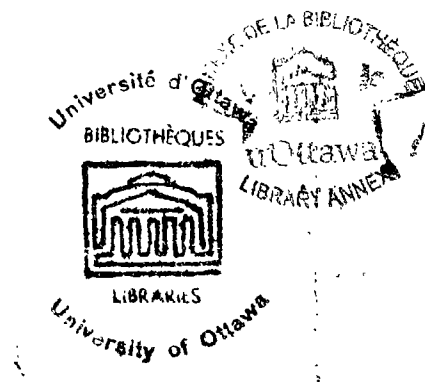
HIS PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTION

by

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of the
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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I can only hope to repay so much to so many by a daily memento in prayer.

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INTRODUCTION

A deeply rooted interest in the subject of one's thesis is an indispensable element, if the work is to accomplish its purpose. Fortunately, in this instance, the interest is natural since it concerns the father of the writer who is endeavouring to discuss the problems of this former Anglican minister, Charles Frederick Street, in his search for, his discovery of, and his resultant attachment to the true faith as found in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

This interest has been coupled with a sense of satisfaction, since a debt of gratitude, long overdue, is being requited, in a small way, at least, to Almighty God for this gift of faith bestowed, not only on the convert himself, but also on his descendants, now in the fourth Catholic generation. Doubtless, the difficulties, encountered because of the change in his religious convictions, and borne so nobly during the years of his after-life, have earned for him a rich eternal reward; however, even at this late date, it seems only right that some formal expression of appreciation of his courageous example and self-sacrificing devotion in the cause of the Catholic religion should be attempted.

A third important purpose of this thesis is to bring to light the apostolic zeal and the unstinted kindness of Reverend Father A. Pallier, O.M.I. in his guidance of this minister, before and after his conversion. Since his example was followed by many other members of his community during the years of growth of the large family of this convert, living, as they did a great part of the time, in the vicinity of the old "Ottawa College", a grateful acknowledgment is long overdue.

A final motive lies in the hope that, if this work is ever considered worthy of publication, in any form it may prove a stimulus to others who may have to face the bitter trials inevitable to all converts to Catholicism.

Critical Survey of Sources.

Because of the lapse of time since this conversion took place, (1872), as also since the death of the convert, in 1914, it has been rather difficult to gather some of the material which would have been of value. First of all, because of the furore among the Anglicans of that time, in Ottawa, records of two of his Anglican curacies have been destroyed. Secondly, because of the loss of files in the fire which burned the old University building, in 1904, another source of illuminative data was closed.

Fortunately, however, in the last years of his life, Mr. Street, himself, wrote several articles, intended only for family perusal. Since these contain, besides a genealogical outline of the family, his reasons for becoming a Catholic, and a few other treatises evincing the depth of his faith, they have proved of real worth.

A second document of value is a letter, written by the above-mentioned Father Paillier, to the Secretary-General of his congregation in Europe; in it, he not only tells of this conversion, but also states that this clergyman had to endure much persecution from those who had been nearest and dearest to him. A copy of this letter is appended to this thesis, and parts of it quoted within it.

Other helpful sources of information have been obtained in newspaper references of the time, as also in two books, Histoire de la Province ecclésiastique d'Ottawa, par Révérend P. Alexis, cap., and Le Diocèse d'Ottawa, 1847-1948, par Hector Legros, ptre, et Soeur Paul-Emile, s.g.c.

Lastly, accounts of important incidents have been collected from members of the family still living. The summary of these promises to be useful in the verification of some necessary data.

Plan of this Report.

It seems advisable to begin this work by a résumé of the convert's family history, his education, his ordination to the Anglican ministry, and his sixteen years of service in that Church, because a knowledge of these facts will serve to demonstrate the reasons for the reorientation of his life.

The next section will state the disputed questions in the Anglican Church of that day, as well as the discrepancies in its position in the religious world. It will also attempt to show why it was practically impossible to procure either clarification of, or justification for them from any of the bishops under whom the young minister worked. In this section, too, must be related the gradual dawning of absolute certitude regarding the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, defined just three years before his ordination, which he had set himself to disprove with all the fiery zeal of a Saul of Tarsus.

Following this, will be an account of the steps taken by this convert to settle his doubts and difficulties. These include his change of diocese, his further change of curacies, until, in a final attempt to satisfy his conscience, he accepted the curacy of the then most ritualistic Anglican church in Ottawa, the new St. Alban's. This position he held

until sometime in the first six months of 1872, when he was finally convinced of the truth of the claims of the Catholic Faith, and decided to take the necessary steps to become a corporate member.

The fourth chapter will describe the four definite sets of problems, -- economic, social, moral, and personal, -- with which he was then confronted. Inevitably this will lead, in the next section, to the ultimate solution of his problems as demonstrated by his new way of life within the Catholic Church.

The concluding chapter will be a comparison of his individual problems with those faced by some contemporaneous converts, in an effort to show the sacrifices entailed in the purchase of the "Pearl of Great Price".

CHAPTER ONE

THE ANGLICAN MINISTER

Charles Frederick Street, the sixth of eleven children of John Ambrose Street and Jane Isabella Hubbard, was born, September the seventh, 1832, at the family residence, Willow Brook, in Newcastle, on the banks of the Miramichi River, New Brunswick. At the time of his arrival, the damage done to the home and property by the catastrophic Miramichi fire, seven years previously, had been repaired, so that the boy's first years were spent, as he describes, in a pretty cottage surrounded by "a beautiful garden, cultivated fields, and clusters of trees; nearby, flowed "a brook, the home of speckled trout, and, at its embouchure an extensive marsh, the resort of plover, snipe, wild ducks and geese."¹

His ancestors, on both sides of the family, were United Empire Loyalists, devoted adherents of the Church of England, if one may judge from the number of ministers of that persuasion, whose names are mentioned in the genealogy. That they were also concerned with the government and defence of their adopted land is evident from the family records which

¹ Street, C.F.; Genealogy and Biographical Sketches, Article 1, p. 2.

list a number of prominent government officials as well as a fair representation in the army and navy.

The Crest of the Street family traces back to the early eleventh or twelfth century; it is a lion rampant holding between its forefeet a "Catherine Wheel". It symbolizes that the members of that family are expected to be strong and valourous, heroic in their fidelity to principles and ideals, even though others should falter; this is emphasized by the motto, "Fidelis inter perfidos". To Mr. Street, this crest was not meant so much to inspire vainglory as to serve the purpose of impressing a sense of responsibility on those who had the right of its use.

He did have a real pride in his ancestry, as the number of detailed anecdotes in his records show. It was, however, based, not on the deeds of prowess themselves, but on the noble motives and characteristics which inspired them, and which, he hoped, would encourage his posterity in "the love of truth, piety, valour and integrity."² His idea of a perfect gentleman, in the Christian sense, had been exemplified by his own father, of whom he writes:

(He was) an upright and honourable man, a learned and painstaking and conscientious lawyer, a charitable and sincere Christian and a consistent member of the Anglican Church, a benevolent citizen, a devoted husband, and a generous and loving parent³.

2 Ibid. Article 1, p. 2.

3 Ibid. Article 1, p. 19.

Moreover, he mentions that this father of his often instructed his children on the necessity of being "truthful, honourable, industrious, persevering, kind, gentle, pious, and pure-minded.⁴" Surely a long list of virtues, but very much reminiscent of those he himself tried, in his turn, to inculcate in his own children.

There is no doubt, from the stress put upon it in his writing, that he valued social prestige, and worldly prosperity, its concomitant. But this was due, probably, to the fact that he suffered so much by the loss of both through the change in his religious adherence. While he, later, regained a great deal of the former, because of his sociable personal qualities, he never succeeded in improving his financial affairs, which were ever a source of anxiety to himself and his family.

His father, the Honourable John Ambrose Street, though a lawyer by profession, was the representative for the county of Northumberland, in the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick, for twenty-four years consecutively. Later, he held the office of Provincial Premier for four years, that of Attorney General for several years more, after which he was appointed to the Legislative Council and given the

4 Ibid. Article 1, p. 19.

title of Queen's Counsellor, with the right by letters patent to the title "Honourable" in perpetuity. He was one of the men who foresaw the benefits of Confederation of the provinces; in fact, it was because of his stand on this question that he was defeated in the elections of 1865. He died suddenly that same year, and a record states that, as a mark of respect to his memory, all places of business in Fredericton were closed on the day of his funeral.

From 1845, the family had resided in Fredericton, where the boy, Charles Frederick, received his high school education under Mr. George Roberts⁵, and his college training at the University of Fredericton, where he obtained both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

By this period of his life, he had determined to devote himself to the Anglican ministry, so, in 1852, he undertook the study of theology at the General Theology Seminary, which was controlled by the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the city of New York.

In 1855, he returned to Fredericton and resided with his parents until he was raised to the diaconate in the following year. He was then appointed assistant to the Anglican rector at Newcastle. The year of 1857 saw him ordained to the ministry in the Anglican cathedral of Fredericton, by

5 Ibid. Article 1, p. 22.

Bishop John Medley of that diocese. He was, at once, inducted as rector of Bathurst, an extensive mission in Gloucester and Restigouche counties, New Brunswick. There he married, in 1860, Miss Lucie Audubon Kendall ten years his junior. She became the mother of three boys and two girls within the next nine years. On account of the arduous missionary life, and because of his wife's frail constitution, Mr. Street found it necessary to ask to be moved to a less onerous post. The farewell address made by those good people has been preserved in a newspaper clipping of 1862. It reads, in part:

The deep and active interest which you have taken in the propagation of the Gospel during your residence in this county, will ever be remembered by us, as your labours have laid a foundation upon which the Church may hereafter be firmly established amongst us. You have held regular services in places where the ministrations of the Church were scarcely known. . . . The first visit of a Bishop of the Church of England to these parishes, and the first Confirmation held amongst us, took place during your ministrations."⁶

His work had evidently been zealous and fruitful!

Prince William and Dumfries, in the county of York, were his next charge. He remained there until after his father's death in 1865, when he accepted a curacy at Picton, Ontario. His reception by the Anglican people of that place must have been sincere and heartfelt, as an anecdote relates that he and his wife were the recipients of a furnished house,

⁶ Address to Rev. C.F. Street in the Chatham Newspaper, (date not given), (no vol.), (no number), 1862.

supplied with provisions sufficient to start them well into their new life.

In the summer of 1867, records⁷ tell that he substituted for Reverend Dr. Geddes at Christ Church, Hamilton, Ontario, but, by the autumn of that year, he is listed as a curate to Dr. Lauder of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa.

When a vacancy occurred, after a year or so, at the new St. Alban's Church, the Reverend Mr. Street was transferred to it, and in the reports of the synods of the Church of England for 1869 and 1870, he is not only named as the curate, but also as the director of Windsor College, a select school for boys.

Towards the opening of the year, 1871, Mrs. Street had become so ill, that a complete change of climate was advised; a move was made to Lacrosse, Minnesota, but the stay there was brief as she succumbed to the fatal malady on March the seventeenth of that year. The stricken family returned to Ottawa immediately, and the ministerial work was continued at St. Alban's and Windsor College. That he had felt her loss keenly is shown in a tribute paid to her memory, in his writings, after forty years. It runs thus:

Her death was an irreparable loss to her little children. She had been a faithful and loving mother, and an amiable and devoted wife. During the period of her married life, she was an example of patience, unselfishness and charity; she bore all those crosses and trials to which the wife of a clergyman is subjected, with cheerfulness and resignation.⁸

⁷ Kingston, Wm. Lightfoot, Journal of Proceedings, Church of England in Canada, Ontario (diocese) Synod, 1863-1921.

⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

In the autumn of that same year, 1871, while still directing Windsor College, and holding the curacy of the same Anglican church, Mr. Street decided to acquire more fluency in the French language, and since the Ottawa College was but a few blocks from his home, he sought the desired help there. Reverend A. Paillier, O.M.I. offered his time and services. The result is reported in a letter, written two years later to Reverend P. Martinet, O.M.I., the secretary of the Congregation, by Father Paillier:

La plus remarquable de ces conversions a été celle d'un ministre épiscopalien. Ce monsieur avait desservi successivement plusieurs paroisses, mais ses tendances trop catholiques, qu'il ne pouvait faire accepter à ses ouailles indociles, firent qu'il songea à se démettre de ses fonctions pastorales. . . . Il vint un jour au collège demander s'il pourrait obtenir . . . des leçons de français. . . . De purement grammaticale . . . la conversation . . . devint bientôt religieuse. Bref, après dix mois de conférences privées. . . M. Street et ses quatre enfants furent reçus dans le giron de l'Eglise catholique le 28(sic) juillet.⁹

Thus ended the ministerial career of the Reverend Mr. Street.

