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CATHOLIC LITERARY NEW YORK, 1800-1840

In the first volume of the *Memoir, Letters and Journals of Elizabeth Seton*, compiled by her grandson, Archbishop Robert Seton, there is a letter Mrs. Seton wrote from New York, in January, 1805, to her dear friend Amabilia Filicchi in Italy. "I have tried so many ways," she tells the Signora Filicchi, "to see Dr. O'Brien, who they say is the only Catholic priest in New York, where they say, too, Catholics are the offscouring of the people; indeed, somebody even said their congregation was a 'public nuisance'; but that troubles me not. The congregation of a city may be very shabby, yet very pleasing to God" (p. 210).

From her own social standing, what Mrs. Seton says in this letter may be taken as the reflection of the opinion in which the "genteel people" of New York then held their Catholic fellow-citizens. Although, in the rôle of a Knickerbocker Pepys, Philip Hone babbles about every possible local happening for half a century the pages of his famous *Diary* will be searched in vain for mention of a Catholic event or personage.

Not long after the date of Mrs. Seton's letter quoted above, Father Anthony Kohlmann, who had been sent to New York by Bishop Carroll to bring about an orderly organization of the new diocese, recorded, on November 8, 1808, that "the congregation chiefly consists of Irish, some hundreds of French and as many Germans, in all according to common estimation of 14,000 souls."¹ As a whole, it is true, they did not make a social figure of much distinction. Most of them were poor. But in proportion to their numerical and material standing they are very respectably in evidence on the local literary roll of the earlier years of the first half of the nineteenth century. That the general reading public

¹ *Historical Records and Studies*, Vol. i, pp. 207.

are not better acquainted with the names of this honorable list must be ascribed to the oft-condemned Protestant tradition with its Conspiracy of Silence, and largely also to our own inexcusable neglect.

One of the very earliest bits of history of local interest is the brief but priceless story the martyr Father Isaac Jogues, S.J., wrote of his visit to the Island of Manhattan in September, 1643.

Mathew Carey presided at the first convention of the publishers of the United States, which was held at the old City Hotel, on Broadway, in 1802, and in addressing them recommended "renewed meetings of a like nature as the most effective means for the promotion and diffusion of knowledge." Of course he lived in Philadelphia, but he was a Catholic, one of the leading publishers and publicists of the era, and the meeting was held in New York.

A year before this there arrived in New York from Ireland Thomas O'Connor, a son of Charles O'Connor of Mount Allen, County Roscommon, whose father was the famous antiquarian of the same name. Thomas O'Connor at first went up to Steuben County in a land-colonizing scheme with William Kernan, the founder of the Catholic family prominent for more than a century in central New York. This venture not proving successful, he returned to New York City. His son, the great jurist Charles O'Connor, was born in New York, January 22, 1804, and died May 12, 1884. In a letter written to Father Finotti, on February 25, 1867, from New York, he gives, for the *Bibliographia Catholica Americana* (pp. 209-210), these details about his father:

My father emigrated in 1801, and died in this city in 1855 at the age of eighty-five. I think he never aspired to the character of an author. He first resorted to his pen as a means of earning a scanty subsistence for his family. This must have been about the year 1811. He was connected with the press at intervals thenceforward until he reached a very advanced age.

War was declared against Great Britain, June 18, 1812. Samuel Woodworth, a printer, but subsequently well known as a poet, novelist and Swedenborgian preacher, at once commenced a weekly newspaper called the *War*. My father was its editor for two or three months. His connection with that paper then ceased; and in conjunction with Stephen Wall, a countryman of his, he edited for a couple of years, beginning September, 1812, a weekly paper called the *Military Monitor*. Sub-

quently he edited for two or three years, commencing in 1815, a weekly called the *Shamrock*. In January, 1819, he commenced the publication of a monthly magazine called the *Globe*. Its proprietors avowed no particular views, but its contents indicate that it was the *Shamrock* in a new form. Ireland and Catholicity were its leading topics. It lasted about a year. In May, 1824, I was admitted to the bar, and from that time my father had no business connection with the press, nor any resort to literature except to gratify some emotion of his heart. . . . He was brought up by his grandfather, "the Irish antiquarian." . . . He was a devoted Catholic, an enthusiastically patriotic Irishman, and as a necessary consequence was averse to the government of Britain and deeply attached to the republican institutions of his adopted country. These characteristics exhibit themselves in all his literary efforts. Whether employed in procuring bread for his family, or in the freely chosen pursuits of early leisure, his pen was always under the influence of these sentiments. It was ever directed in vindicating the fame of Ireland, the honor of our United American States, or the truth and purity of his cherished Mother, the Apostolic Church.

