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A GLIMPSE OF THE OHIO VALLEY

by Rev. John Martin Henni

Translated for the Society by the late Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Hakel

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Letter 12 - The Sects (Part 1 of 3)

The vast stretches of primeval forest in North America are a magnificent sight, with their vaulted leafy arches, their unparalleled lofty height, and their varied beauty changing with every season of the year. They extend in quiet majesty over hills and valleys, along the gentle curve of large rivers or shaded creeks. A strange and indelible impression is engraved on the beholder's mind by the humble, neat cabins of the white settlers, who generally build near a bubbling spring or cleared land amid half dead tree stumps along the slopes of newly cultivated hill country. Memorable are the birds of this area with their blue or bright red plumage, so different from the green and yellow of the birds of our southern climate. Memorable is their shrill chirping' during the day and of the screeching of numerous owls at night, like harbingers of death. As soon as the traveler leaves a town or village he wanders all alone again in the deserted forest, so like the intertwined arches of a gothic cathedral. In the dim light of the forest he seems to hear a voice inviting him to turn his mind to serious thoughts with these unspoken words, "Wanderer, are you looking for eternity here?"

In this vast stillness Father Fenwick had the habit of praying his Breviary, or the Rosary, when he was accompanied by other priests. Frequently

while riding his slowly ambling horse, he sketched out the sermon to be given at his next stop.

I am not at all surprised by the intense feelings of animal enthusiasm that gripped the first settlers, especially after the war cry of secretly skulking Indians had ceased and Indian corn and tobacco were planted around their cabins. It was a feeling that manifested itself spontaneously in a disorderly and brutally rough manner, and led to the excesses of sectarian religious assemblies that endure even today. Naturally, hearts vacillating in subjective belief (volatile and changeable as leaves on trees) were unable to grasp anything higher, mightier, and more solid. They could not accept something certain like our sure and enduring Catholic belief. "The early settlers' places of worship were tents, as they were called; their pews were logs; their communion tables were rough slabs of hewn timber, and over the heads of the worshippers the only roof was the leaves of the forest trees."² Such places of worship and the people assembled in them with their finger on the biblical text, which the preacher explained with gestures from his tree stump pulpit, are the most widely scattered sights in the general picture of that colorful panorama of American Protestant religion.

Even if I were to enumerate the most prominent of these sects in this sketch of religions and would try to outline their goals and character only briefly without delving deeply into the particular shadings of their teachings which change like a kaleidoscope, you would hardly find anything entirely new in my presentation even though our Yankees³ are reputed to be very original and inventive. Sectarianism is and basically can be only a renewal of the most varied kinds of fanaticism, the sum total of all nonsense of the centuries. In a word, it is simply a renewed outbreak of the same old errors, only now with a different local development in a different, less disturbed hemisphere.

Instead of dwelling at length on unnecessary philosophical notions of positive and negative, of realism and idealism, of rationalism and supernaturalism, I would rather touch upon the underlying background that permeates the spirit of the last three centuries. The confusion of religions and the resulting hostility have inflicted incurable wounds on Christendom and mankind. They have taken love out of family life and peace out of civil society. They have delivered our youth over to unbridled licentiousness and nations over to bloody anarchy. This is simply the result of the overall principle that subjects the authority of the Church to the self-will (autonomy) of the individual. And so this infection spreads and nourishes continual destruction with deadly results. Sad to say, all accounts of recent and contemporary history prove this and describe in unmistakable outlines the connection of basic cause and the evolution of epochs following each other like days and nights. It is a generally acknowledged truth that Catholics and Protestants of all countries lament, and often point the finger at that tendency to highly subjective principles that raise a barrier between the Church and the world.