9 Extrait des Missions de la Congrégation des O.M.I., Vol. , No. 49, mars 1875, p. 477.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SEARCH FOR THE TRUE CHURCH

In his biographical sketches, Mr. Street states that, at the time of his reception of Anglican Orders, he was sincerely convinced that

the Anglican Church had been, during the 16th and 17th centuries, a special instrument of divine Providence to revive Apostolic doctrines in Great Britain, to promote the study of the holy Scriptures, and to banish errors, which, it was alleged, had been corrupting Christendom during the mediaeval age.

Also, he was

led to understand that certain English divines and statesmen with the approval and patronage of the King of England - Henry VIII - had delivered the people of that kingdom from the control of the Papal Supremacy, revived and organized the Anglican Church as a national and reformed religious body¹.

It is not difficult to realize the sincerity of his convictions, regarding the first declaration, born and bred as he had been in the midst of Protestantism, which for three centuries had held his ancestry in its grasp. It is less comprehensible that he should have considered the second statement as anything but a delusion, when these so-called divines and statesmen were in collaboration with such a patron as the grossly immoral Henry VIII. It is amazing to find that sincere and devout churchmen could believe that Almighty God

¹ Street, C.F., Genealogy and Biographical Sketches, Explanations, Article 2, p. 1.

would choose a man, royal though he might be, to reform the evils in His divinely instituted Church, when that man was deliberately and consistently refusing to reform himself. Would not the clients of such a patron stamp themselves as being in the same category as their king? Does not Holy Scripture, which they boast as being their sole rule of faith, warn them of the pit into which fall the blind and the leaders of the blind? The evident answers to these questions seem to have been undeducible for a large number of intelligent, earnest clergymen, since some, like Pusey and Keble, remained in error all their lives, while others, like Newman, Manning, and Faber, only saw truth after a period of years.

They all seem to have missed the point that such a revivifying and reorganizing as theirs claimed to be, would result in a system vastly different from the Church founded by Jesus Christ. They forgot, as Mr. Street says that:

This ecclesiastical government of the Catholic Church was divinely constituted and is therefore a perfect system of government adapted expressly to the administration of a great Kingdom².

2 Ibid. p. 10.

They must have forgotten, too, that as Mr. Street says again:

If it be admitted, a priori, that the Anglican and Protestant Churches revived apostolic doctrines and purified religion, in the 16th century, then the deduction must be, that the Catholic and Apostolic Church had erred, lapsed into heresy and been unfaithful to the trust committed to her as the pillar of truth, by her divine Master.

· · · · ·
If these were established facts in history, then we would be obliged to confess that the gates of Hell prevailed against the Church. But this desolation, our Lord had confidently predicted, would never occur to His Kingdom.

· · · · ·
Thus, the one or the other conclusion must follow, either that the solemn promise of our divine Lord, the Son of God, was not fulfilled or that the reformers libelled the holy Catholic Church, and that the Reformation of the 16th century was an imposition and delusion³.

But, at the beginning of his career, this young minister was not brought to see the Light in this manner. It came about in a rather unusual way. Shortly after his ordination, his father, the Honourable J.A. Street, successful professional man as he was, deemed it advisable to suggest to his clerical son a means of making himself prominent among his ministerial friends. The plan proposed was that the son should try to disprove some important doctrine maintained by the Roman Catholic Church. Now, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception had been defined just three years before the young man's ordination, and it had caused much criticism among the Anglicans. What better doctrine on which to work?

3 Ibid. p. 14-15.

His study and research were persevering and thorough; but the result, most unexpected to himself. He ended by having, not only a strong belief in, but a tender devotion to Mary Immaculate, Virgin Mother of God. It is touching to know that his baby daughter, while he was yet an Anglican, was given the Baptismal name of Mary. Moreover, his last sermon, preached, - with his resignation from the ministry in his pocket, - in St. Alban's Church, was on the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

Other disturbing circumstances had also arisen during the time of his research work, which caused him to doubt the "superiority of the English Church over the sister churches" as well as "the spiritual advantages which Protestantism possessed over Catholicism".⁴ These distressing discoveries were three in number: 1) "the discord prevailing in Anglican parishes, concerning dogma and ritual, so derogatory to the authority and the unity of the true Church which claimed to be pure and orthodox."⁵ 2) The distinct divisions in the Church of England itself, namely the Low, the Broad, the High, the Ritualistic. 3) The resultant cavilling between the pastor and his parishioners, or between the parishioners themselves, in their efforts to follow their individual principles.

4, 5 Ibid. p. 2.

The article, entitled Ritualism, in the Catholic Encyclopedia, written by Reverend Father Thurston, gives in some detail, the discrepancies in the Anglican position, and the reasons for the impossibility of their correction. In it he notes six chief points of disagreement, summed up, in 1866, which constituted the main features in the claims of the less extreme Ritualists. They were: the use of incense, of altar lights, of vestments, of wafer bread, of the mixed chalice, and of the eastward position, (that by which the minister, in consecrating, turns his back to the people). These questions were still being disputed, in spite of the fact that, six years previously, "a committee of the Lower House of Convocation expressed a strong opinion that most of these things should not be used in parish churches without reference to the bishop."⁶

It seems worth inserting here, that the young minister, Mr. Street, did enquire from his Bishop, how he was to act under this ruling. The reply advised him to follow the wishes of whatever rector he happened to have; in other words, if the rector was ritualistically inclined, then ipso facto, the curate was to become so. In one word, the rector's conscience must be the curate's also.

⁶ Thurston, Herbert, Ritualism in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. XIII, Special Edition, p. 90-93.

Further pronouncements concerning Ritualism, by a Royal Commission, by the Dean of Arches and the Privy Council, and by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council between 1867 and 1871, obtained neither entire obedience nor unanimity of opinion on ceremonial and disciplinary matters. When to such conditions as these were added public remarks similar to that of Dean Church of St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral, London; "The divines of the Reformation never can be again, with their confused Calvinism, with their shifting opinions, their extravagant deference to the foreign oracles of Geneva and Zurich. . . . the heroes of saints and churchmen"⁷, it is only to be expected that all thinking clergymen would be confused. To Mr. Street, there seemed a definite need for some central power, authoritative and revered.

But of much more serious consequence, were the disputed doctrinal questions. In his chapter, Explanations, these are listed at some length. They refer to regeneration in Baptism, justification by faith, the sacraments, the meaning of the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, the authority of the Church of England, private judgment, interpretation of the Bible, the priestly office of the clergy, Absolution, and the Symbol of the Cross. Surely a formidable

⁷ Barry, William, Oxford Movement in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. XI, Special Edition, 1913, p. 370-377.

array of difficulties! Yet they were so, not only for this one young minister, but also for a great number of serious and learned men, of the Anglican clergy particularly.

These discrepancies in the discipline and doctrine of the Church of England had led finally to four specific groups, each claiming to be the True Church founded by Christ: The Low Church, with its outstanding Protestant characteristic of attachment to the principles of the Reformation, and its determination to preserve the standards, then established, in belief and worship; the Broad Church, whose exponents, strongly influenced by rationalism, were averse to all that is dogmatic, supernatural, or miraculous; the High Church, divided from its off-shoot of Extreme Ritualism, chiefly in regard to the degree of Catholic doctrine and liturgy, which each party had decided to adopt. As William Perkins Bull quotes in his book, From Strachan to Owen⁸, for the High Churchman there must be plenty of "plain, pithy, and sensible doctrinal teaching"; the Low Churchman should not be deprived of "all reference to private experimental religion"; and the Broad Churchman is dissatisfied if there is too much stress on "clothes and gestures", and too little on "social and moral duties" . When such sentiments could be so openly declared, it is quite comprehensible that there would be cavilling between the clergy and the laity.

⁸ Bull, Wm. P., Mysticism in From Strachan to Owen, McLeod Ltd., Toronto, 1937, p. 283.

That religious principles were constantly being compromised, in an attempt to preserve peace, can be seen from the reports of the Anglican synods of Ontario alone, as well as from sermons preached, - and later printed - by several Bishops of the Church of England. To cite an example from a Charge Delivered by Right Reverend J. T. Lewis, Lord Bishop of Ontario, in Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa, as late as 1874:

It is urged that Auricular Confession and private absolution are essential to the soul's health; that the vague and indefinite Precatory Form of Absolution is almost nugatory, and that the Form in the first person, "I absolve thee" is necessary if not to validity, yet certainly to ghostly comfort. . . . (This is) not wholly objectionable, because it is allowable and allowed by the Church in the exceptional case of the visitation of the sick, but I feel bound to protest against claiming for such a form and such doctrine, a conscientious observance on all occasions of confession, when neither the one nor the other were ever heard of till the eleventh century⁹.

Since Bishop Lewis was, at one time, over the diocese in which the Reverend Mr. Street was stationed, one can readily perceive how the latter would be aware that the Church to which he owed allegiance, was, at home and abroad, being retarded in its spiritual life, its members checked in the growth of grace, because of their continual bickering, and its pastors, discouraged, in their parochial endeavours.

⁹ Lewis, J. T., A Charge Delivered in October, 1874, at Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa.

Once more, the need of a "recognized authority, centred in a particular officer or committee, to whom the clergy and laity were bound to submit irrespective of individual opinions"¹⁰ was apparent.

From serious and intelligent reading of the exponents of the Oxford Movement, then in its so-called Second Spring, Mr. Street became conscious of the fact that, so far in his career, he had only studied these questions of religion from the Protestant viewpoint; he determined to investigate them in the light of the Church of Rome. As Newman and his convert followers had done, he sought to link the teachings of the early Fathers of Christianity with those of the nineteenth century Anglican Church. Of course, it could not be done, and he was sufficiently honest and courageous to admit that his Church lacked the mark of Apostolicity, as he had formerly found it lacked the marks of Unity and Catholicity.

This knowledge was coupled with the cognizance that several churchmen, distinguished for their piety and learning, had severed their connection with the Episcopal Church in England and America, having tried it and found it wanting, and had embraced the Catholic Faith; some, who had been ministers, like Newman and Manning, had been ordained to the Catholic priesthood, thus admitting the invalidity of Anglican

¹⁰ Street, C. F., Opus cit., p. 3.

Orders, while others, like W. G. Ward and T. G. Allies, owing to various circumstances, had retired to the position of laymen. Mr. Street's conclusion was:

Taking into serious consideration the divisions and discord in the Church of England, the antagonistic views of religious dogmas which separated the Low and High Church parties, the indefinite standard of dogmas, the absence of a centre of authority in ecclesiastical questions and the numerous sects classified under the head of Protestantism, I began to lose confidence in the Church, of which I was an ordained minister; to me, she was no longer a "pillar of the Truth" or a true branch of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ¹¹.

His doubts led him to make enquiries on three points:

- 1) The origin of the Episcopal Church of England and of the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland.
- 2) What was the character of the corruptions in Christendom which demanded reform?
- 3) What was the effect of the self-styled reformation?

He gained the following information on the first question:

Prior to the sixteenth century, whenever any abuses crept into the Church, ecumenical councils had been summoned and their decisions had been accepted by the faithful as final; otherwise there resulted excommunication. But, by the sixteenth century, for various reasons which can be traced to the Renaissance, people had become more independent of all control, secular and religious. True, there were abuses needing correction; but the

¹¹ Street, C. F., Opus cit., p. 4.

rebels changed the doctrines instead of reforming the abuses.

As Mr. Street states:

It is an undisputed fact in history, that when Henry VIII ascended the throne of England, in the 16th Century, there was only the one visible Church recognized in Great Britain as the representative of Christianity. This was the "one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" referred to in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds¹².