There is a slight mistake in this in regard to the *Shamrock*. The first issue of that paper was dated December 10, 1810, and it lasted until August 17, 1817. The honor of being the pioneer in Catholic American journalism is usually awarded to the famous Sulpician missionary, Father Gabriel Richard, under whose inspiration the *Michigan Essay or Impartial Observer* began its brief career in Detroit on August 31, 1809. The Rev. Dr. Paul J. Foik, C.S.C., in a monograph on the *Michigan Essay*, says of it, and of Father Richard:

His religious duties and the extent of his missionary labors did not enable him to give his time to the publishing and editing of this paper. . . . We have no conclusive evidence that more than one number was issued. . . . There is nothing in the first issue to indicate that the *Essay* was to be the mouthpiece of the Catholics of Michigan. . . . The most we can claim for the *Essay* then is that it was a semi-Catholic periodical.²

There is much in the career of Thomas O'Connor to warrant putting him forward as our first Catholic editor and the *Shamrock*, although not explicitly so called, as our first Catholic paper. It must be remembered that Irish and Catholic interests were then practically synonymous. It was the period of the opening of the great battle for Catholic Emancipation. What Charles

² *University of Notre Dame Studies, Historical Series*, Vol. i, No. i.

O'Connor tells of his father's work indicates the character of the *Shamrock*, which served as a model for most of the papers of its kind that followed it.

"The writer would add," said Bishop England of Charleston, S. C., speaking of his diocese, while on a visit to Dublin in 1832, "that during upwards of ten years he and his associates have at a very serious pecuniary loss, not to mention immense labor, published a weekly paper the *United States Catholic Miscellany* in which the cause of Ireland at home and of Irishmen abroad, and of the Catholic Church through the world, has been defended to the best of their ability." The Bishop puts "the cause of Ireland" first in the reasons for the existence of his paper, the first distinctively Catholic organ started in the United States.

Catholic controversy, and the progress of the movements for Catholic Emancipation and the repeal of the Union in Ireland take up the greatest part of the space of the papers printed in the United States for Catholic readers during most of the first half of the nineteenth century. Thomas O'Connor came across the Atlantic with the other exiles after the failure of the rebellion of the United Irishmen in 1798. In the *Shamrock* he had the good-will and active help of several of them who also had located in New York, notably of the great jurist, Thomas Addis Emmet, William Sampson and the only Catholic of the group, Dr. William James Macneven. Their contributions occasionally added to the interest of his own vigorous and forceful writings. In 1817, O'Connor compiled a history of the War of 1812 which ran through four editions in two years and was regarded as a very satisfactory outline of the conflict. It was a 12mo volume of 304 pages with the title: *An Impartial and Correct History of The War between the United States of America and Great Britain. Carefully compiled from official doc's. New York: Printed and published by John Low, at Shakespeare's Head, No. 17 Chatham Street.*

During 1822-23 O'Connor waged a vigorous war in the *Shamrock* against the Philadelphia Hoganite schism. He published, in 1825, a second book: *The Inquisition Examined by an Impartial Reviewer*, which was printed for him by his friend, Joseph Desnoues, of 23 Provost Street. Desnoues and Dr. Macneven also were connected with an educational enterprise,

l'École Économique, founded under the auspices of General Victor Moreau and the Baron Jean Guillaume Hyde de Neuville, then exiles in New York from their native France. The school had a fashionable vogue and Moreau and De Neuville lectured there daily. It was located first on Chapel Street (now West Broadway), between Duane and Reade Streets, and later in a large building with spacious grounds on Anthony (now Worth) Street. One of General Moreau's children died in New York during this period and was buried in the graveyard of old St. Patrick's Church, Mott Street.