It is remarkable that such a trend is praised in theory but limited in practice by the harshest

criticism and danger of intolerance (even in the most liberal countries) by various explanations in print, confessions, consistories, managements, acts of uniformity, Fundamental Articles, 39 articles, agenda and threats, oaths of allegiance, and excommunications. Thus they try to preserve the vanishing existence of all orthodoxy by all means possible, even by illegal means. But it is all in vain as long as this gross contradiction between principle and experience is not established. But I would be doubly unjust to Protestantism in North America if I did not acknowledge first that it does not reject its European origin and secondly that it expresses itself more logically and correctly. However, here, just as in Europe, there is no end to attempts at perfecting the teaching of Christ. This alleged improvement necessarily and generally produces fanaticism or materialism in which the limits imposed by worldly powers overpower and hamper religious teaching, be it by the force of revolution as happened in Holland and England before, and under Cromwell's Protectorate, or because of greater freedom of all religions as in North America. Ever since Christians broke away from Christ and His Bride, the Church, and from unerring truth, there has been an increase in the number of sects in England as well as in Germany and Switzerland. But religious madness must surely be more rampant in the free United States of North America than in all other countries, not to mention the wigwams and quabanos⁴ of the Indians whom the Bible Societies have failed to convert.⁵

While the Catholic Church spread without schism in Canada north of the English colonies and south of them in Mexico, constant jealousy and strife abounded among the Protestants in the Atlantic colonies on purely religious grounds. The high Church of England in Virginia persecuted the Dissenters in New England and along the Delaware and Hudson rivers, and the Dutch colonists who had lived there since 1614. The Puritans of New England dealt even more

harshly not only with the Dissenters but also with Brownites, Independents, and even peaceful Quakers, the minute any of them dared to enter their territory. Who does not know about that theocratic, republican, biblical commonwealth of the so-called Pilgrims of Plymouth, or about the Blue Laws of Connecticut? With puritanical rigor these Pilgrims strove to set up their own religious political commonwealth and base it on the Word of God after they had migrated from England to Holland, but could not find their expected freedom among less pure brethren. So they finally looked for it in the northern forests of America. The Books of Moses and the wanderings of the Israelites in the desert served them as a basis for their criminal legislation. By virtue of these capital laws, death was the penalty, not only for any kind of deliberate murder or treason against the republic, but also for idolatry (of which they accused Catholics) and for familiarity with evil spirits (fortune-telling and witchcraft) and for direct blasphemy against God or the Trinity (unbelief), and for bestiality, sodomy, adultery and abduction. False oaths against another's life, obstinacy, and mistreatment of parents by their children also fell under the punishment of death.⁶

The severity of these laws resulted in one benefit, namely, the greater expansion of the colonies. Dissenters were exiled from their midst and as a result sought their salvation in other regions, as for instance the no less fanatical William Rodgers, the patriarch of a new political religious party or community in Rhode Island. Mutual agreements and a sort of friendship, that naturally arose from the relaxation of their church statutes, gradually developed as some colonies began to complain against the English Crown or against governors for alleged or real oppression. Discontent brought about mutual rapprochement, if not in principles or biblical interpretation, at least in mutual toleration, which in the early days of the Revolution united in common interest all religious parties under the

banner of independence. As soon as this was won and peace restored, the earlier centrifugal forces of individual religious fads and personal vanity reappeared but with this difference -- that in the new Constitution all former weapons of persecution were taken away from them except for the weapons of intellect and the press.

Puritanism retained its old spirit of inherited bitterness but it appeared in new forms and organizations such as the Scottish Church, or one of the Calvinist splinter groups. The ministry of the presbytery which had almost disappeared among the Quakers and others, now reappeared. Under the presbyters or elders, new endless fights arose between the old and the new school. For the Confession of Faith, which was drawn up in a synodal assembly in Philadelphia in June, 1821, and promulgated with utmost acclaim and accepted by almost all Presbyterians, had already outlived its day. While the adherents of this Confession in Pennsylvania under the leadership of Dr. Ellis outshone their opponents the nonconformists, the ante-doctrinaires made great progress in eastern New York and in New England where they joined with the restorationists and half-Unitarians or Pelagians and others who deviated from the old orthodox strictness. Thus we have the teachings of Hopkins and Beecher, who propounded their own doctrines of justification and predestination, as also, for some years now, the first, second, third, fourth and fifth Presbyterian Churches in the United States.

These churches all preach only their own peculiar doctrines day in and day out. I shall mention from authentic sources the frantic convulsions that the old orthodox party anticipates as a result of the huge assembly of Presbyterians which is supposed to be convoked in Pittsburgh. "We regard the Convocation of the General Assembly in Pittsburgh on the third Sunday of May, 1835, with the profoundest trepidation. It will deal with decisions on topics that will be of vast

importance for the welfare of our church denominations. In all probability, the success or failure of our Presbyterian Church for the next fifty years will depend on the decisions of this Assembly." This newspaper article concludes, "In short, we can expect schisms, splits, and general discord in the holy name of orthodoxy."⁷ I do not at present know the outcome of this fight between the new and the old orthodox school, since I am far removed from the scene. Now this church, which one learned man described as least reformed because least deformed, has disintegrated into Arminianism and Gormarism. The first strove to retain the hierarchical or episcopal form, while the latter leaned more to the Presbyterian system.