The defection occurred because the ecclesiastical court at Rome refused "to accede to the petition of the King in a serious matter which endangered the moral discipline of the Church and the sanctity of the Sacrament of Matrimony."¹³ Henry VIII had hoped to keep the religious doctrines the same as they had always been, but he did not reckon with the other religious agitators, such as Cranmer and Cromwell. These tried to justify the part they played in the revolt on the plea of religious motives. Religion has been used frequently as a cloak to cover selfish ambitious motives.

The Presbyterian Church of Scotland was founded by John Knox, a fallen-away priest, who based his teaching on doctrines taught by Calvin in Geneva, as also on the prophecies of the Old Testament. It is blasphemous to believe that God would allow such a man to remedy wrongs in the Church founded by Christ.

12 Opus cit., p. 8.

13. Opus cit., p. 6.

In answer to his second question, regarding the type of errors, which required correction, he learned that some, who claimed to be bent on reformation,

wanted more freedom of individual thought in relation to dogmas and ritual than allowed by the Catholic Church; others contended that the old faith could be improved by the abolition of certain symbols and ceremonies. Some argued that the life-powers of the mediaeval religion were exhausted and that there was required a more spiritual religion than that of the Catholic Church with her sacramentals. . . . Certain rulers and statesmen of different countries found objections to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome in their respective realms and argued that the Chief Power of Ecclesiastical as well as Civil affairs should not be subject to any Foreign Potentate¹⁴.

Would not these demands, if granted, break down the unity of the Catholic Church? Had not these changes, now in their third century of trial, only brought into being numerous sects, which, without the means of grace from the Sacraments and from the Mass, were abandoning belief in God, and turning to rationalism and other pagan cults? Protestantism assuredly did not hold the key to eternal life. So thought Mr. Street.

Why, then, had so many Catholics, at the beginning of the Protestant revolts, cast aside so easily their faith? Once more, he found the reply. In England, for example, at the time the Act of Supremacy came into being, the bishops and priests of the British Isles had either to renounce allegiance to Christ's Vicar in Rome, and transfer their fealty

14 Ibid. p. 7.

to Henry VIII, or suffer persecution, or exile, or death. Since the majority of the clergy chose the latter alternative, the laity, left, like sheep without a shepherd, found themselves deprived of guidance and the means of grace; the ignorant and weak-minded were then easily persuaded by plausible teachers to join the reformed religion and the lower classes were thus carried away by "seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils".¹⁵

Once these difficulties had been cleared away, his next procedure was to study the history and government of the Catholic Church down through the centuries, so, in several pages of the same article, which has been quoted already in this chapter, Mr. Street draws a fine comparison between the government of the British Empire and that of the Church of Rome. This seems worthy of direct quotation:

. . . as the chief bishop or Pope has his representative in each ecclesiastical province, so the sovereign of the Empire of Great Britain has his representative in the person of the Governor General in each province or dependency. The sovereign exercises all powers of executive government through a Cabinet, composed of certain sworn Privy Councillors, who act as advisers of the Crown and conduct the public administration in accordance with law and constitutional usage. The Governor General is the representative of the King and administers the government of a colony or dependency by a cabinet chosen from members of the Privy Council of the country.

15 Ibid. p. 13.

Again, as the archbishop of a province is an essential factor in the maintenance of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope at Rome, so the Governor General maintains the sovereignty of England in distant territories. As the Pope at Rome is the chief link, which makes the Catholic and Apostolic Church one body throughout the universe, so the King of England is the chief link binding together the world-wide Empire of Great Britain.

But should a political revolution occur . . . compelling the Governor General to abdicate . . . then the Colonial government would become disorganized . . . Should the royalists prove too weak to enforce the re-instatement of the representative, then the Colony would be cut off as branch of the Empire. A similar effect, in the Kingdom of . . . the Church was produced, when the representative of the Chief Bishop in . . . Great Britain was forbidden by the civil authority to recognize the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Chief Bishop at Rome and when communion with the Metropolitan Church was sundered . . . The Archbishop of the Province had either to disobey the Chief Bishop, forswear his fealty to the Vicar of Jesus Christ or leave the realm of England¹⁶.

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Concerning the history of the Catholic Church, it has already been shown that the links of the long chain of Papal Succession had never been broken, that difficulties concerning doctrine or discipline had always been settled by Ecumenical, Provincial, or Diocesan Councils, convoked according to necessity. That Mr. Street studied the decrees of each of these councils is evident from his writing again:

16 Ibid. p. 10-12.

Thus, there were ecumenical councils held prior to and during the 4th century to define or confirm certain articles of faith contained in the Nicene Creed and to establish the canonical books of the holy Scriptures. Ecumenical councils were convoked in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th centuries. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the council called the Lateran, was summoned to guard against certain heresies and schisms which then were endangering the true faith. In the 15th century the Councils of Constance and Basle suppressed the sects of Hussites and Wyckliffites. The Ecumenical Council of Trent was convoked in the 16th century to check the religious revolution which had arisen and was spreading throughout Western Christendom¹⁷.

He saw the difference between the attitude of early Christians and the few presumptuous leaders of the Protestant Revolt, for he continues the above remarks by saying:

Notwithstanding the reverence with which the . . . defenders of the Faith in all ages regard the Councils, notwithstanding the authority which was associated with them, yet those few leaders of the Reformation in the 16th century presumptuously undertook to reform the Catholic Creed . . . Luther, Zwinglius, Calvin, Cranmer, Knox and others insulted the highest ecclesiastical Courts of Christendom, and appealed to secular rulers and civil authorities for co-operation in the super-human task of reforming and correcting the Catholic faith¹⁸.

The conclusion drawn is that these so-called Reformers had no marks of being "Men of God", lacking, as they did the gifts of the Holy Ghost and the virtues of "piety, humility, self-denial and learning."

This brought his attention to the saints of the counter-revolution. He travels back as far as St. Dominic

17 Ibid. p. 16-17.

18 Ibid. p. 17.

and St. Thomas Aquinas, the former of whom, he reminds his readers, preached against the Albigensian heresy, founded the Dominican Order, and instituted the devotion of the Rosary; the latter was a doctor of divinity, distinguished for his theological, moral and metaphysical works, especially for his Sum of Theology. St. Bonaventure is named as being a bishop and Cardinal, noted for "eminent skill in sacred learning". St. Charles Borromeo is appropriately given credit for correcting disorders in his diocese of Milan, and for reclaiming apostates from the Zwinglian heresy. St. Francis de Sales is remembered, because of his work in the territory of the Duke of Saxony, carrying consolation to the poor and upholding the true faith. According to the findings of Mr. Street, this saint was the means of converting 72,000 Protestants. St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis Xavier and their "staff of Missionaries" complete this miniature hagiography; their devotion to the education of youth, the instruction of the ignorant and their reformation of the outcast, as also their conversion of the pagans made a deep impression on the mind of this earnest student.

As he delved into the religious history of the next three centuries, he found there was "an incessant religious warfare between Protestants and Catholics, between Presbyterians and Episcopalians, between the Puritans and Separatists"¹⁹;

19 Ibid. p. 21.

the party dominating depended on the reigning monarch and the political party in power. He followed carefully through each reign, watching the effects, and his decision was

The religious freedom of Protestantism encouraged false teachers and plausible guides, who presumptuously perverted the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, who despised authority and formed sects remarkable for their eccentricities and distortions of the religion of Jesus Christ²⁰.

The Reformation had destroyed the unity which had through centuries prevailed in Christendom.

Added to the devastation caused by this lack of unity in the churches, this convert became aware that the Reformers had despoiled religion of necessary means of grace, by abolishing certain sacraments and changing "the nature and intention of the two they retained, defining them to be merely pledges and seals of divine promises, and denying them to be channels of grace."²¹ Penance, for example, was no longer a sacrament, the confession of mortal sin not an absolute duty, nor personal absolution from a duly authorized priest. As a consequence, Protestants were "deprived of essential graces in promoting spiritual life and eradicating besetting sins."²² He discovered that Catholics make frequent use of the sacrament of Penance for the remission of sin and to restore to the soul the friendship of God.

20 Ibid. p. 24.

21 Ibid. p. 26.

22 Ibid. p. 27.

He learned, too, that

Transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass are essential dogmas in the worship of the Catholic Church, founded upon the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and upon apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions. They realise the presence of the Son of God incarnate with His Church and His propitiatory sacrifice by which God the Father is daily moved to mercy with His people under the Christian dispensation²³.

He knew only too well that, to the Protestant reformers, the "Sacrifice of the Mass is a blasphemous fable and dangerous conceit, and "Transubstantiation is repugnant to . . . Scripture."²⁴ To refute such an iniquitous statement, he worked back through the Old Testament, using examples to show how God revealed His Presence to His chosen people, under the Mosaic dispensation, in the time of Zachary, and up to the occasion of Christ's Baptism, and then he adds:

The Christian dispensation exceeds preceding dispensations in glory and holds closer communion with the divine Persons of the adorable Trinity than was enjoyed in former ages²⁵,

because Christ had called twelve apostles to build up the one, holy Catholic Church, to organize the priesthood of ^{the} New Testament, to take the place of the Levites of old, to direct the form of worship and ritual, to administer the sacraments, to show how mankind is sanctified by the oblation of Christ,

23 Ibid. p. 28.

24 Ibid. p. 28.

25 Ibid. p. 29.

Who "offers Himself daily in the sacred mysteries of Christian worship in an unbloody manner for the redemption of our souls²⁶," by the priests of the Catholic Church.

That thought brings him to the Catholic meaning of Transubstantiation:

The conversion of the whole substance of the bread into Christ's Flesh and of the wine into His Blood; that the Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity of Jesus Christ are truly present in the sacrament of the Eucharist²⁷.

As Scriptural support of this doctrine he quotes St. John and St. Paul, using the statements which every Catholic has memorized from childhood days. But what is deserving of recopying is a paragraph indicative of his own reverent and appreciative attitude, although he ascribes it to Catholics in general:

The doctrine of Transubstantiation and the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass deeply and awfully affect the hearts of the faithful and pious Christians when they enter the temple of the Lord. Reverently kneeling before the Altar, the attention of the devout Catholic is entirely directed to the Passion of the Redeemer, by the prayers of the Liturgy. At the time of the Consecration and Elevation, the propitiatory sacrifice is so solemnly represented that the pious worshippers behold with the eye of faith the Lamb of God slain, the Saviour nailed to the Cross, and the Blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins²⁸.

Evidently much impressed by the devout adoration of the Catholic laity at Mass, he contrasts their reverent worship

26 Ibid. p. 30.

27 Ibid. p. 31.

28 Ibid. p. 31-32.

with that of Protestants receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; to these latter, as he knew only too well, it is merely a pledge of God's presence in a commemorative ceremony, though, in some Anglican churches, it is regarded "as an outward sign of an inward grace, a strengthening and refreshing of the soul²⁹" but the doctrine of the Real Presence, as taught by Jesus Christ and by the Catholic Church, and the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass is rejected. He claimed that the want of reverence in the Protestant services could be imputed partly to the disuse of vestments, altar lights, flowers, incense, and other ceremonial, all of which tend to draw the mind through the appeal to the senses.

The rejection of the sacramentals by the Protestant sects was done because they were supposed to encourage formalism, superstition and idolatry; these reformers professed to be substituting a spiritual religion, a religion of the heart. But, by the nineteenth century, unprejudiced divines had come to see that such a religion is exposed to many snares and abuses; those sects, without sacramentals, were noted for hypocrisy and cant, drawing nigh to God with their lips rather than with their hearts and losing reverence for the House of God and for their clergy. Many thus "lost sight of the visible

29 Ibid. p. 32.

Church of our divine Lord as the Kingdom of God and they have encouraged rationalism and atheism."³⁰

The exposition of the doctrine of Purgatory, which follows in this same chapter, is testimony of deep reflection on the definition decreed by the Council of Trent, but the term is confused with Limbo, a rather surprising error, until investigation shows that St. Thomas Aquinas and the Schoolmen of the middle ages differed in opinion concerning it from St. Augustine and the African Fathers, and that its definition, like so many others, was only settled at the Council of Trent. Mr. Street, however did emphasize the reasonableness as well as the antiquity of the doctrine of Purgatory, and he felt strongly that the standards of morality and piety had been lowered by the Reformers in their perversion of Christ's words concerning damnation. To him, it was a source of real comfort to find out that the souls of those who die in venial sin or who have to pay the temporal punishment due to mortal sins, which have been forgiven, can be "helped by the prayers of the faithful and, above all, by the acceptable sacrifice of the Altar."³¹

After his exploration of the Catholic teaching on the Invocation of Angels and Saints, he was convinced that instead

30 Ibid. p. 34.

31 Ibid. p. 39.

of it being idolatrous, as Protestant sects believe, it is an exemplary manifestation of brotherly love; that, with the doctrine of Purgatory, it establishes a "mysterious communion throughout the whole human family"³²; that it is

founded not only on divine revelation and the testimony of the Church, but upon the guidance of our reasoning powers, upon the ties of kindred uniting us with the saints and upon the communion which has always existed . . . between God the Father and his children, between the Saviour and the redeemed³³.