The Moreau school was an important local institution that enlisted the support and influence of many wealthy men and especially of the French colony, which then included a number of high-born exiles from France and the West Indies. Bishop Cheverus of Boston was interested in it. It had a printing plant which Joseph Desnoues managed and turned out the text-books used by the pupils. When General Moreau went back to France in 1813, the school was taken over by Victor Bancel, a refugee from St. Domingo, who had started a school of his own in 1801 in Harrison Street.³ Another fashionable finishing school for young New York women was that managed by Madame L. F. Binsse. These were ancestors of well-known New York Catholics of our own time. Louis Bancel Binsse will be remembered as prominent in every Catholic movement in the second half of the last century and as the last Consul General here of the Papal States. The mother of John Lafarge, author and painter, was Louise Josephine Binsse (de St. Victor).

After Louis XVIII was restored to the throne in France, Hyde de Neuville, who had gone back to his native land with Moreau, returned to New York as Minister Plenipotentiary of France to the United States, and he was delighted to find that the École Économique they had been instrumental in founding was still exerting a beneficial local influence.

The building up of the Church in New York was mainly done by Catholics of Irish birth or blood. We who claim that affiliation, must confess that at times we are a bit clannish, and therefore, because, no doubt, of the differences of language, customs

³*The Old Merchants of New York*, Vol. i, pp. 337 sq.

and training, the standing of the French Colony here has been neglected in some of our published records. When Bishop Dubois was chosen for the See, in 1826, his coming, it will be remembered was resented, because he was "a foreigner," in the estimation of the people who would have rejoiced had the Rev. Dr. John Power been named by the Holy Father.

Another one of the interesting figures in the New York of this period is the ex-minister Virgil Barber, who, after the conversion of himself and family by Father Benedict Fenwick, S.J., settled here in the fall of 1816 and opened a school at No. 24 Vesey Street, now the site of the *Evening Post* building. It lasted about a year and the subsequent history of this family makes one of the most extraordinary chapters in the chronicle of the many notable conversions of the time. He and his son Samuel became Jesuit priests; his wife a Visitation nun; the youngest of their three daughters joined the same community and the other two entered an Ursuline convent. Mrs. Barber, as Sister M. Augustine, was for two generations one of the successful educators of the Visitation schools in Washington, St. Louis and Mobile. She lived until January 1, 1860.⁴

Another Irish exile who came to New York in 1803 was Bernard Dornin, who has the distinction of being the first distinctively Catholic publisher in the United States. He located at Newburgh-on-the-Hudson, but soon came back to New York where he opened a book store at No. 136 Pearl Street, and, in 1807, published New York's first Catholic book, an edition of Pastorini's *History of the Christian Church*, which was followed the next year by Fletcher's *Reflections on the Spirit of Religious Controversy*. There is extant a list of 462 subscribers for these books, which now makes an interesting record of Catholics who then had a taste for solid reading matter. In 1823 John Doyle, also from Ireland, opened his book store which was long a local landmark at No. 237 Broadway, now part of the great Woolworth Building. His publications included prayer-books, controversial works and the first New York Catholic Bible (1833). His store was near St. Peter's and also Columbia College and for years was a popular literary rendezvous.

⁴ DE GOESBRIAND, *Catholic Memoirs of Vermont and New Hampshire*. Burlington, Vt., 1866

In December, 1808, Father Anthony Kohlmann, S.J., as has been noted, was sent by Bishop Carroll to take charge of Catholic New York, and incidentally Catholic literary New York benefited. He founded, soon after he was fairly well settled in the city, its first Catholic College, "The New York Literary Institution," which occupied an imposing old mansion on the present site of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Avenue. Writing of it in August, 1810, Father Kohlmann said, after a public examination of the students: "Everyone thinks that if the reputation of the house is kept up it will in a short time rivalize any college in the country. . . . We have the finest set of globes in America." One of the professors in this college, the Rev. James Wallace, S.J., published in 1812, through "Smith & Forman, at the Franklin Juvenile Bookstores, 195 and 213 Greenwich Street, New York," one of the first Jesuit contributions to exact science in America, "*A New Treatise on the use of the Globes and Practical Astronomy . . . the whole serving as an introduction to the Higher Astronomy and Natural Philosophy Designed for the instruction of youth and particularly adapted to the United States*. Other contributions in this special field were made by Dr. William James Macneven (1815) *Chemical Examination of the Mineral Water of Schooley's Mountain*; (1819) *Exposition of the Atomic Theory of Chemistry*. For three years, Dr. Macneven was one of the editors of the *Medical and Philosophical Journal*.