Noteworthy are the explanations of the infallibility of the church which a very learned preacher of this church gave in a sermon in New Jersey last year. But he was soon censured and persecuted by his colleagues for being Catholic. This Episcopal Church has a much smaller number of members now than it had before the Revolution, in fact less than several other religious denominations. But it is wealthier than all the others because before the Revolution the Anglo-Americans were very expert at extorting income from the sweat of their oppressed subjects and from the Negroes. The Catholics of Maryland, with the exception of a few families, suffered want at that time even though their colony had been founded by Lord Baltimore around the middle of the seventeenth century. Because of the cowardly defection of their descendants to the English Church, those Catholics who did not wish to follow their example had to endure a hard fate.⁸

Since the Revolution, the dying body of these two principal sects is being divided mostly among the Methodists, the Baptists and Unitarians. The latter attract the more affluent, while the other two appeal to the middle class or to the poor.

The Unitarians are split into various subdivisions: Arians, Anti-Trinitarians, Socinians, and so forth according to the different views they hold about Christ, the Logos. Some acknowledge Him as a higher being participating in the Divinity, while others regard Him as merely a sublime spirit or even merely a wise human being. They are indisputably the best educated class of people and can be classed on the same plane as the Universalists who believe in the final salvation of the entire human race. Their entire belief is pure naturalism. It is noteworthy that this class of Unitarians boasts by word of mouth and also in their writings and papers that gradually only two religious denominations will and must possess the upper hand in the United States, namely, the Unitarians (Rationalists) and the Catholics (believers in revelation and authority). Is it possible that in time such a thing could happen as a result of the present unrestrained pursuit of scientific knowledge? Wieland has said that an educational system with infallible and divine authority is indispensable if Christianity is not to be reduced to more than rationalism. In a word, we must be either rationalists or Catholics.⁹ This is the opinion of Lingard and of noble Fenelon, as Chevalier Ramsey has said, "The Bishop of Cambrai has convinced me that one cannot be a wise deist without being a wise Christian, without being a Catholic."¹⁰ This is the opinion of renowned Protestants like Leasing and Reinhold and many others.

(To be continued)

NOTES

1) The trilling of the lark and the sweet song of the nightingale are not often heard in North America. In the evening, instead of cuckoos, the cry of the whippoorwill is heard. Canaries were imported in large numbers from their native island just like the poor Negro slaves. By the way, the abandonment of some slaves in a foreign land necessarily forced them to become their own masters. Their natural laziness demands a master who knows how

to control himself. The Republic of Haiti proves this and now even more so do Virginia and the other slave states. What promise is there in Monrovia on the West Coast of Africa, the adopted home of these abandoned blacks from North America?

2) Quotation from Dodrick's *Civilisation*, p. 194.

3) The inhabitants of New England, or the Puritan immigrants, are called Yankees. They are indisputably a people of common sense, shrewdness and enterprise, in short, strong-minded, but this has only too often a bad connotation so that in ordinary speech, Yankee is synonymous with trickery and cunning.

4) Quabano is a sort of community food offering which is offered to the bad spirits (Manitous) and which is generally accomplished by fearful howling, dancing, and drunkenness. They all abandon themselves to this debauchery except for only one person, who remains fasting. Fasting is not uncommon among the savage tribes, partly to honor the Great Spirit and partly to evoke their guardian spirits or demons who then reveal their will in one way or another, but mostly through dreams. When these participants in the Quabano (medicine rite) bring their offerings they pronounce secret words to placate the Manitous and obtain health for the sick, success for a venture, etc.

Our gray-haired missionary Father Theodore Stephen Badin, who lived for a long time with the Pottawatami Indians, has assured us and has been an eye-witness to such scenes in which the Indians dance around a huge bonfire, stick their arms into the seething kettles in which the food offerings were boiling. They do this without suffering any apparent bodily harm. Such are the aberrations of thousands of tribes who have very little or no contact with white men because the light of Revelation has not been brought to them. The dark night of ignorance and its evil power have not been dispelled.

