Bishop Young's Catechism

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John Young was born of William and his wife Mary, née Cahill, in St. John's Parish in the city of Limerick and baptised there on March 10th, 1746. He had a distinguished academic career in Louvain where he was ordained in 1770. He was home without delay, beginning his priestly life as a curate in his native parish and by 1781 he was a parish priest, in Bruff, where he remained for ten years. In 1791 he was made parish priest of St. Mary's in the city and Dean of Limerick. In 1793 he was appointed co-adjutor to Bishop Conway, took over as Bishop of Limerick (Fig. 1) in 1796, and died in Park House on the 23rd of September, 1813.

The Youngs were an interesting and, for their times, a family of some significance. They belonged to the rising Catholic merchant middle class that played such a part in laying the foundations of our present establishments. The passage following re-creates the mise-en-scène in which the Youngs made their contribution to Catholic instruction and formation:¹

Charles, a brother of the bishop, came up to Dublin at an early age and engaged in business in the firm of Young and Lynch, successors to Hevey & Co., Castle Street, whose daughters the partners married. Having settled down in life with an agreeable partner, he resolved to bring up his children in the love of fear of God. The house after a time became a favourite resort for the metropolitan clergy, for all from Dr. Troy to the humblest curate, were welcomed and hospitably entertained. The children were numerous, being eight boys and four girls. These grew up under parental control of a high standard and were remarkable for the holiness of life they developed. Three of the girls became nuns. One Catherine, called in religion Mary John, became Abbess of the Poor Clares, Harold's Cross, Dublin. Two became members of the Ursuline Community, Cork. They were authors of the Ursuline Manual, of a History of England and of other well-known works.² The career of the sons was still more remarkable. Four of them, William, James, Henry and Charles, became priests. William, the eldest, was parish priest of Baldowly and Howth, having his two brothers at one time as his curates. This holy man died about 1855 during a mission at Middlesex, having preached the Gospel to the poor Irish in Liverpool and other cities in England; James, who was P.P. of St. Margaret's, died in September, 1862. Henry had the reputation of a saint, for it was firmly believed that he worked miracles during his missionary labours. Towards the close of his life he was many years chaplain of St. Joseph's Asylum, Portland Row, a man truly wise in good and simple in evil. He departed this life on 19th November, 1869. Charles, born 21st December, 1798; entered the Society of Jesus, 2nd September, 1832; died at Tullalagge 16th January, 1896; aged ninety-eight. All were living models of holiness and died in the odour of sanctity.

One of the priests, Henry, is the subject of Myles V. Ronan’s biography, An Apostle of Catholic Dublin: Father Henry Young, Dublin 1944, a work that assembles so much of our catechetical history. It was the age of the ecclesiastical free-lance, before Cardinal Cullen had perfected his more rigid Tridentine moulds. But, even in such a climate, Henry was something special; he emerges as the legendary character intimated by Begley. Ronan sums him up in his pastoral work as a missionary “free to employ methods that the parochial clergy might not have considered prudent”. Neither were they likely to fall in with the austerities he practised to the end: he slept, at one time, in a sort of box at the back of the altar in the church, curled up like a cat. But he was a man of quite extraordinary missionary talent. His contribution to the building up of the institutions for Catholic formation, more especially the confraternities and sodalities, was enormous. Not only did he establish these societies, in the country parts as well as in the city, but he composed directives for them in great detail. His Rules for the Direction of Christian Doctrine and Purgatorial Societies in Country Parishes, Dublin (C.M. Warren of 8,
Fig. 1. John Young, Bishop of Limerick, 1796-1813.

(Photo: L. Walsh, reproduced by kind permission of the Bishop of Limerick).
Tighe-Street) 1852, is a masterly composition. These were the sodalities—of the laity—that educated our people in the counter-reformation principle before the Catholic school system was fully established. The source too for the introduction and consolidation of such popular devotions as Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and the ‘Forty Hours’ which date from Fr. Henry’s time and owe so much to his zeal.