The record of the famous Keating case, in which Father Kohlmann was cited to court for refusing to disclose the secrets of the confessional, was published, in 1813, by William Sampson, who had appeared in defense of Father Kohlmann at the hearing of the case in the Recorder's Court. He gave it the title: *The Catholic Question in America*. Father Kohlmann added an appendix: *A True Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church Touching the Sacrament of Penance with the Ground on which this Doctrine is Founded*. The case occasioned the incorporation into the statute books of the State of New York of the prohibition of any violation of confidential communications to a spiritual adviser. The example of New York was later followed by other States. Sampson was not a Catholic, but he compiled the court records of the case as an expert reporter and Father Kohlmann gave them special value by his appendix.

Matthew Field, born in England of Irish parents, arrived in New York in 1815 and started a "library" for the publication and sale of books at No. 177 Bowery, near Delancey Street. In those days all booksellers had "libraries" as a part of their business and loaned books for a fee to their customers. Field's list enumerates a number of standard Catholic works. He published *The Catholic Laity's Directory to the Church Service with an Almanac for the year 1817*, the first of the long series of such manuals.⁵ He promised also a *Catholic Magazine*, but it did not materialize. His son, Joseph M. Field, was a brilliant and prolific contributor to current periodicals and a successful playwright. His daughter, Kate Field, was the journalist and lecturer who attained a national repute and popularity in later years.

Lorenzo Da Ponte was a literary celebrity abroad before he reached New York in 1805. From his native Italy he went to Vienna where he met Mozart and there wrote the libretti for the great musician's operas: "Don Giovanni," "La Nozze di Figaro" and "Cosi fan Tutti." He introduced the study of Dante here and was professor of Italian at Columbia College. In 1807 he published a compendium of his memoirs, subsequently expanded to three volumes (1829-30), which detail a rather variegated international career. Not much stress can be laid on his Catholic character, however. When he died, on August 17, 1838, at No. 91 Spring Street, he was buried in the old Eleventh Street cemetery. The grave was not marked. This cemetery was closed in 1848; at the time of the consecration of St. Patrick's Cathedral, during the Centenary celebrations of 1908, the bones and dust of such of those buried there as could be gathered up were transferred to Calvary Cemetery. No trace of Da Ponte was found. This Eleventh Street cemetery ground, in which, according to Archbishop Corrigan,⁶ there were from March 13, 1833, to August, 1848, a total of 41,016 interments, was sold for \$357,000, in November, 1912, except the northeast corner at Twelfth Street, where the Italian Church of Our Lady, Help of Christians, has been built. It was bought in August, 1832, for \$37,050, to be used as a cemetery because St. Patrick's graveyard in Mott

⁵ *Bibliographia Catholica Americana*, pp. 20, 21.

⁶ *Records and Studies*, Vol. i, p. 374.

Street, in which the first burials had been made in 1801, had become filled up. Archbishop Corrigan says there were 32,153 interments in St. Patrick's yard up to its close in March, 1833.

Da Ponte's daughter married Dr. Henry James Anderson, mathematician, scientist and philanthropist, one of the most noted converts to the Faith during the century. He died in his seventy-sixth year, on October 19, 1875, in India where he had gone to observe the transit of Venus. He was for a number of years the presiding officer of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in New York, and through his very generous gifts became one of the founders of St. Gabriel's Church and of the Good Shepherd Convent in New York, and of St. Elizabeth's Church, Fort Lee, New Jersey, where he is buried. For some time he edited the *Tablet*, and was a contributor to various Catholic periodicals and in demand as a lecturer. He became a Catholic in 1849 while on a visit to the astronomer Arago in France.

The first Italian opera sung in New York was Mozart's "Il Barbiere" presented by the Garcia troupe at the old Park Theatre in Park Row, opposite the present Post Office, on the evening of November 19, 1825. Da Ponte was present and the Garcia troupe was brought to New York in one of his own ships by the Catholic merchant, Dominick Lynch, Jr., who during his student days at Georgetown College recited, on February 22, 1799, the eulogy at the memorial exercises for the death of George Washington. In 1790 his father, Dominick Lynch, Sr., was one of the four laymen who signed the address of congratulation to Washington on his inauguration as our first President.

Dominick Lynch, Jr., lived at No. 1 Greenwich Street, and it was there that the prima donna of the opera company, Maria Garcia, better known later as Madame Malibran, the greatest singer of her day, first sang in New York.