5) It is well known that the obstinacy of the savages was caused mostly by the dissension and contradictions among the Bible quoting sectarian preachers. I could cite examples of the results of feuding Protestant missionaries not only in North America but also in East India and Africa that prove how Bible agents soon turned their

congregations to deliberate opposition to Christianity through contradictions. They do not even have the good sense to try to hide it. As a result the more intelligent savages turn back again to worship of their old Trimurti (a three-headed idol). Has the Bible Society with all the millions at their disposal ever succeeded in achieving what only one Saint Francis Xavier did with one Bible? Will they succeed in restoring in some small way that Christianity which the greed of the Dutch destroyed along with the flourishing colonies of the Portugese on the islands and coasts of East India? Who is the cause of the downfall of the Cross in Japan where even the inhabitants curse the Cross? Experience and history are sadly ignored!

6) See the "Code of 1650," a compilation of the earliest laws and ordinances of the general court of Connecticut; also, the constitution or civil compact entered into and adopted by the towns of Windsor, Hartford and Wethersfield in 1638-39, etc., called "Blue Laws." Edit. Hartford 1828. For the sake of brevity, I will not mention the more insignificant or purely politico-religious decrees; for example, going to and from church with downcast eyes, the ban on cooking on the Sabbath (Holy Scripture does not mention Sunday), the ban on cleaning the house and cutting one's beard and kissing one's children, etc. This stark coldness has now changed to a softer mood that generally more or less pervades all Sabbaths throughout the Republic. In fact, it determines in each city or county the height or depth of the local morality by its pressure on a sort of moral thermometer. Among the strictly orthodox it is commonly remarked that Europe, or at least Continental Europe, is far behind us in religious practice.

7) Excerpt from the Presbyterian paper *The Philadelphian*. See also the *Catholic Herald*, no. 29, year 3, article, "Presbytery in the United States."

8) Why do English politicians support the Catholic religion in Hindustan today and pay the Catholic clergy in Canada, while in Ireland they rob the people of their daily bread? Their insular Toryism knows the reason.

9) German *Mercury*, 1788, no. 198.

10) Life of Bishop Fenelon.

Abstracts from *The Catholic Telegraph*

(Continued, from Vol. XXVII, No. 3)

Dec. 13, 1851

Subscriptions: J. Goldcarp [Goldcamp] and John Keenan, Hanging Rock, Scioto Co.; James Smith, Ironton.

Dec. 20, 1851

Subscription: Dr. E. R. Magruder, Somerset

Dec. 27, 1851

DEDICATION

The Dominican Church of St. Thomas Aquinas, Zanesville, which has been many years in process of construction, and which has been already described in this paper, was solemnly dedicated by Archbishop Purcell on Sunday, 14th December. There were present at the ceremony Very Rev. Joseph Ferneding, of Cincinnati, and Rev. Mr. Dieters, Pastor of St. Nicholas (German) Church, Zanesville; Rev. Father Murphy, Provincial of the Society of Jesus in Missouri; and of the Order of St. Dominic, Rev. Mr. White, assistant to the General of Rome, sent as visitor to the Province in Ohio and Kentucky; Rev. N. D. Young, the first Catholic Missionary, with Bishop Fenwick, in Ohio; Rev. Messrs. Bowling, the Prior; C. P. Montgomery; Geo. J. Wilson, Daly, Bokel, Darco and Cubero. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. F. Murphy, and the High Mass was sung by Rev. Mr. Wilson; Rev. Messrs. Cubero and Bokel being Deacon and Sub-Deacon. In the afternoon the Archbishop preached at Vespers. The weather was intensely cold, but this, notwithstanding, the prescriptions of the Pontifical were faithfully complied with.

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, ZANESVILLE.

The Archbishop officiated in this church on Monday, Octave of the Immaculate Conception, morning and afternoon, assisted by Very Rev. Mr. Ferneding, who preached in German, and by the Pastor, Rev. Mr. Dieters. The Archbishop

blessed a well sized and fine toned bell presented to the church by a zealous and generous member of the congregation. There were many sponsors. Twenty-four persons were confirmed, the severity of the weather preventing a much larger number from the country from being present. We would have much to say of the affectionate attachment of this congregation for the Archbishop and Pastor, and the many ingenious ways in which this attachment is manifested in every branch of true Catholic duty, but we must leave its praise and its reward to Almighty God, while we earnestly pray for the continuance and increase of its blessings to both congregations.