The final paragraph of this chapter, though too lengthy for quotation is deserving of a synopsis, at least, as it proves how spiritual had been the grasp of Mr. Street on the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. To him, it was a God-given means to generate the spirit of charity through the Church militant and the Church triumphant. God has made human beings interdependent in the spiritual order as in the temporal order. To the rich has been given the opportunity to advance the worldly prospects of the poor; to the influential, the power to promote prosperity among the less important members of society; to the strong, the ability to protect the weak; to the scholar, the wisdom and knowledge, to direct and instruct the ignorant. Members of the human race have these different physical and mental qualities, these varied tastes and capabilities, in order that, occupying different positions in life,

32 Ibid. p. 41.

33 Ibid. p. 43.

they may aid one another, and thus become interested in society at large, and thereby be united by a bond of charity and brotherhood. In the same way, the saints in Heaven have the power conferred on them by God to promote the spiritual welfare of men on earth; these latter are thus encouraged to call on their brethren now glorified in Heaven.

The study of this would-be convert had been thorough and painstaking, but the reward worth all the effort in the world, -- the gift of faith for himself and his posterity.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONVERT FACES A NEW LIFE

In the local news of The Ottawa Times¹, of Monday July 29, 1872, as also in a Toronto newspaper, The Leader², on the same date, are notices announcing the conversion of the Reverend Mr. Street. The item in the latter paper states that he had been some time previously a curate of Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa; the former adds that his four children had been received into the Catholic Church with their father. An account in the French Catholic paper of Hull, Quebec, of July 27, 1872, has a more detailed report, which runs as follows:

Abjuration. Ce matin, le Rév'd. M. Street, l'un des ministres de l'église St. Alban's, a abjuré la religion protestante à l'église St. Joseph. Les quatre enfants du Rév'd. M. Street ont été baptisés en même temps. . .

Cette conversion a d'autant plus lieu de nous réjouir que le Rév'd. M. Street était l'un des ministres les mieux instruits du pays. Il connaît plusieurs langues et ce n'est qu'après de longues années d'étude qu'il a embrassé la religion catholique³.

The convert had crossed his Rubicon, not as Hannibal, in his search for earthly glory, but with the sole intention of

1 Conversions, Local News, in The Ottawa Times, issue of July 29, 1872, Vol. , No. , p. , col. 1.

2 Canadian, news item, Ottawa, in The Leader, Toronto Vol. 21, No. 6926, issue of July 29, 1872, p. 1, col. 6.

3 Abjuration, nouvelle dans Le Courrier d'Outaouais, Hull, P.Q., vol. , no. , livraison du 27 juillet 1872, p. , col. .

following divine Truth, whatever might be the cost. Insurmountable obstacles he must have foreseen, but with a courage consequent of a total abandonment to the Providence of God, he was willing to face whatever might lie ahead.

As far as those difficulties can be judged at the present time, they seem to group themselves under four headings; namely, economical, social, personal, and moral. It appears wiser to deal with each separately, not only for the sake of detailed enumeration, but also for the purpose of an attempted explanation for their existence.

1) The Economic Problems.-- The earning of necessary funds was the only part of the economic problem which concerned Mr. Street. The distribution and consumption of whatever funds he possessed were always assured by his family and anyone else in need. Yet the acquirement of means of support were never an anxiety to him. That is why one of the first slanders he suffered, after his conversion is so preposterous. It is described in a newspaper article of the True Witness and Catholic Chronicle, published in Montreal, on August 9, 1872. Its skill demands quotation:

An Important Conversion: On Saturday morning July 27, in the chapel of St. Joseph's College, Ottawa, Reverend T.C.(sic) Street⁴, a minister of the Church of England, and his four children were received within the pale of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, by the Reverend A. Paillier (sic), O.M.I., who had prepared the converts for their grand and final step. Mr. Street is a gentleman in every sense of the word, a man of Letters, Graduate of Oxford (sic) University, and his conversion will, we are sure, be hailed with delight by the entire Catholic community.

At first it was our intention to simply chronicle this important "change of faith" but during the past week rumors, untrue and malicious, have been industriously circulated by the former friends and admirers of Mr. Street. One Protestant gentleman(?) had the bad taste to state in a public place that "the minister had turned over for pecuniary motives; he was to obtain a very lucrative position, the Superintendence of the City Catholic School." We would inform this badly informed zealot that the Catholic Separate Schools of Canada have no fat salaries to dispose of; thanks to the illiberality of uneducated Protestants (Orangemen and Orange sympathizers) they are barely able to support themselves decently; therefore "the Minister", who - being an intelligent man - was all along aware of this, could not have expected any such assistance from any such source If these facts are known to the slanderers of Mr. Street, they should at once eschew falsehood and cant
(Sgd) MARK.⁵

As a proof of the falsity of the above charge, Mr. Street's means of support decreased considerably; he tried to maintain a school for Catholic boys, to parallel his former Anglican one, but it was not a financial success. It must have ceased operations by 1875, because, in that year, he

4 T.C. Street was a cousin of C.F. Street, and was elected the Conservative member for Welland, at this time.

5 An Important Conversion in The True Witness and Catholic Chronicle, Montreal, Vol. XXII, No. 52, issue of August 9, 1872, p. 5, col. 1.

is listed in the City Directory of Ottawa⁶, as employed in the Civil Service; from family tradition, he is said to have obtained then the position of secretary to Sir Hector Langevin, Minister of Railways and Canals. That position would have meant a fair salary, and he would have been in better circumstances as a result. He had, however, married again a young Catholic lady with as much faith and courage as his own, and, already, another family of little Streets were helping to use the extra salary.

In 1879, after the change in government, Mr. Street was transferred to the Public Works Department, and later, to the Finance Department, where he remained until 1913, when he was superannuated. None of these later positions brought a very large income, and as the second family gradually increased to the number of eleven, money had to be earned by extra work.

Before his reception into the Catholic Church, the question of the change that would be made in his financial status must have given him much food for thought. He had been born and bred in a well-to-do family; as a young clergyman, he had married, and his wife's relatives were equally prosperous; he had been educated in a classics course, which in nowise fitted him for the business world, nor did he possess

⁶ Street, C.F. in Ottawa Directory, 1872-1913, and in Family Memoirs.

any business aptitude to be developed. All his life he seemed to think that money was earned only to be given away to the first needy person he met.

While it is probably certain that he received no large remuneration during the days of his Anglican ministry, it is also sure that both his own and his wife's relatives rendered assistance gladly; they were thus helping to support the missions of their Church. After his change of religion, such aid was no longer forthcoming, although it must be said, in all fairness to his deceased wife's relatives, that they were very generous to the four children who claimed her as a mother.

But, even in his ministerial years, he had sacrificed a lucrative living allowance in order to undertake the curacy of St. Alban's Church, where even the rector only received an annual stipend, at first, of \$300. or \$500.⁷ He did this because the ritual followed there, seemed more in accordance with his ideas of proper divine worship; it is not surprising then to find him prepared to sacrifice still more, when he had found the True Church of Christ, whose liturgy left nothing to be desired.

⁷ Davidson, A.L., Difficult Years in Annals of the Parish of St. Alban the Martyr, Ottawa, 1942, p. 10.

It may be wondered why this convert did not enter the teaching profession in some Catholic College. There are two practical reasons: 1) He was only fitted to teach the classical languages, which the clerical professors on the staff would be well qualified to teach themselves. 2) Most probably, there was not sufficient remuneration offered, as the Catholic Colleges and high schools have never had any government grant, as an aid to their support, and the tuition charged was, perforce, inadequate, since the majority of the Catholics did not possess an abundance of wealth. Even if he had had a professional certificate to teach in the government high schools - which he did not have - he would never have secured a position, because of the bigotry.

Why did he not, then, use his talent for English in some branch of journalism? Again, there are two answers: 1) If he had tried to obtain a place on any secular paper, he would not have been accepted, once more owing to religious prejudice. 2) No Catholic publication of that time could have afforded to engage a full-time journalist; most of those papers managed to subsist through the zeal and self-sacrifice of the clergy and a handful of apostolic laymen.

This economical problem with which Mr. Street was faced was surely a difficult one to solve. How he did so will be told in the next chapter.

2) The Social Problems.-- It is only necessary to recall a few of the remarks in the reports of several papers, and particularly, the statements made by Reverend A. Paillier, in the letter already quoted, to realize that the previous social environment of Mr. Street, refined and learned as it had been, was closed to him. After his conversion, he had to forego the society of many for whom he had great esteem, because they refused to understand that he was but following his conscience in making the change from Anglicanism to Catholicism. To quote again from Father Paillier's letter:

Inutile de vous dépeindre . . . tout ce que le pauvre converti eut à souffrir. Les lettres méchantes lui arrivèrent de tous côtés, tant de la part de sa mère, de ses frères et soeurs, que de celle de plusieurs ministres, et notamment de l'Evêque anglican qui l'avait ordonné . . . Ses enfants eurent à subir bien des taquineries de la part de leurs petits compagnons d'enfance⁸.

And this persecution did not die easily. Years afterwards, so one of his daughters relates, as she was walking along one of the city streets with her father, they met a gentleman who ignored Mr. Street's greeting; as the child had noticed this behaviour before by the same person, she enquired from her father why he continued to bow to one who refused to return his salutation. The reply is worth recording: "I am bowing to his guardian angel".

⁸ Paillier, Rév'd. A., Lettre au Rév'd. P. Martinet, extrait des Missions de la Congrégation des O.M.I., No. 52, ~~des~~ 1875, p. 477.

Another instance, which occurred more than thirty years after his conversion, evinces that he was still paying the price of his change of belief. With one of his little girls, he was walking through the market, in search of some commodity which was scarce at the time; suddenly the child saw the desired article and tried to draw her father to the stall, but he hurried past. It was only when they were well out of earshot of the owner that he explained: "that woman used to be one of my parishioners, and she has never forgiven me for becoming a Catholic. It would only mean a scene if I addressed her".

Such annoying trivialities, often enhanced by some circumstance, which greatly increased their magnitude, and continued through the forty-two years of his Catholic life could have caused a hypersensitivity and a morbid introspection. The section, corresponding to this one in the next chapter will attempt to show how he worked out the solution of this type of problem.

3) The Personality Problems.-- This term, so over-used today, expresses exactly what is meant by the third kind of difficulty which confronted Mr. Street in his new life. True, his conversion left him with the same set of individual characteristics as he had developed in his earlier life, but

these could be, and doubtless were, responsible for the greater or less amount of suffering he experienced under aggravating circumstances. Judging from the opinions of those who knew him most intimately, as well as from the qualities which he most admired in others, it may be concluded, with a fair degree of security, that Mr. Street was magnanimous, courteous, gentle, and patient; he had high moral courage, great self-respect, and an unusual esteem for truth, honour, and independence. The refinement of his upbringing, however, had made him extremely sensitive, just as the affluence of his early environment had helped his lack of solicitude in money matters.

With such a combination of characteristics, it is not difficult to imagine how much and how often he was hurt, when he found himself snubbed, maligned, ignored, by many whom he still loved despite their present estrangement. How many times must he have been tempted to repay petty meanness in kind, to use his skillful pen in bitter satire, or his physical strength in well-merited retribution!