Bishop Young in action

The uncle in Limerick had none of Henry’s eccentricities, but he had plenty of his talent. In an age of Founding Fathers, Bishop Young stood equal to the best, and in respect of one issue—perhaps, in retrospect the gravest of the day for the Catholic cause—he towered above them all; he seems to have been the only bishop firmly opposed from the start to Government proposals, dating from 1798, to provide salaries for the Catholic clergy in return for a State veto on the appointment of bishops. More notable, however, in our context, was his work in the field of ecclesiastical education and his efforts as a catechist. He was fortunate to have had such close contact with his predecessor as Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Denis Conway, with whom he shared residence in Mungret Street during the years of his co-adjutorship. The education of young men for the priesthood was of course a major anxiety at the time on account of the collapse in France. In his will, Conway left £450 to Young to be used as he thought fit in the event of there being “any university or college for the education of Roman Catholic youths established in this Kingdom.” The new bishop lost no time in following up this line of thought. Conway died on the 19th of June, 1796, and by the 29th of September of that year Young had purchased a house in Palmerstown, in Limerick City, for a seminary that was to provide courses in logic and theology. This was the beginning of Limerick’s St. Munchin’s College. The seminary was housed in various locations until it acquired some permanence at Park House in 1809, within a stone’s throw of where it now stands—as a second level college—in splendid distinction.

Young was as concerned about the clergy he had as about the ones he was trying to form. In 1802 he issued the Statuta et Constitutiones Dioecesis Limericensis as a consolidation and updating of the statutes of his predecessors, Cornelius O’Keeffe, Robertus Lacy, Daniel O’Kearney and Dionysius Conway, indicating in his ‘Praemonitio’ that he regarded Bishop O’Keeffe as the founder, in a sense, of the diocese of our time, the one who a year after his appointment in 1720 issued his constitutions as the basis for rebuilding during Penal times. The Statuta include an interesting Bibliotheca Sacerdotalis; besides the usual biblical commentaries and theological tracts, which are presumed to be in their possession, the clergy are directed to acquire and read a library of some twenty-one catechetical and formative books. These included Challoner’s Meditations, the Introduction to a Devout Life by de Sales, the Imitation of Christ and the Spiritual Combat (“Combattimento Spirituale”) of the 16th century Theatine, Lorenzo Scupoli, all of which, incidentally, were part of the essential equipment for Maynooth students when the writer entered the College in 1931. Other works prescribed by Young were widely used by preachers and catechists from the 18th century, books by Bishop Hay, Father Robert Manning and the egregious ‘Rev. Mr. Gother’ whose literary style had been admired by Dryden.

The appendices added to Young’s Statuta include The Rule of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament, suggesting that the bishop, no less than his nephew Henry, was anxious to foster piety while instructing the faithful. The ideal was to offer perpetual homage and adoration to the Holy Eucharist; and the initiative proved fruitful because
Limerick has a Convent of Reparation to this day, devoted to perpetual adoration. Young’s furthering of the devotion among the ordinary faithful was, it would appear, particularly early in the Irish experience. The rules insisted on daily prayer in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, frequent spiritual communion, attendance at Mass if convenient every Thursday, spending some time every Sunday and Holy Day in adoration, and what we came later to call the ‘Holy Hour’ was to be practised by all members once each year. Interesting to note that this latter rather moderate demand was seen to present difficulties, the obvious one of forgetfulness, but no doubt the problem too of finding a church with reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. Devotions suggested for the hour were acts of Repentance, Faith, Hope, Charity, Adoration, Praise, Thanksgiving, Supplication, Atonement, etc. Those who could not read were told to pass the hour in saying their beads, as so many indeed were accustomed to do during the ‘silent Mass’.

The Catechism: printing history and surviving copies

Begley refers to the catechism briefly, and in his quaint hebraic style: “In his zeal for the religious advancement of the youth of the diocese Dr. Young compiled a Catechism in English and Irish for the schools, a book now very rare and exceedingly difficult to procure”. It is indeed. The oldest surviving text is an 1802 sixth edition (56 pp.) of the English version:

A Christian Doctrine: wherein the Principles of the Roman Catholic Religion are briefly explained. For the Use of the Diocese of Limerick. By the Right Rev. Dr. Young. Limerick: John and Thomas M’Auliff, Booksellers, near the Exchange.