"For this advantageous accession to the resources of mental gratification we are indebted to the taste and refinement of Dominick Lynch," says Dr. J. M. Francis in his *Old New York* (pp. 254-55):

. . . Lynch, a native of New York, was the acknowledged head of the fashionable and festive board, a gentlemen of the *ton* and a melodist of great powers and exquisite taste. He had long striven to enhance the character of our music; he was the master of English song but he felt,

from his close cultivation of music and his knowledge of the genius of his countrymen that much was wanting and that more could be accomplished, and he sought out while in Europe an Italian troupe which his persuasive eloquence and the liberal spirit of Price led to embark for our shores where they arrived in November, 1825.

During her stay in New York Maria Garcia was married at St. Peter's to Eugene Malibran, a French merchant. The witnesses were Dominick Lynch and his social companions, John B. la Sala and Peter Harmony. La Sala was another Catholic merchant whose name is to be found among those promoting the interests of the Church during this constructive period. He saved the Visitation Convent in Washington from dissolution in 1822, when the community was in such dire want that it had been determined to close the school. He had three daughters, and wishing to place them in this school, he visited Washington to arrange the details. The poverty of the Sisters so moved him that he insisted on advancing them a sum of money sufficient to save the existence of the pioneer Catholic school for the higher education of women in the United States.⁷ The Lynchs, father and son, had a number of children, but most of them made mixed marriages and their descendants now are no longer of the Faith. The same must be said of the Harmonys, the Fields, the Dornins and others of the pioneer families.

New York's unique material prosperity and commercial pre-eminence begin about 1825 with the canal and railroad building era. With this came a great increase of the Catholic population and new demands for the conservation of their spiritual welfare. Bishop Connolly arrived in New York to take charge of the See, as its first resident ordinary, on November 24, 1815. He had about twenty-thousand souls under his jurisdiction which included all New York State and most of New Jersey, and but four priests to help him in a task that soon wore him out. He died at his residence, No. 512 Broadway, on February 5, 1825. For two years following the Diocese had, as its administrator, the Very Rev. Dr. John Power, who had come from his native Cork, Ireland, in 1819, to be the pastor of St. Peter's, Barclay Street, and the Bishop's vicar-general. Dr. Power had been a seminary

⁷LATHROP, *A Story of Courage*, pp. 223-225.

professor in Ireland. He was a fine preacher and a distinguished scholar, who may be set down as one of our very first advocates of the potency of the Apostolate of the Press. He might be canonized as the Patron of the Barclay Street known all over the English-speaking world as the center of the Catholic publishing trade of the United States. The pioneer publisher of the street was a now unknown Higgins who had his establishment at No. 16 (old number) in 1817, and there published the first Barclay Street volume: *Catholic Doctrine and Catholic Principles Explained. To which is added "The Conversion of the Duchess of York" written by Herself; and of "A. M. de Ramsay" by Archbishop Fénelon (1709) as given by Ramsay Himself.*

Could Barclay Street's record in Apologetics have a more substantial cornerstone? An edition of the same book was printed, round the corner, in 1811, at No. 59 Church Street, as part of the output of the printing plant Joseph Desnoues ran for General Moreau's École Économique. Dr. Power followed this, in 1824, by an edition of the New Testament to which a list of 742 subscribers now gives special value as a directory of Catholic New Yorkers of that day. A *History of the Holy Bible* and a *History of the New Testament*, both "from the French by J. Reeve," an English Jesuit, were published by J. Seymour at No. 49 John Street in 1814. The erratic Father William Taylor, styled by Archbishop Corrigan "an early example of 'Americanism,'"⁸ published in 1819 an unorthodox prayer-book, *The Christian's Monitor*, in the preface to which he announced:

to the Roman Catholics of this country my intention of causing to be published in this city an edition of the Douay translation of the Scriptures

but nothing came of it. With his prayer-book he published in a pamphlet a *Sermon on the Festival of St. Patrick the Apostle of Ireland* which he had preached in St. Patrick's Cathedral, on March 21, 1819. Another sermon pamphlet was that of a discourse, on Sunday, February 25, 1810, delivered for the benefit of the City Dispensary by the Rev. B. J. Fenwick, S.J., "Published by Williams & Whiting, at their Theological and Classical Bookstore, No. 118 Pearl Street, J. Seymour, printer." Neither the publishers nor the printer were Catholics.