His dignified demeanour, resultant of his self-respect, was mistaken for pride by those who did not know him, while, at the same time, his paternal attitude, cultivated so conscientiously during his ministry, often embarrassed the younger members of his family, who feared his unsought help

might be considered officiousness. His youngest daughter remembers how often she hoped, as they boarded a street car, that her father would not feel it his encumbent duty to help some young mother, trying to manipulate a baby and a go-cart.

Again, the following chapter will try to reveal the effect on his personality, caused by his conversion.

4) The Moral Problems.-- After delving into definitions of morality in secular and religious texts, Newman's psychological point of view seems the best introduction to this section:

The sense of right and wrong . . . is so delicate, so fitful, so easily puzzled, obscured, perverted, so subtle in its argumentative methods, so impressionable by education, so biassed by pride and passion, so unsteady in its course, that in the struggle for existence amid the various exercises and triumphs of the human intellect, the sense is at once the highest of all teachers yet the least luminous⁹.

When Mr. Street, a few years after his conversion, read that thought by Cardinal Newman, he must have experienced a feeling of kindred sympathy and understanding, because he, too, must have had to reflect profoundly on the moral issue of the fundamental change, which his conscience and reason obliged him to make, in the cause of religion. Doubtless, his intelligence made him aware, that, without "the strong motives for

⁹ Newman, J.H., Conscience in Letter to the Duke of Norfolk, Longmans, London. 1874, p. 253-254.

obedience to the law, afforded by one's sense of obligation to God, and the knowledge of the tremendous sanction attached to its neglect¹⁰, he, quite possibly, might disregard the essential duties of that law. His reason had convinced him of the errors of the Anglican religion and the unimpeachable truth of the Catholic faith; for him, therefore, no other path was open to him than the one which led him into the Fold of Peter.

Judging from an intimate knowledge of him, through years of association with him the following problems seem to have been the most disturbing ones he had to elucidate:

1) Granted that the doctrines of the Catholic Church were those taught by Christ and His Apostles, that it, consequently, possessed all the marks of truth, and that its liturgy was the most reverential and devotional, would an all-loving God require, for the fulfilling of His Will, that one should sacrifice all worldly prospects and earthly happiness, and grieve one's friends and relatives to the extent of bringing total estrangement from them? This, most certainly, would be the price of entering the Catholic Church.

2) In the event of his becoming a Catholic, was it incumbent upon him to change the religion of his children? Was that not forcing them, unfairly, to make a change which

¹⁰ Joyce, G. H., Morality, in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. X, Special edition, 1913, p. 559.

they scarcely understood, and forego the advantages they would enjoy by remaining in the Anglican Church, where wealthy relatives would provide bountifully for them? Moreover, without these children, he could, after conversion, become a Catholic priest; should he not leave them undisturbed?

3) If he did not become a priest, because of keeping the children and having them baptized with him, it would be wiser for him to marry again. Had he the right to do so, when his economical status would be changed so considerably? Besides, where would he find any woman willing to marry a widower with four children, whose ages ranged from ten to three years?

4) As a Catholic layman, would he be living a life as dedicated to God, as his had been, when he was an Anglican clergyman?

These, and dozens of other questions required answers; fortified with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he found them.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONVERT LIVES THE NEW LIFE

As the author of the clever article in the True Witness and Catholic Chronicle wrote, Mr. Street had not been enticed into the Catholic Church by any delusion of "vast emoluments" to be garnered. He had foreseen the financial difficulties, but he faced them, as he faced all other difficulties, with unshaken faith in the Providence of God. When anxieties threatened to overwhelm, his favourite Gospel text was always:

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these.

.
Be not solicitous therefore, saying, What shall we eat: or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed?
For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.

Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you¹.

His keen sense of duty, honesty, and justice kept him, steadily and consistently, trying to make an income, sufficient for the nurture and education of his family. Nor did he ever fully realize that it was a lack of ^{monetary} ~~ability~~ ^{ability} within

1 St. Matthew, ch. VI, v, 28-33.

himself, which often caused him to fail to use an opportunity of increasing his income. Fortunately his wife helped to supply for this deficiency, and as he had great confidence in her judgment, he entrusted to her the care of the family budget.

Her endurance was sorely tried at times in this regard, as, for example, when he would arrive home on a Saturday evening with a side of pork, or a quarter of beef, or a crate of berries, absolutely oblivious of the fact that the preservation of these supplies would necessitate several hours of drudgery on the part of his already weary spouse. He had, always, as excuse for the purchase, that "it was a real bargain".

Another weakness he had, but of which he was aware, was his inability to resist the sales-talk of any book agent. This was the defect, surely, of the virtue of intelligence. In his business dealings, he bore a strong resemblance to Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield.

As he grew older, the oldest boys of the family sacrificed their high school education in order to increase the family revenue; later still, his oldest son in Ottawa took over his father's money matters and saw to his outstanding debts.

The insufficiency of wealth in Mr. Street's case was never due to extravagance. He did not allow himself, nor his sons either, to grow effeminate by indulgence in luxuries of any kind for any purpose; this restriction was never demanded of his wife and daughters.

He enjoyed outdoor pleasures, such as swimming, boating, and walking; his indoor amusement was chess or cards. These were all within his means, and gave him the desired relaxation. His children learned to enjoy all of these, except the game of chess; for that, he had to find outside friends.

The fact, that Mr. Street allowed others more competent than he to control his finances, is an evidence of his humility, -- a willingness to admit mistakes, and a desire to make amends for them in the best manner he was able. Then too, it must be conceded that his ~~foolish spending~~ of money was often evoked through his spirit of generosity and sympathy for those in need; surely a very pardonable offence in the eyes of God.

The changes of residence, after his conversion, which number eleven between 1872 and 1914, - the date of his death, - are suggestive of pecuniary difficulties also, although they might easily be attributed to the increasing number in the family, and to other causes of equal importance. However, though the rent of a house had always to be considered, in the family memories there is no recollection of overcrowded

sleeping quarters, nor scarcity of necessary commodities. The children were dressed well, even if in made-over clothing, an accomplishment in which their mother excelled. She, herself, was always told she was one of the best-dressed women of the city; the secret lay in her ability not only to make her own attire, but also to care for it. Her house-keeping talents equalled her skill in needle-work, so that the family thrived on good substantial meals, with many a little home-made extra for festive occasions. No wonder that her husband used to gaze at her in sheer amazement, invariably exclaiming: "Fannie, you are a wonderful woman!" She really was, for, without her, his economic problems would never have been solved.

When Mr. Street had determined to embrace the Catholic religion, Father Paillier was probably more aware than the convert himself of the heartaches which would accrue. One evidence of his forethought appears in records of the Baptismal ceremony, when it is observed that, instead of having only two sponsors for the five converts, he had arranged to have ten², chosen from nine different prominent families of St. Joseph's parish. By this means, he hoped to substitute new friends for the former ones, now estranged. The idea worked out so

² The godparents listed in St. Joseph's parish records are as follows: For C.F. Street, Mr. M. Higgins, Mrs. W. P. Scott; for John Ambrose, Mr. and Mrs. Kearns; for Douglas Richmond, Mr. Keogh and Miss Lily Birmingham; for Hilda, Mrs. Plunkett and Mr. Friel; for Mary, Mr. Brophy and Miss K. McDonald.

successfully, that, at the home of one of the sponsors, Mrs. J.J. Plunkett, Mr. Street met this lady's younger sister, who, within a year, became his wife, and in the many years of their married life, the mother of eleven children.

Another element of comfort, traceable also to the thoughtful intervention of Father Paillier, was the courtesy and friendliness, shown by many French Canadians, in Government circles, to the lonely Englishman and his family. The names and faces of some of these are still in the mind of the writer; for example. Archbishop Duhamel, who asked, each time, he confirmed one of the family, "Are you the last of the family?" There were others, such as Judge Taschereau, Sir Hector Langevin, and Mr. Lemaire, who did many an act of kindness in the first years of Mr. Street's conversion.

If Mr. Street had decided to enter the priesthood, the Oblate Fathers had agreed to educate his two sons, and the nuns of the Congrégation de Notre Dame would have taken the little girls. But, as so often happens, momentous decisions are dependent on trifling circumstances, and this time a heart-felt desire was quenched by the tears of a child: Mr. Street had left his two boys at the College and was about to leave his little girls, when the youngest, just three years old, cried so bitterly that her father could not leave her. Back he went to Father Paillier, and, on his advice, the idea of the priesthood was abandoned.

The enthusiastic devotion with which he had worked as a minister, was now directed, with the same ardor, towards the advancement of the Catholic cause. He was bent on being a scholarly layman, as well as a fervent one, in the church of his adoption. Henceforth he never ceased studying, and he used to count that day lost on which he had not acquired some new knowledge of religion. He tried to show his appreciation of the great gift, that God had bestowed on him, by disseminating his extensive information, chiefly by writing in the Catholic press. His zeal urged him, too, in the endeavour, described as follows:

Sous l'administration du Rév'd. M. Dacier, on songea enfin à bâtir une chapelle. L'idée première et le mérite en reviennent, de droit, à M. C.F. Street, ancien ministre protestant converti. Un jour . . . il demanda la permission d'adresser la parole au public, et proposa de commencer à construire une église. La proposition plut . . . Les arrangements préliminaires à l'établissement d'une paroisse furent pris . . . et l'on acheta . . . la maison de M. Street . . . Le presbytère était trouvé . . . En face du presbytère . . . un lopin de terre . . . fut acquis . . . pour une jolie petite église en bois . . . L'année suivante, 1887, . . . M. Eugène Barry fut nommé curé de Billing's Bridge³.

From the family memoirs there comes a homely little comment on the appointment of Reverend Father Barry as pastor at Billing's Bridge. It states that, when the good priest arrived to take over his parish duties, he had to reside in

³ Alexis, Révérend P., cap., Histoire de la Province Ecclésiastique d'Ottawa, Vol. 2, St. Thomas d'Aquin de Billing's Bridge (autrefois Gateville), Ottawa, p. 202.

Mr. Street's home for several months until another home could be found for the family. The parlour was given up to him as a bed-sitting room. The family counted it a great honour to have a priest living in their house, but it must have caused him much inconvenience to live in the midst of a family of lively, growing youngsters.

For the new pastor and his jubilant parishioners, God permitted a great trial. As Mr. Street wrote in an article, at the time: "In spiritual matters as in worldly, our hopes are often blighted at the very moment they are brightest⁴". On June the sixth, 1888, "un affreux cyclone passa par le pays en rasant fermes et granges et renversant de fond en comble la pauvre église"⁵ so wrote Père Alexis. In this sad state of affairs, Mr. Street again tried to be of assistance, and there is extant a printed page from some brochure, wherein he made an urgent appeal for aid from those in "other parishes who are enjoying continued prosperity" that they "may appreciate their blessings" and express their gratitude "by acts of charity towards those whom God has directly visited⁶". The results of this appeal must have been of some use, since, in the account of Père Alexis, it is stated that, within two weeks, the congregation had made plans, with the permission of the Archbishop to begin the reconstruction of their church.

⁴ Street, C.F., A printed page from some unknown brochure.

⁵ Opus cit., No. 3, p. 48 of thesis.

⁶ Same source as ⁴ above.

It is quite apparent that Mr. Street had allowed himself no time for self-pity, nor useless regret over the loss of affection and esteem, which he had suffered. He had found a curative in his family life, his office work, and in his church interests. God rewarded him for his sacrifices.

As the years passed by, his sisters and brothers began again to correspond with him, although his mother always hoped and prayed he would return to Anglicanism. The bitterness of many of his early friends was sufficiently assuaged to enable them to be on speaking terms, at least. Besides, his charity and sociability won for him many new associates who held him in high esteem. New converts came to him frequently to discuss their own problems, sure of a sympathetic listener and a sincere trustworthy adviser.

In his latter years, he did much writing for papers, he read a great deal, of which reading, the breviary was always a daily portion. Long before laymen were using a missal, he had procured a Latin one, such as the missionaries use, and he carried it always to Mass. Incidentally, his constant custom on Sundays was to attend High Mass; if he was receiving Holy Communion, that meant he would assist at two Masses, as, in those days, Holy Communion was not distributed at High Mass.

