
How Atheists Are Made.

W. J. D.
An ex-seminarian wrote a best-seller last year. It was flippant, shallow, and misleading, just the sort of thing the public wants in non-fiction -- as the goofy public showed. It high-hatted the religion of his boyhood. And now he has written an autobiographical book in which he tells how he lost his faith. "He reveals that he was an omnivorous reader in his adolescent days, and this resulted in religious doubts and finally loss of faith. He pictures his relations with his self-sacrificing and kindly father, with his ambitious and patiently believing mother, with his brothers whose own careers were sacrificed that he might have the preparation necessary for the priesthood." One scene we transcribe:

"One night I had been reading some of this heretical literature until a single stroke of the clock aroused me into the realization that it was time for sleep. My parents had begged me not to read so late an hour; unconsciously they understood that these books were like a virus in my blood; but my greed for forbidden knowledge was stronger than their gentle dissuasion. My reading through at last, I knelt by my bed and began to pray.

"Dimly I saw my faith slipping from me, saw myself standing as if naked on some lone-some shore, with the darkness falling around me. I did not want to abandon my Church, I loved the fair creed that had given me the story of Jesus and the gentle face of the Virgin; I liked every priest I had met, and remembered gratefully the kindness of the nuns; I did not want to lose my father's respect or my mother's love. I begged God to tell me how to answer these books, how to be strong against this blasphemous poetry."

It is the oldest story in the world. In his pride he disobeyed; he ate of the forbidden fruit and was cast out of paradise. Adam saved his soul by the grace of God, through humility and hard work. Let us pray that this poor fellow will do the same. And may we profit by his example!

Does It Last?

Very frequently the question is asked about the training of Notre Dame men to devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, "Does it last?" There has been no survey made of the fruits of this training, but from everywhere reports come that people are edified at the way Notre Dame men keep up frequent Communion out in the world. Not all of them do it, of course, but the general average is more than good. From one school where quite a few old Notre Dame students are gathered comes this letter:

"Father, you might be interested in some of the facts concerning religion in these parts. I have never come in contact with so many agnostics (ex-Catholics included) in my life. And the graduates of other Catholic colleges marvel at the way our group receives regularly -- on a First Friday you see every Notre Dame man at church. It shows quite plainly that we have gotten something that other schools haven't offered. No feathers in my hat, for I am still a bit wicked, but it would delight your heart to see the way the other Notre Dame boys conduct themselves."

He might have added that quite a few of his friends managed to make daily Communion during Lent last year, and that on Saturday nights one of his friends -- who was always somewhat of a monkey at Notre Dame -- pestored every fellow in the neighborhood to make up a crowd for confession.

PRAYERS: Three students ask prayers for relatives who are undergoing operations, and three for special intentions. Chas. Riley asks prayers for a deceased relative.