⁸*Records and Studies*, Vol. i, pt. ii, p. 216.

In 1825, Dr. Power influenced the inception of a weekly paper, the *Truth Teller*, the first number of which was issued on April 2 of that year with this imprint:

New York: Published regularly every Saturday by W. E. Andrews & Co., at the office of the *Truth Teller*, 95 Maiden Lane, where communications (post paid) are respectfully requested to be directed. Terms, four dollars per annum—payable half-yearly in advance.

There is not a word of local Catholic news in the paper until the sixth issue, May 7, when a notice is printed of a coming sermon by Dr. Power for the benefit of the orphan asylum. The imprint "W. E. Andrews & Co." disappears with this issue, and "Printed by the Proprietors George Pardow and William Denman at the office Collect opposite Canal Street" was substituted for it.

"W. E. Andrews" was the William Eusebius Andrews who was the indefatigable publisher of Catholic literature in London during Bishop Milner's time. The once so popular *End of Controversy* was among his publications. There is no record of his ever having been in New York, and his connection with the *Truth Teller* is a mystery now unsolvable. George Pardow was a member of an old English Catholic family and came to New York from Birmingham in 1823. He was in the hardware business and dealt principally in needles, an important commodity of domestic use in those days. His store was at No. 95 Maiden Lane, the first office of the paper. He was among the first dealers in New York to sell the newly fashioned steel pens which in time superseded the old goose quills. His interest in the paper was sold in January, 1830, to William Denman, who continued as its owner until March, 1855, when he disposed of it to the proprietors of the *Irish American*, who then consolidated it with that paper.

George Pardow had four children, two sons, Gregory and Robert. They studied at Stonyhurst before the family emigrated to New York. Gregory became a priest of special promise but died in his thirty-fourth year, in 1838. Robert was the father of the Rev. William O'B. and the Rev. Robert Pardow, two Jesuits of our own time, and of their sisters, Mother Augusta and Mother Pauline Pardow of the Sacred Heart Congregation. Their aunts, Julia and Helen Pardow, were for many years Superiors of the Sacred Heart Convent and the Convent of Mercy in New York.

William Denman was born in Scotland, March 17, 1784, and claimed to have been in the British army before he came to New York, hence a title "Major" by which he was known locally. His early career is not recorded. He had no literary training or ability but became of political importance because of his connection with the *Truth Teller*, which supplied an organ of public opinion for the fast growing Catholic colony. He outlived all his day and generation. His last years, unknown and forgotten, he spent in the family of a generous friend, the late Mrs. James Coleman, a sister of the California "Bonanza millionaire," William O'Brien. He died September 12, 1870.

Denman did not lack for helpers to make up for his own literary deficiencies in the conducting of the *Truth Teller*. There was Dr. Power and his assistants, the Rev. Thomas C. Levins and the Rev. Joseph A. Schneller, both former members of the Jesuit community at Georgetown, D. C. Father Levins, who wrote over the pen-name of "Berkley MacAlpin," was a gifted and versatile controversialist. He had a testy temper, however, and a tendency to insubordination that got him into trouble with Bishop Dubois in a trustee squabble and he was suspended for several years. Father Schneller was an early and staunch advocate of Catholic education and by vigorous pamphlets and contributions to the press did much to refute the calumnies against Catholics circulated by the fanatics of that day.

Other contributors to the *Truth Teller* were Dr. William J. Macneven; Thomas S. Brady, one of the early schoolmasters, father of Judge John R. Brady and James T. Brady, the celebrated lawyer (Cardinal McCloskey was among his pupils); and another old classical schoolmaster, Patrick Sarsfield Casserly, whose *Latin Prosidy* and *Greek Reader* were extensively used for two generations. Several books of devotional reading were also compiled and edited by him. He came here from Ireland in 1824 and opened his school, which he called the "Chrestomathic Institution or Seminary for General Education," at No. 36 Cherry Street, in 1828. The venerable Thomas O'Connor was also always ready to battle for the Faith. The literary tradition of his family is continued today by his grandson, Dr. Thomas O'Connor Sloane, former editor of the *Scientific American* and more recent translator of Jorgensen's *St. Francis of Assisi*.