His devotion to the liturgy of the Church was inspiring, and many was the lesson his children could have learned, if they had had less human respect concerning the opinion that others might have of them, if they followed the example of their father in church.

His magnanimity was proved through his life most noticeably by the fact that he never allowed any criticism of any Protestant denomination, nor did any of his children ever hear him condemn or criticize those who had condemned and slandered him when he became a Catholic. The letters to which Father Paillier refers, from his mother, his sisters and brothers, as also those from his Bishop and his fellow ministers were never spoken about; if his children heard of them, it was only by accident.

The paternal attitude, which he had exercised so assiduously during his early life, towards his parishioners, broadened to include all human beings in distress. In his charity he exhibited the courtesy of a mediaeval knight, regardless of the individual concerned; he had truly learned to see Christ in his every neighbour.

Unpractical he may have been, as at the time of the Hull-Ottawa fire, in 1900; his wife used to tell that just about one hour before their home was burned, her kind-hearted husband brought into the house a poor old woman, whose home

had already been destroyed. Then he lighted the fire in the stove to make the needy creature a cup of tea, while his wife tried to arrange for the moving out of whatever valuables she thought might be salvaged. Naturally she always thought that her husband should have been helping her rather than one towards whom, she maintained, he had no obligations. It was ever a mooted question in the family as to which one was in the right.

The most difficult moral issues with which the convert had to struggle, were those concerning the doctrines taught and believed in the Catholic Faith. In chapter two, his manner and method of dealing with them has been shown. In chapter three, however, an attempt was made to state what other moral problems, resultant of the first set, demanded a solution.

The first difficulty was in regard to the obligation imposed on him, once he was convinced of the truth of the Catholic Church. Mr. Street, who read and studied the Bible every day of his life, must have found the answer as it reads in the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapter ~~13~~:

Do not imagine that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have come to bring a sword not peace. I have come to set a son at variance with his father, and the daughter with her mother, and the daughter-in-law with the mother-in-law; a man's enemies will be the people of his own house. He is not worthy of me that loves father or mother more; he is not worthy that loves son or daughter more; he is not worthy of me that does not take up his cross and follow me⁷.

That left no loop-hole, as far as he was concerned. Cost what it might, his duty lay in walking in the path which his newly found faith marked out for him.

The second question, which referred to the four children being baptized as Catholics, was able to be answered by means of a comparison: - If a father knows for a certainty, what constitutes the best nourishment for his children, would he be acting conscientiously by continuing to give them substitutes? Or, if he knows where he can obtain the best form of education for those children, would he be satisfied to give them anything less than that, because of the sacrifice he himself would have to make? Surely then, since parents determine what is best for the bodily needs of their little ones, it is infinitely more reasonable that they act in the same manner concerning the souls of those for whom they must answer to God.

As far as depriving these children of earthly wealth, through bringing them into the Catholic Church also, he reasoned,

7 St. Matthew, Chap. X, verses 34-38.

and rightly so, that it was much better to deprive them of wealth in this world, in order to assure them of heavenly riches, that meant eternal happiness.

It has already been told how it could have been possible for the convert minister to become a Catholic priest, if that had been the design of God for him; that plan, too, would have provided for the children remaining under Catholic tutelage. The circumstance which prevented its accomplishment has already been described.

His anxiety about ever finding any person brave enough to marry him, situated as he was, proved unnecessary, as he was married exactly one year after his entrance into the Catholic Church, to the extraordinarily gifted wife already delineated.

The last important problem which demanded solution, was that concerning the good he might be able to accomplish as a Catholic layman, in comparison with what he had been able to do as an Anglican minister. He reasoned that his work in the latter capacity would be of little avail, once he knew the errors of its doctrines; therefore, since he was being prevented, through no fault of his own, from being a priest, then, in his life as a Catholic layman, God would give all the graces necessary to fulfil the end for which he was created.

Altogether, Mr. Street's Catholic life was calm, but never lacking in energy, resigned but not apathetic, trustful but not presumptuous, religious but not fanatical, happy but not unrestricted. In fine, he had grasped its meaning and he strove to live according to the command of Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself, for the love of God⁸".

⁸ St. Matthew, Chap. 22, verses 37-39.

CHAPTER FIVE

RAPPROCHEMENTS WITH OTHER CONVERTS

Biographical literature is of interest to all psychologists; that of converts is of special concern to Catholic students of that branch of knowledge, because therein is revealed not only the working of the human intellect, but also the result of Divine light and grace upon that mental endeavour. Moreover, this class of literature exerts great influence on Catholics, by increasing their appreciation of the gratuitous gift of Faith, and it renders valuable aid to those groping their way into the True Fold through the narrow gate, which is pillared and arched by sincerity, humility, and fortitude.

In the lives of those seekers after Truth whose varied tenets of belief travel the whole gamut of religious sectarianism, and whose range of occupations reach from the highly professional to the simplest mechanical, there is apparent a definite unity of purpose and desire, that of finding the Church which Christ founded, in order to work out their eternal salvation in security and peace of soul.

Cardinal Manning has said that "between the beginning of difficulties, misgivings, and fears that may prove vain, and the moment when these become convictions, a considerable time may elapse". While the time-element is indicative of

the celerity and the profundity of one's mental grasp, the psychological constituents of all conversions are much more worth research, revealing, as they do, how manifold are the means God uses in the process of bringing souls to Himself. In this regard, there seems ever to be a definite relationship between the trends of the times and the avenues of approach to the Catholic Church. To quote Father Hecker, founder of the Paulists:

The man who establishes the historical identity of the Church of today with the Apostolic college says the doctrines now taught must be true; the man who perceives the identity of the Church's doctrines with his own highest aspirations also proves them true. The man who has become responsive to the primitive action of his reason says that the Church, which is its only authoritative exponent, must be a divinely appointed teacher¹.

According to him, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the three avenues which led to Catholicity were those of philosophy, history, and mysticism; not that each convert was listed under only one of them, since it is quite usual to find an individual influenced by all three. "The Spirit breatheth where He will". However, the criterion that proves He is the guide is the soul's ready obedience to the voice of Holy Mother Church.

¹ Walter Elliott, Life of Father Hecker, New York, Columbus Press, 1891, xvii-428 p.

To demonstrate here the rapprochement between Mr. Street and other converts from the Protestant sects, Cardinals Manning and Newman have been chosen as representing English converts of the nineteenth century, while Orestes Augustus Brownson and Isaac Thomas Hecker, typify those of the United States of the same period. The four preceded Mr. Street, by some thirty years, in regard to their conversions, but all of them had created such a stir that repercussions were felt for long throughout the English-speaking world. For that reason their example made a great impression on the young New Brunswick clergyman.

None of the four could claim to be as purely Anglican as the Reverend Mr. Street. True, Manning was educated in the precincts of Anglican schools and of Oxford University, but his mother was descended from a French Huguenot family, and, it is now known that his paternal grandmother was a steadfast Irish Catholic. Newman's mother had very decided Calvinistic tendencies, which she tried to impress on Newman as a boy; Brownson, began as a Congregationalist, turned to Presbyterianism, then to Calvinism, abandoned that to become a Universalist minister, then an Independent preacher with no belief in Divine Revelation. Fortunately the Workingman's Party, a periodical, which disputed questions of capital and labour, showed him the necessity of some form of religion; he tried Transcendentalism, but also found it wanting, then

delved into Anglicanism, but not being able to accept it, he went further and found Truth at last in the Church of Rome. Isaac Thomas Hecker began life with no formal teaching of religion, but from boyhood on through early manhood, he diligently sought for Truth in every available Protestant source. On Brownson's advice, he investigated Anglicanism; while attracted by the beauty of the Episcopal service, he found that Church tainted by Calvinism, broken down by the license of dissent, ruled by extremely lax discipline. Shocked by the errors, the incompetency, the lack of a central authority, he continued his enquiries until he found a divinely authorized and divinely assisted interpreter and teacher in the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, as each of the others likewise did.

Once these five men had embraced Catholicism, it is fascinating to watch the march of their later lives. Brownson, under the suggestion of Bishop Fitzpatrick, took up again the publication of the Boston Quarterly Review, but, as he naively said, the name Brownson was substituted for Boston, "to save the fair name of Boston". With this weapon at hand, he not only attacked the errors of Protestantism, but he tried to build up amongst apathetic or indifferent Catholics, a sense of responsibility in regard to their duties as American citizens. His style was eloquent, clear, precise, vivid, capable of

defeating any opposition, but most unlikely to win over any opponent. Towards the end of his life, influenced by his old friend, Father Hecker, he strove to do what he had earlier criticized Newman for doing, namely, to look for the kernel of truth in the mass of error, and use that as a foundation on which to build the whole edifice of truth. In the early stages of his convert life, however, he felt impelled to drive home the truth, if necessary, by a deadly thrust. Naturally, this method induced retorts, sneering and bitter. His conversion to Catholicism was declared just one more attempt by him to play a part "on the stage, in the character, for the time being, of an ecumenical council²". Nothing daunted, he pursued his work, fighting ever on the side of justice, trying to right wrong wherever he found it, and asking for no approval except that of his own conscience, under the guidance of Holy Mother Church.

He did have one great source of comfort, besides what the Catholic religion had brought him, and that was in his family life, for his wife and eight children followed him into the Church. With a temperament such as his, friends were few and enemies numerous, but even when buffeted by recriminations from all sides, he had in the Catholic Church, the happy

² Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Orestes A. Brownson, A Pilgrim's Progress, Little, Brown, Boston, 1939, 305 p.

solutions of the central problems of life.

Isaac Thomas Hecker had once said, "I don't want infallibility or reason by itself, but I do think that I want them both combined in life. When I am sure of that combination in any Church, I shall be a member³". He had found what he sought in the Catholic Church in the twenty-fifth year of his life. Though he and Brownson had been received into the True Church together, or almost so, "the wide liberties of a universal religion gave ample scope and large suggestion for the accentuation and development of their native differences⁴". Brownson's journalistic gift kept him as a belligerent in the cause of truth and right; Isaac Hecker, though a mystic, was also called to an external apostolate. His method of approach, however, was that which led him back to his Protestant friends, but always gently bringing with him a Catholic message.

Acting on spiritual advice, he became a Redemptorist, then, owing to misunderstanding with his superiors, he was dismissed. The Holy Father dispensed him from his former vows, and gave him permission to found the new congregation whose work was to be the conversion of his non-Catholic countrymen. For thirty years he strove unceasingly to recommend

³ Katherine Burton, Paradise Planters, Longmans, London, 1939, x-327 p., p. 145.

⁴ Walter Elliott, Father Hecker, Columbus, New York, 1891, xvii-428 p., p. 64, 178.

the Catholic faith to the democratic American people, who had been reared in hostility to the Church on the claim that it was both foreign and anti-democratic. In the meantime, Father Hecker had become the Superior and co-founder of the Missionary Priests of St. Paul the Apostle; associated with him were four other former Redemptorists, Fathers Walworth, Hewit, Deshon, and Baker.

It is generally considered a fact that Father Hecker did for America what Cardinal Newman did for England. Both had read themselves into the Catholic Faith by a profound study of the decrees of the Council of Trent. Both tried to build the spiritual life of the individual on the foundation of natural virtues, already existent, at least to some extent. Father Hecker used to say: "No two noses are alike, much less souls. God never repeats⁵".

One may well imagine the amazement of Bishop Fitzpatrick and Bishop McCloskey, to whom Hecker applied for admission to the Church, when he informed them that he had been instructing himself by perusing the Catechism of the Council of Trent. In the case of Newman, too, it is revealed by Tract Ninety that he had endeavoured to bring the famous Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church into alignment with the doctrines defined by the same Council of Trent.

5 Op. cit., sic 4, p. 61.

Lastly, Newman, himself, wrote to Father Hewit after Father Hecker's death, mentioning the resemblance:

I have ever felt that there was a sort of unity in our lives, that we had both begun a work of the same kind, he in America, and I in England⁶.