(To be continued)



Junction City St. Patrick

Confirmations by Most Illustrious and Most Reverend J. B. Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati, 30 May, 1844.

Henry Gilligan
Mathias Diamond
William Clark
Daniel Gilligan
Charles Beoths
John Ring
James McCullough
Barth Gallagher
Barthol. Crosby
Philip Forquer
Vincent Burgoon
Daniel McGreevy
Hugh Conley
Joshua Reynolds
John Sullivan
Peter Crosby
John Diamond
Oliver Oaks
Owen Gilligan
Nicholas Strigle
William Dougherty

Edward Grogan
Barthol McGreevy
William Turrell
James Dougherty
Thomas Patton
John Flinn [?]
William McGahan
Bernard Murphy
John Gregg
Mary Agnes Hessey
Mary Beaths
Sarah Curran
Margt. Farrel
Mary Lavin
Sarah Seals
Mary Emiline Ward
Marg. Cain
Mary Patridge
page 91
Martha Ward
Eleanor Rowe

Elizabeth Murphy	Elizabet Marg.	Mary Loague	Margaret Curran
Elizabeth Johnson	McGreevy	Elizabeth Grogan	Nancy Curan
Margaret O'Connor	Mary Murphy	Ann Jane Connely	Margaret Bash
Catharine McGreevy	Margaret Loague	Ann Kenny	Mary McCann
Elizabeth Haughen	Cath Agnes Downey	Ann Hoy	Elizabeth Hoy
Ann Gilligan	Elizabeth Lavin	Mary Mahar	Jane Ring
Margrt Keenin	Elizabeth Gilligan	Mary Ann Ring	Mary Sullivan
Sarah Ann Gordon	Lydia Ann Clark	Catharine Rowe	Elizabeth Downey
Cath McGough	Ann Crosby		

**Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Columbus,
Cathedral Section C, Lot Records, 1867-1926**
(Continued, from Vol. XVII, No. 5)

25-C west

p. 75, Mrs. Ann McNamara, 1872 June 13, lot 25 east [sic] half. Graves: 1877 Oct. 25 to dig grave from old cem.; 1886 Jan. 26.
Ellen A. wife of J. F. Turney died May 8[?], 1875 in the forty-fourth[?] year of her age

25-C east

p. 75, John W. Manning, 1872 June 13, lot 25 west [sic] half. Graves: 1890 April 15; 1906 Dec. 3.
John W. Manning died Dec. 2, 1906 aged 81 y'rs
Mary wife of John W. Manning died Apr. 14, 1890, aged 66 y'rs

26-C east

p. 101, Mrs. James Doyle, 1873 May 22, lot 26 east half. Grave: 1887 Jan. 4.
James Doyle died Jan. 20, 1874 aged 31 years.
May his soul rest in peace.
Mary Grace daughter of James & Mary Doyle died May 21, 1873 aged 3 ms.

26-C west

p. 189, Bridget Murphy, Mt. Pleasant 625 McCoy St., 1881 Feb. 19 lot 26 west half. Graves: 1892 Feb. 19 Mrs. J. Murphy; 1892 May 4 Gertrude Murphy, child; 1896 May 21 Wm. Murphy; 1911 Sept. 26.
Murphy: Father + Mother + Daughter

27-C east

p. 99, James Sullivan, 46 E. University St., 1872 Aug. 3, lot 27 east half. Graves: 1888 July 18; 1888 Aug. 11 child; 1886 July 7; 1893 Feb. 19 child; 1902 Aug. 22.
William, son of J. & M. Sullivan died Mar. 6, 1896 aged 21 y 9 m At rest
[Name on top of stone, eroded away], daughter of M. A. & W. J. Lauer, died Aug. 11, 1888, aged 4 m. 21 d.
Mary daughter of Jas & Mary Sullivan born Feb. 15, 1870, died July 17, 1888 aged 18 y 5 m 2 d (Mother) Mary C. wife of Jas Sullivan, died Aug. 21, 1902
(Father) James Sullivan born Jan. 16, 1840 died Jan. 4, 1894