In time the *Truth Teller* became tainted with trusteeism, and Fathers Schneller and Levins, on October 5, 1833, started the *Weekly Register* as a rival to it. They had an efficient auxiliary in the Rev. Dr. Felix Varela, a Cuban driven here by political troubles in 1823. He had been a member of the Spanish Cortes as a delegate from Cuba. After a short time spent at St. Peter's, Dr. Varela organized Christ Church, Ann Street, with a new parish, the fourth in New York. "He was a solid theologian and wrote several works in his native language, which circulated extensively through Cuba and Spanish America, and in English contributed extensively to the Catholic papers and periodicals."⁹ He projected a Spanish periodical in New York, and was instrumental in the publication of the Catholic magazine for children which had a brief career of prosperity (1838-40). At the time of his death, February 18, 1853, he was pastor of the Church of the Transfiguration. His life, in Spanish, by J. J. Rodriguez, was published in 1878.

Another factor in these enterprises was the Rev. Dr. Charles Constantine Pise, preacher, poet and author, Chaplain to the United States Senate, the only priest ever attaining the honor of the Chaplaincy of Congress, to which he was appointed, on motion of Henry Clay, December 11, 1832. Before coming to New York, he had been a Jesuit novice at Georgetown and in Rome, but for domestic and family reasons had completed his theological course for ordination as a secular priest. He wrote two church histories, the lives of St. Ignatius and his companions, a popular novel, *Father Rowland*, a doctrinal work, several minor pamphlets, and a number of poems, among them the oft-quoted apostrophe to the American Flag.

In fact, he first endeavored to give the young Catholics of America reading which would be attractive and innocent. Like many good works, this at first found many assailants and borne down by the fierce criticism of Catholic reviewers, the publisher of these popular Catholic works was compelled to stop the publication. All, however, now admit the necessity of a literature of this kind, of which Dr. Pise must be considered the founder.¹⁰

⁹ SHEA, *The Catholic Church in the United States*, Vol. iii, p. 402.

¹⁰ SHEA, *op. cit.*, Vol. iii, pp. 407-408.

With Dr. Varela and Father Schneller he edited the *Catholic Expositor*, a monthly magazine (1840–42), in which many of his own contributions appeared and which supplied a medium through which other Catholic writers had a chance to come before the public. Notable among these were John Augustus Shea and Charles James Cannon. The latter's first book, *Poems by a Proser*, appeared in 1831; *Facts, Feelings and Fancies*, 1835; *Oran the Outcast*, 1837; and a number of others, some of which were reprinted in England and one, *Father Felix*, was translated into French and German (1845). He was the literary adviser and editor for the Dunigan publishing concern and compiled a spelling-book and a series of school readers. He also wrote several plays—one, "The Oath of Office," for James W. Wallack, who produced it at the Bowery Theatre, then the leading play-house of the country.¹¹

Following the *Expositor*, what may be called the chapter of modern Catholic literary New York begins, but this period of metropolitan evolution will not be touched upon here. Enough has been set down in the rough outlines of the foregoing record to show that in the literary field, as in all else in culture and refinement that has gone to build up the New York that is the world capital of the Twentieth Century, Catholic activities have always been in evidence. The "Greenwich Village" section, now supposed to be the center of New York's Bohemian art and literary "life", was largely an Irish Catholic settlement of poor hard-working artisans in 1824. A disgraceful spirit of intolerance was rife in the city then, and on July 12, of that year, a procession of its anti-Catholic Orangemen marched up to the village and excited a riot there. Not the rioters, but a number of their victims, were arrested for the proceedings of the day. When these Catholics were brought to trial two months later the eloquent Thomas Addis Emmet was stirred to such indignation that, in their defense, he made one of his most impassioned addresses, denouncing the disgraceful intolerance then existing in New York and the great injustice the prisoners had suffered. As a result they were at once discharged. The Greenwich men, under the leadership of Charles O'Connor, then a young lawyer, as a token of

¹¹*The N. Y. Catholic News*, April 11, 1908.

their gratitude, presented Mr. Emmet with a silver pitcher on which was engraved:

Presented to Thomas Addis Emmet, Esq., as a slight testimonial of their respect and admiration for the Patriotism and talents displayed in his gratuitous defence of his Exiled Countrymen, from the assaults of Irish Orangemen, in America, by the Irishmen of the village of Greenwich whose cause and principles he advocated on that occasion in the Court of Sessions of New York for September, 1824.

The venerable Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet, the great jurist's Catholic grandson, still has that silver pitcher among the family treasures.

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