Newman, however, had a decidedly different background from Father Hecker. He was a typical English gentleman, the son of a banker. For thirteen years before his conversion, he had written the now famous tracts, which made him the leading spirit in the Oxford Movement. After his entrance into the Catholic Church, he continued his writing, so lucid in style, so rigid in logic, so deep in spirituality, so uncompromising in principles of religion, that its power of attraction was almost miraculous, and its moral influence extensive beyond all expectation.

But his life as a Catholic priest was a suffering one. He had been forced to surrender connections with Oxford, his great earthly love, for the first fifteen years after his ordination. His rectorship of the Dublin University was one long series of misunderstanding, ending in the defeat of his cherished ideas. Yet he could courageously say towards the end of his life that, though he had been tried and afflicted more as a Catholic than as an Anglican, never for a moment

⁶ John H. Newman, Letters from Cardinal Newman, in Appendix, Life of Father Hecker, op. cit.

had he wished himself back, nor never had he ceased to thank God for His mercy in enabling him to make the great change. And he added: "Never has He let me feel forsaken by Him or in distress, or any kind of religious trouble.⁷" It is no wonder he could quote: "Numquam minus solus quam cum solus", with faith as strong as his had grown.

Cardinal Manning's reception into the Church had been brought about by a gradual weakening in his belief of the indefectibility of the Church of England. In 1850, when the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council directed the institution of a clergyman accused of unorthodoxy, by the so-called Gorham Judgment, Manning's faith was deeply shaken. This clergyman had refused to admit Regeneration by Baptism, yet he was inducted as a rector of an Anglican parish! The last straw came with the defeat of a bill in Parliament, by which the House of Lords would have been given power to decide all doctrinal questions for the Church.

The confidence which the Catholic hierarchy had in the sincerity of his conversion is evident by the fact that he was ordained to the Catholic priesthood within two months. That they made no mistake is clear from the convert's own words, thirty-five years later, when writing to Archbishop

⁷ John Henry Newman in What Does It Feel Like? Series 1, issued by The Catholic Unity League of Canada, London, 1921.

Lynch of Toronto, describing his feelings as a Catholic:

From the hour I saw the full light of Catholic faith, no shade of doubt has ever passed over my reason or my conscience. I could as soon believe that a part is equal to the whole, as that Protestantism, in any shape, from Lutheranism to Anglicanism, is the Revelation of the day of Pentecost"⁸.

Even in Manning's time as Archdeacon of Chichester, when he made his periodic visitations, reports show his true spirit of zeal and generous self-sacrifice, his love for the poor, his resolute resistance to wrong, and his efforts for reform of abuses. As a Catholic priest, then as provost of Westminster Metropolitan Chapter, and last as Cardinal-Archbishop, his active work continued along the same paths, but, as it grew in extent, so did his knowledge and love of Catholic truth.

The contrast between the two English cardinals is striking. Newman was a thinker, a poet, a University man, a scholar, but sensitive and introspective; Manning was a statesman, and administrator, possessing an indomitable will, resourcefulness, tact, and sociability. Newman was termed a Liberal Catholic, because he emphasized, in the ministry of the Church and the Communion of Saints, there ought to be no form of coercion, which might invade freedom of conscience. He saw

⁸ Henry Edward Manning in What Does It Feel Like? Series 1, issued by The Catholic Unity League of Canada, London, 1921.

the Church "as a channel of divine grace only by virtue of her sacraments and her discipline; and her priest as but an intermediary"⁹. Cardinal Manning, on the other hand, was ultramontane and bureaucratic, minimizing the role of the laity and magnifying that of the clergy in the administration of the Church. Newman's idea of a Catholic college in connection with Oxford was baulked by Cardinal Manning, as being impractical. Yet both these men had only the good of the Church in view, both were striving towards the same goal, but attaining it by very different means. In the sight of God, each proved for the other a means of real sanctification.

What points of similarity exist between these four converts and Mr. Street, the subject of this thesis?

The first striking point of resemblance lies in the fact that all five, before their conversion, had striven to find for the respective societies in which they lived, a loftier ideal and outlook on life than the prevailing rationalism and liberalism of their era. All but one, Father Hecker, had been accredited ministers of the Gospel in some form or other; Orestes Brownson had the experience of five different sects; the other three had realised the deficiencies of the Church of England. After conversion to the Catholic Church,

⁹ Charles F. Harrold, John Henry Newman, London, Longmans, Green, 1945, (xv-245 p.) p.166.

though each found his life-work in a different path, all tended towards the same sternal goal.

All five, after conversion, wrote, not only in defence of the Catholic Church, but also, in order to propagate its doctrines. Each of the five was endowed with unusual mental gifts, and each used those gifts, - with a large variation of style and presentation - to the best possible circumstantial advantage. Each had to suffer through the use of these literary talents: Brownson's polemics were thought too bitter and rash by the Catholic Bishop Fitzpatrick, and they brought him much scorn and ridicule from Protestant leaders; when Father Hecker strove to develop the apostolate of the Catholic press, very little encouragement was given by a large percentage of the clergy, who felt that the building of Catholic churches and schools required all their financial support. The Catholic World, begun in 1865, was a hazardous venture, since the clergy of America had little time for reading, and the educated Catholic laity were few and far between. Its continued publication was almost miraculous.

In England, though Newman's Apologia Pro Vita Sua brought Protestant opinion to his side, this was only after fifteen years of misunderstanding with Cardinal Manning, W.G. Ward, and Father Faber, his new co-religionists. He was blamed for being unorthodox, when he intended merely to justify

the individual's rights of conscience, and later, when he voiced his opinion concerning the untimeliness of the definition of Papal Infallibility.

Cardinal Manning, besides being accused of ultramontaniam and of bureaucracy, was charged with having entered the Catholic Church to gratify his ambitions; as the representative of the Holy See, in England, he had to try to explain the correct definition of Papal Infallibility to the English Protestants who, with fiery bigotry, had burned the effigy of the Pope placed by them in public places.

The opposing views of Newman and Manning evince the marvellous pliability and adaptability of the Catholic Church, which can enlist such opposite characters, making their very opposition serve her ultimate triumph as well as theirs. But such conquests are only achieved through much suffering.

In a similar manner, Mr. Street, as has been said, had much persecution to endure. In a Charge Delivered by the Anglican Bishop Lewis of Ottawa in 1874, there is reference "to a few secessionists in this city, not long since, who justified their conduct by the example of Latimer and Ridley they uphold the doctrine of auricular confession and private absolution . . .¹⁰". In all this it was well known that he

¹⁰ John Travers Lewis, A Charge Delivered at the Visitation of the Clergy of the Diocese of Ontario, Held in Christ Church in the City of Ottawa, Oct. 27, 1874.

referred principally to Mr. Street who had given his reasons for becoming a Catholic, in letters to Archbishop Lewis as well as to Archbishop Medley, who had ordained him in New Brunswick. Father Paillier, in referring to the sufferings inflicted on his convert says: "La conquête de cette belle âme par la grâce était complète, et les basses attaques dirigées contre M. Street ne firent que fortifier sa foi et mettre ses qualités . . . en relief¹¹." By one Anglican archivist, recently, Mr. Street was said to have gone into journalism after his conversion and to have been quite "turbulent". The bigotry has apparently been handed down in tradition, even if his name was erased from their church records.

Of the five converts, Mr. Street is the least known. There are two chief reasons: First, when he became a Catholic, he was so deeply hurt by the infidelity of his former friends, that he wished to disappear from the public eye. He had to teach himself to forgive and to forget, and the best way in which he could do that was by becoming engrossed in new friends and new interests. It seems greatly to his credit, that none of the letters which caused him so much suffering were left among his correspondence. His family knows of them only in recent years. In that he was magnanimous! Secondly, the

11 Op. cit., Reverend A. Paillier's letter.

events of his convert life placed him in circumstances where he had little time or opportunity for the use of his literary talents. His sphere of action differed as much from that of Cardinal Manning's as the little church he helped to build at Billing's Bridge differed from the great Westminster Cathedral planned by the same Cardinal. It is pleasant to remember here, that it is not what is given to God that counts, but the love with which it is given. Mr. Street's children all remember his favourite rhyme which seems applicable:

Were I so tall to reach the pole
Or stretch the ocean with my span,
I would be measured by my soul;
The mind's the measure of the man.

The keen desire of these five converts to spread the "Gospel Tidings" is not unexpected; it is a recognized fact that, in the last century, by far the greater amount of the best literary work done is by convert authors. This fact may be because the majority of these new Catholics have been from among the most intellectual and the most learned men of the period. Moreover, they are, as it were, saturated in divine truth, and the consequent rapture they experience urges them to proclaim their new knowledge to the whole world as the Apostles were urged on the day of Pentecost. As Mr. Street expressed it, in his article, entitled Nisi Dominus Frustra, there is a

mass of evidences . . . which appeals to us . . . to believe in God, to fear Him, to love Him with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our strength, to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put our whole trust in Him, to call upon Him, to honour His holy Name and Word and to serve Him all the days of our life¹².

Mr. Street did a great amount of writing for the Catholic Record over a long period of years. Unfortunately, little of it has been preserved, besides that compiled in his Genealogy and Biographical Sketches. The eight articles collected in this show a deep gratitude to God for personal and universal favours, a singularly spiritual view of nature, a sense of the nobility of man's destiny, and a keen understanding of individual responsibility to one's country and to one's God.

Like Cardinal Manning, and Mr. Brownson, Mr. Street felt it an incumbent duty to

make religion an important factor in the administration of the Government of the Country. The religious education of the youth should be as essential as secular education. The civil laws of the Country should be subservient to the moral laws. The divine Commandments and the authority of the Church representing God's kingdom here on earth, should be respected and protected. The people of a Nation should strive to be a holy nation . . . whose great ambition is to be numbered with the saints in life everlasting¹³.

It is interesting to note the respective views of these five converts, regarding Papal Infallibility, a doctrine so

12 Op. cit., p. 15.

13 Ibid., p. 17.

misunderstood by non-Catholics. Of them all, only Newman seemed to have difficulty in assimilating its real sense. Rome appealed to his intellect, but Oxford held his heart and he feared the effect that the pronouncement of Papal Infallibility might have on his Protestant friends, at the time of the decree of the Vatican Council, 1871. Father Hecker's comment was: "I have always heard the voice of Rome as that of truth itself", and on another occasion: "All I have to say is that if the Roman Court prevail, it is the Holy Ghost who prevails through the Roman Court¹⁴". Brownson stirred up trouble for himself by his very loyalty to Papal Supremacy; the Catholic immigrants to America knew they, too, were loyal to it, but they thought it imprudent and presumptuous for a convert to reiterate so frequently, that Papal Supremacy extended "even over the State". Cardinal Manning, in order to refute Gladstone's attacks on the question, wrote the three pastoral letters, and later, The True Story of the Vatican Council. As for Mr. Street, he shows how logical is the doctrine, stating: (1) St. Peter was the first chief foundation stone, according to Christ's command. (2) The Church is indestructible, through Christ's promise. (3) Therefore, St. Peter's successor must be infallible, when exercising ex cathedra his powers as Christ's vicar, in matters

14 Opus cit., p. 362.

of Faith and Morals. Then he traces the belief down through the history of the Church in a masterly manner.

A strong point of resemblance between Orestes Brownson and Charles Street was their broadminded view of the Catholicity of the Church. They both strove to prevent it being considered Irish or French or German or Italian or any other form of nationalism, since they could see the immense amount of harm that view would have on converts entering the Catholic fold. Brownson inveighed against this tendency with courage, but with bitterness; Street spoke frankly and courageously, but he could never be bitter.

Amongst all converts there is apparent a keen apperception of things spiritual; amongst these five, it is very marked. In the whole of the literature on the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, there is probably nothing more sublime than Newman's description in his Essay on Christian Doctrine, nothing more inspiring than Manning's writing on The Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost, never more courageous and gifted journalism than Brownson's in defence of the mark of Catholicity in the Church, never a more persuasive example of Mysticism permeated by humility and entire submission to God's designs than Hecker, no greater eulogist of the propitiatory Sacrifice of the Mass than the subject of this thesis, Charles Frederick Street.

