

"FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE & OTHERS."

Very interesting is the life of Cardinal Manning ("Henry Edward Manning: His Life and Labours"*) by Shane Leslie, M.A., to which we recently referred, not only because it takes us back to the time of the Oxford Movement and the Catholic revival in England, but because of its reference to Florence Nightingale and the glimpse which it gives us into her attitude towards a burning question of the day.

The future Cardinal was born on July 15th, 1808, and was educated at Harrow and Oxford (Balliol). At Oxford, though Manning heard Newman preach "the avenging blasts of the Oxford Movement had not begun to blow," but later he felt the full blast of them. Here it was that he first met Gladstone, and their friendship continued until Manning's secession to Rome, when Gladstone felt as though his friend had "murdered his mother," and never forgave, though Manning wrote ten years later: "When I laid down all that I had, including your friendship, precious to me beyond wealth or prosperity, it was that I might cast the last weight I had into the scale of positive truth—that is my whole life and soul, with all its past, and with all its future."

"Of three great women who entered into Manning's life, Miss Bevan's influence was the most important." The Bevans were deeply interested in Evangelicalism, and the "pious and gifted Miss Bevan set out to save Manning's soul." She is referred to as his "spiritual mother," and a character sketch of him written in 1832 shows how her sympathetic understanding and appreciation of his sensitive disposition must have been a solace and a stand-by to him in the inevitable pain which is the heritage of such a nature.

She wrote: "His sensitive disposition calls for the consolations of friendship. He cannot readily dissolve a tie once formed, nor harbour a suspicion of anyone who has given him proof of amity. He is confiding as well as communicative, and expects to find that faithfulness and generosity in others that they will find in him. He is easily won by kindness and deceived by flattery."

The other women (besides his wife, to whom during their brief married life he was devoted) who entered most closely into his life were Miss Maurice and Florence Nightingale.

An illness in 1847 resulted in his being ordered abroad ("it may be for a year—it may be for ever"); a short return home and then, in October, he set out for Rome.

"In Rome friends rose to meet him. At Santa Croce he saw Newman in his chamber, a sight still awesome to Anglican eyes. They met once in the street. So ill was Manning that Newman did not recognise him. On December 8th Manning set eyes on his future friend and eventual creator, Pius IX. He went about Rome with Sidney Herbert and Florence Nightingale." Perhaps it was the memory of those intimate days which

enabled Miss Nightingale later to open her heart to Manning, when he had joined the Roman branch of the Church, and made converts by conversation, or, as Ruskin said, "by fascination."

With Miss Stanley, also, sister of the Dean, he kept, when abroad, in touch with the Anglican world, and "to convert Mary Stanley and her friend Florence Nightingale he wrote endlessly, believing 'the school you have been in is one which turns from the peril of our own soul to think of others. This is blessed when we have made sure of our own eternity.'" He wrote (July 15th, 1853): "Birthdays bring strong unhomelike thoughts now, but all the better, for this is now our rest. Grace has called you to the substance, not the shadow; to the imperishable reality, not the short-lived imitation. Florence Nightingale will either decline to a level lower than herself, and unworthy of her, or she will be rebuked and chastened by failure into the path which she already knows full well. How wonderful, you so long off, she so long at the door."

"Friendship with Miss Nightingale had developed since the Roman winter of 1847. He was one of the few to encourage her in the vocation she sought under almost insuperable difficulty. To rescue the fallen, or nurse the sick, was considered methodistical and unladylike. A letter of hers in the summer of 1852 tells of a joint venture.

"I found the poor child at Kensington bent upon going. I stayed till half-past six, hoping that there might be a change and that you might come. But unless you were more successful than I was after I went, the poor thing is lost. I have seen legs cut off and horrible operations, but that was nothing to this.' And again, 'There is no time to be lost. It is a miserable child of fourteen. If I fail, do you think you could, do you think you would undertake it yourself? It seems a great deal to ask, but she would not resist you. God bless you for your tender mercy to this poor child.'

"Manning carried away the child to the Convent of the Good Shepherd. *O Felix Culpa!* One can hardly forbear to say of the fault, done in childish ignorance, which brought two such twin spirits as Henry Manning and Florence Nightingale to seek that which was lost! All this time she was torn between her vocations to serve God as a nun or to seek out sick humanity as a nurse. Her soul was torn between the Church of her home, and that of Rome, which she confessed she loved. She poured forth her sorrows to Manning, when her relations seemed 'like children playing on the shore of the eighteenth century. Oh, don't laugh! For it is like seeing people jesting among the mangled bodies of their kind. So we play through life among the mangled souls of those we love'

"I dislike and despise the Church of England, she cried (June 30th, 1852). "She received me into her bosom. But what has she ever done for me? She never gave me work to do for her, nor training to do it, if I found it for myself. You think it would be a sacrifice to me to join the Catholic Church, a temptation to remain where I am. If you knew what a home the Catholic Church would be to me! All that I want I should find in her. All my difficulties

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)