27-C west

p. 83, William Sheehy, 363 Dublin Ave., 1872 Oct. 29, lot 27 west half. Graves: 1876 Oct. 24 child; 1878 Feb. 6; 1880 Sept. 25 child; 1922 Dec. 21.
Sarah F. Sheehy 1837-1922 Rest in peace (Mother) Catherine Quinn Sheehy Feb. 2, 1867-Aug. 4, 1908

28-C

p. 158, Charles Maynard and Hodges Monett. [Hodges Monett has deed from Bishop Rosecrans dated 1873 April 23rd for \$15.00.] lot 28. Graves: 1882 Nov. 30 child; 1898

Sept. 27; 1900 Feb. 9 child; 1900 Nov. 22 child; 1902 May 1; 1902 Aug. 23 child; 1903 Jan. 7 child; 1909[?] May 1; 1913 Sept. 24; 1925 Oct. 26.

[In memory] of Elmer Menard born Jan. 9, 1864[?] died Aug. 2, 1873

Jerry Maynard died Sept. 26, 1898 age 25 y.

Joseph Maynard March 26, 1879-April 30, 1909

MAYNARD: (Father) Charles 1824+1913

(Mother) Philomena 1835+1925

Marie A. C. Monnett died Feb. 8[?], [1900?] age 2 Y 7 M

MONNETT: Hodges 1864+1939

Minnie his wife 1869+1930

29-C east

p. 78, Michael O'Brien, 1874 March 26, lot 29 east half. Graves: 1889 Nov. 5 child; 1901 Aug. 4 child; 1903 July 30; 1910 Apr. 11.

O'BRIEN:

Michael O'Brien 1841-1884

Ellen, his wife 1843-1910

Harry, 1880-1886

James, 1888-1903

Elizabeth O'Brien Callahan 1869-1906

29-C west

p. 294, Thomas Moore, lot 29 west half. Sold see p. 406

p. 406, Mary Hyland[?], 769 Harrison Ave., 1898 Nov. 2, lot 29 west half. Graves: 1898 Nov. 2; 1899 Feb. 4; 1900 Aug. 30; 1916 Jan. 14. [no stones]

30-C

p. 168, John E. Gillivan, 1874 June 27, lot 30. Graves: 1880 Dec. 11; 1889 July 30; 1888 Jan. 12 child; 1905 Dec. 27[?]; 1911 Apr. 16; 1913

Apr. 30. 1903 March 12, 2 bodies removed from this lot to 1/2 lot 3 north side Section E. Mary A. Gillivan died Apr. 27, 1913 aged 51 years. R.I.P.

(Aunt Mary) Mary Gillivan died July 8, 1927, aged 90 years R.I.P.

John Edward Gillivan 1850+1935

31-C east

p. 101, Michael Gallagher, 1618 E. Broad St.; Charles, 462 Montgomery St.; 1875 March 7, lot 31 east half. Graves: 1889 Feb. 2; 1891 Dec. 8; 1910 June 22.

(Mother) Nellie Fleming 1857-1943

31-C west

p. 74, Edward Burns; 1875 March 15 lot 31 west half. 1889 Dec 6 transferred to Mr. Joseph Bentz. Graves: 1889 Dec. 6; 1901 Jan. 31; 1906[?] March 18; 1914 Mary 25.

(Father) Thomas B. Englehart 1883+1936

(Mother) Katherine W. Englehart 1884+1974

Alfred T. Johnson 1935+1959

32-C

p. 163, Mrs. Turney; Owen; 1876 Feb. 10, lot 32. Graves: 1880 Nov. 11; 1885 Nov.; 1898 Nov. 13; 1914 July 30.

{Catherine born 1829, died June 28, 1848

{Mary born 1831, died 1832

{Owen T., born Oct. 22, 1836, died Feb. 10, 1876

{Children of O. & M. A. Turney

{(Father and Mother)

{Owen Turney, born in County Louth, Ireland, 1806, died Dec., 1848

{Mary A. Turney, born in County Louth, Ireland, 1800, died Nov. 9, 1880

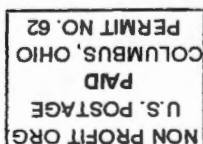
(To be continued)

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