The deep appreciation of the liturgy of the Church is another link in the rapprochement of these converts. Effusive outbursts over its beauty and solemnity are met in the writings of each one. But, perhaps the best and most concise summary of their respective opinions is found in the words of another famous convert, Professor R. H. Lord, of the graduate schools of Harvard, Vienna, Berlin, and Moscow:

The Catholic Church lays hold of another side of our nature by the beauty and variety of her services, the majesty of her venerable liturgy, the innumerable chords struck within us by her special devotions. But what is hardly less remarkable is the deep wisdom of the Church's disciplinary system and of those simple but effective instruments -- the Rosary, Indulgences, etc. (sic), by which she builds up the spiritual frame of her children as systematically and methodically as a good doctor guides his patients back to health¹⁵.

A final comment on the similar devotion of these five converts to the doctrine of the Church on the Invocation of Saints seem necessary. Brought up, as they had been, with the belief that Catholics practised superstitious forms of idolatry in their worship, there is a positive delight expressed when they have realized that, by this teaching in the Church, Catholics merely make use of their influential friends in Heaven, especially the Mother of their Redeemer, to intercede for them at the throne of God; that Catholics know these "Saints in Heaven have naturally great anxiety concerning the

¹⁵ Robert Howard Lord, in What Does It Feel Like? Series 1, issued by The Catholic Unity League of Canada, London, 1921.

spiritual welfare of their brethren here on earth . . . they are our brethren . . . members of the same Body"¹⁶ so, for that reason Catholics feel they may seek their sympathy as they would do if these saints were still on earth.

Converts, having lost so many friends because of their change of religion, are glad to discover that they have acquired new associates, capable of rendering perpetual aid, and never weary of so doing.

At the close of this chapter, there comes to my mind a paragraph from The Spirit of the Oxford Movement by Christopher Dawson.

For the men who count in the end are not the successful men who rode triumphantly on the crest of the wave of change, like Napoleon, but those who are indifferent to success or failure, who despise quick results and preserve their spiritual integrity at all costs¹⁷.

They are the beacons to light the way of those in the mists of doubt.

¹⁶ C. F. Street, Explanations in Genealogy and Biographical Sketches, Article 2, p. 43.

¹⁷ Christopher Dawson, The Spirit of the Oxford Movement, Sheed and Ward, London, 1934, p. 2.

CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter of this thesis has been reached. It is earnestly hoped that the aims, expressed in the Introductory Chapter, have been attained.

In Chapter One, an effort was made to provide evidence that the family background, the education, and the ministerial training of Charles Frederick Street had prepared him to rise to prominence as a clergyman of the Church of England, in New Brunswick.

The next chapter revealed the causes and effects of his incipient doubts concerning that Church, their gradual development, and his final disillusionment in Anglicanism.

Chapters Three and Four demonstrated the resultant individual problems with which this earnest and zealous divine had to struggle, as well as the successful means he used in his endeavours to grapple with them.

Chapter Five introduced four other noteworthy converts, Orestes Brownson, Father Isaac Thomas Hecker, and the two illustrious Englishmen, Cardinals Manning and Newman. This was done for two purposes: (1) It serves to illustrate the far-reaching influence of these conversions, not only in the United States and England, but throughout the English-speaking world; not only in their own life-time, but down the years

to the present day. The subject of this thesis is but one example of the consequent perennial inflorescence. (2) It elucidates the reasons for the apparent oblivion into which the memory of Mr. Street disappeared, despite the magnanimity of his Catholic life.

Throughout this dissertation, there is frequent evidence of the continual compromise and inconsistency in the teaching and doctrines of the Anglican Church, so disturbing to a sincere and intelligent mind. This is in sharp contrast to the stability and congruity of the Catholic position, so much valued by converts to her fold.

Because of repeated reference to the spiritual director of Mr. Street, the Reverend Antoine A. Paillier, a zealous Oblate of Mary Immaculate, it is hoped that someone will be inspired to write the life-story of this Canadian Curé d'Ars.

Lastly, an ardent wish would be fulfilled, if this thesis were ever considered worthy of publication, and might, perchance, benefit even one single soul.

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APPENDIX I

C.F. Street: ARTICLE 2. EXPLANATIONS p. 31-32

The doctrine of Transubstantiation and the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass deeply and awfully affect the hearts of the faithful and pious Christians when they enter the Temple of the Lord. Reverently kneeling before the Altar, the attention of the devout Catholic is entirely directed to the Passion of the Redeemer, by the prayers of the liturgy. At the time of the Consecration and Elevation, the propitiatory sacrifice is so solemnly represented that the pious worshippers behold with the eyes of faith the Lamb of God slain, the Saviour nailed to the Cross and the Blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins.

Cardinal Manning: THE INTERNAL MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST
p. 412

The note of sanctity by which the Church in the world is known is the supernatural manifestation of the presence of the Holy Ghost. As the Holy Ghost is the Creator and Sanctifier of the Church, He is also its Guide and its Light. The presiding Intelligence which preserves it in the way of truth is the mind of the Spirit: and the voice of the Church is the voice of the Holy Ghost. When men deny the infallibility of the Church of Jesus Christ, they do not know -- at least so I trust -- that they are denying the office of the Holy Ghost Himself. And as the Church is His work, so all of us who are born again by Baptism, and grafted into that Church, become thereby the firstborn and the first fruits of the Holy Ghost. He dwells in us, . . . because we are the sons of God.

APPENDIX II

Lettre du R.P. Paillier au R.P. Martinet, 25 juillet 1875.

Tout à l'heure je vous disais mon révérend Père, que nos Pères desservent aussi une petite paroisse attenante au collège: c'est la paroisse Saint-Joseph, dont l'église est évidemment trop petite. Ses proportions mesquines ne font pas honneur à la population qui la fréquente, et jurent lorsqu'on les compare à celles du collège, qui sont plus grandioses. Cependant cette église est propre; chaque dimanche six à sept cents personnes viennent se presser dans son enceinte pour assister aux offices religieux. Tout s'y passe bien convenablement. Sept ou huit Pères y distribuent à tour de rôle le pain de la parole de Dieu à deux cents familles irlandaises et cinquante familles canadiennes-françaises. Le chant y est bon, grâce au bon nombre de voix choisies qui, sous l'habile direction du R.P. Chaborel, exécutent aux jours de grandes solennités les compositions sacrées des meilleurs auteurs. Comme les autres paroisses de la ville, la nôtre a sa bonne part dans les conversions qui s'opèrent chaque année parmi nos frères séparés. Je ne pense pas pouvoir être taxé d'exagération en portant à trente-cinq ou quarante le nombre des personnes qui depuis huit ou neuf ans ont été reçues dans le giron de l'Eglise catholique.

La plus remarquable de ces conversions a été celle d'un ministre épiscopalien. Ce monsieur avait desservi successivement plusieurs paroisses, mais ses tendances trop catholiques, qu'il ne pouvait faire accepter à ses ouailles indociles, firent qu'il songea à se démettre de ses fonctions pastorales. Il ouvrit donc, à quelques pas de notre collège, une académie fréquentée par vingt-cinq ou trente jeunes hommes protestants appartenant à de bonnes familles. Il vint un jour au collège demander s'il ne pourrait obtenir l'avantage de recevoir, de la part de quelques Pères, des leçons de français. On accéda à sa demande. De purement grammaticale qu'elle était au commencement, la conversation entre le professeur et l'élève devint bientôt religieuse. Bref, après dix mois de conférences privées, qui avaient lieu deux fois par semaine, M. Street et ses quatre enfants furent reçus dans le giron de l'Eglise catholique le 28 juillet, et le lendemain (dimanche), la paroisse qui ignorait encore son abjuration, fut toute stupéfaite lorsqu'elle vit s'approcher de la Table sainte celui que, trois jours auparavant, elle voyait se promener dans les rues de la ville avec la cravate blanche d'étiquette propre aux ministres protestants. Inutile

de vous dépeindre, mon révérend Père, l'émoi que la nouvelle de cette conversion causa dans Ottawa, et tout ce que le pauvre converti eut à souffrir. Les lettres méchantes lui arrivèrent de tous côtés, tant de la part de sa mère, de ses frères et soeurs, que de celle de plusieurs ministres, et notamment de l'Evêque anglican qui l'avait ordonné. Mais ce fut peine perdue; la conquête de cette belle âme par la grâce était complète, et les basses attaques dirigées contre M. Street ne firent que fortifier sa foi et mettre ses qualités et ses vertus en relief. Ses enfants aussi eurent à subir bien des taquineries de la part de leurs petits compagnons d'enfance, mais ils montrèrent une fermeté et une sagesse que Dieu seul sait inspirer aux petits enfants. Plusieurs protestants eurent cependant le courage d'admirer et de louer publiquement M. Street de ce qu'ils appelaient la noble indépendance dont il avait fait acte en cédant à ses convictions; quelques-uns même vinrent le trouver pour lui faire part de leurs inquiétudes de conscience. Mais, hélas! ce fut tout. Les considérations humaines ont étouffé ces premières et saintes inspirations, et pas un n'a encore eu le courage de confesser publiquement la vérité à laquelle il rend intérieurement hommage. J'espère que les ferventes prières de nos bons catholiques, celles surtout des nombreux membres du Rosaire-vivant, auxquels nous faisons réciter le chapelet pendant un mois entier pour la conversion des hérétiques, obtiendront comme par le passé de nombreux retours à la véritable Eglise.

Je m'aperçois mon révérend Père,

(Signé) O. Paillier.

Excerpt from
"Missions de la Congrégation des Missionnaires
Oblats de Marie-Immaculée", T. 13, No. 52, Déc. 1875,
pages 476-478.

APPENDIX III

EXCERPT from A CHARGE DELIVERED by Right Rev. J. T. Lewis, Lord Bishop of Ontario, in Christ Church, Ottawa, Oct. 27, 1874.

In this city, not long since, a few secessionists justified their conduct by the example of Latimer and Ridley, who, as the schismatics allege, being members of the Church of Rome, became members of the Church of England, or in other words, left one Church and set up another. This delusion which confounds Englishmen and Italians, and cannot draw a distinction between communion with a Church abroad, and membership in the Church at home, is both widespread and popular. And yet nothing can be plainer than the identity of the Church of England before and after her great Reform. Ridley and Latimer were born, lived and died members of the Church of England.

.....
Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley and others had not the remotest idea that they were leaving the Church of Rome and joining or forming a Church of England, but they all by their lives and deaths purified the Church of England from Papal errors, and even that which was most novel -- the Liturgy in the vulgar tongue -- it was so substantially identical with the old Liturgy that Cranmer, long after the Preface of the Prayer Book was written, offered to prove (it) the same that had been used in the Church for fifteen hundred years past.

.....
Many a one would be surprised to hear that there were no members of the Church of Rome in England till the tenth year of Elizabeth when emissaries from abroad started a Branch of the Italian Church in England.

.....
Stephen Langton's reforms under Henry I . . . were the same type as those of Thomas Cranmer.

.....
Auricular Confession is not mentioned in the Primitive Church, that is, habitual Auricular Confession and private absolution as being essential to the soul's health, though it was practised from A.D. 1215 to A.D. 1552 . . . (Results not satisfactory, according to this speaker).

.....
The demand for it by a few of the clergy is but an instance of a very general blunder.

.....

APPENDIX IV

COPY

Baptismal Register of
St. Joseph's Church, Ottawa.

Mr. C. Street

Chas. Fred. born 17 7ber 1833
John Ambrose " 29 7ber 1862
Douglas Raymond 19 June 1864
Hilda Lucy 12 June 1866
Mary 21 Augt. 1869

On this day, July 27th, I undersigned have on this day conferred conditional baptism on Mr. Charles Frederick Street (formerly Anglican Minister) aged 39 years, and I received him into the fold of the H. Cath. Church. I likewise baptized & received in the C. Church his four children viz. John-10 yrs. old, Douglas Raymond 8 years old, Hilda Lucy 6 years old & Mary 4 years old

The sponsors for Mr. C. Street, Mr. More Higgins
& Mrs. W. R. Scott.

for John: Mr. & Mrs. Kearns
for Douglas: Mr. Keogh & Miss Lily Birmingham
for Lucy Hilda: Mrs. Plunkett & Mr. Friel
for Mary: Mr. Brophy & Miss K. McDonald

Sgd. A. Paillier
O.M.I.