There is a copy of this in the National Library, and two in the Limerick City Library, the lower part of the title page being missing in both the latter, only the title and the slogan, ‘For the Use of the Diocese of Limerick’, surviving; an insert states 6th Ed. 1802. One of the Limerick City Library copies is bound with the diocesan statutes, the same printer—“Limerici: Typis Ioannes & Thomae M’Auliff, prope Excambium, 1804”—a manner of issue much favoured by Young, and fortunate too because it has enabled a number of the English texts to survive. A 15th edition, printed by George M’Auliff, “opposite the Old Jail, Mary-Street, 1809, Price Fourpence” (Fig. 2), is bound with the 1808 Statuta, “Limerici: Typis Georgii M’Auliff”. The writer has come on copies of this binding in the Limerick City Library, the library of Thurles College, and in the collection of Revd. John Leonard, Hon. Secretary of the Thomond Archaeological Society. A 13th edition, printed by W. Goggin “at the Shakespeare, Corner of Bridge-Street (formerly Quay-Lane), 1808” (Fig. 3), has survived with M’Auliff’s printing of the Statutes—a curious venture, if venture it were, by rival houses.

The latest copy of a printing that the writer has seen—in the Limerick City Library—is from the twenty-ninth edition, “carefully collated and divested of the Errors apparent in former Editions”, and was printed in Limerick by George M’Auliff, Bookseller and Stationer, Bridge-Street, 1811. This comes on its own, independently of the Statutes, and is, of course, the one meant for general circulation.

The National Library (Ir.238.04) has catalogued “A Christian Doctrine, wherein the principles of the Roman Catholic Religion are briefly explained…. By the Rev. Dr. Ryan, 71 pp., 12mo, Limerick, J. & D. McCarthy, 1829.” Obviously it is Young’s; the title is his and there is no evidence whatever that Bishop Ryan wrote a catechism. The attribution of authorship to the reigning bishop was quite common in catechism printing at the time;
and not only for policy sake but to emphasise that the catechism spoke with the voice of the hierarchical Church, the voice of God; it was a deeply rooted concept.

Young had the catechism bound with the Statuta for the convenience of the clergy, but more particularly because he wished to make it quite clear that his catechism was to be the only one used in the diocese. In the preface to the Statutes he mentions the *Catechismus Dioecesanus*, the Diocesan Cathecism, among the addenda to the statutes proper that he expects none of his clergy to ignore. Within the Statutes themselves, Titulus VI, *De Confirmatione*, he is more explicit:  

> With a view to avoiding the confusion arising from the circulation of so many different catechisms, and so that we may all repeat the same thing, we completely forbid all catechisms when instructing the young other than the one issued by authority of the Most Revd. Denis Conway for use in the diocese. Parish Priests are warned, under pain of our displeasure, not to permit the teaching of another catechism in their parishes.
Diversity of catechisms was a problem everywhere in the post-Reformation era which Catholics call Tridentine from the counter-reforming Council of Trent, the Concilium Tridentinum. By the end of the 18th century Irish Catholics were in the catechism-printing business in a big way. Young had to contend with the Butler text, the work of Archbishop James Butler of Cashel, first published in 1777. The O'Reilly catechism, considerably older, the work of Archbishop Michael O'Reilly of Armagh, had a wide circulation in Munster and both of these catechisms had versions in both Irish and English. The catechism of Henry Turberville, popularly known as the Doway from its origin in the English College at Douai, a very popular text with the Irish, was an advanced text but was no larger than Young’s if one includes his Appendices with his Catechism proper. There was a Doway ‘Abstract’ available also in the two languages. The argument for unity within a diocese at least was very sound, especially as the ‘Confirmation System’, the bishop going from parish to parish examining the candidates for confirmation, was well under way in Young’s time. The passage quoted establishes also that the catechism had been issued before Young took over in 1796. One inclines to suggest that he wrote the catechism during his co-adjutorship. Six editions by 1802 would seem to fit in reasonably well with this conjecture; but, then, the slogan atop the title page of all the English versions, ‘The only authorised Edition’, sets one wondering about what conclusion may be drawn from the numbered printings.

One copy only of Young’s Irish catechism has survived, in the Limerick City Library (Figs. 4 & 5):

Figs. 4 & 5. Young’s Catechism: Irish language edition, title page, left, and page of text, right. (Photos: Sean Cooke, reproduced by kind permission of Mr. L. Walsh, Curator, Limerick Museum).
An Teagasd Chriosdiugh, ann a vuil Teannsgnadh an Chrediov Chaitilice Rowainig soleirife go haichomair, chuim usaid Diosuis Lumine. Limerick: Printed by William Morgan, No. 12 Mary Street, near Baal's-Bridge. 1811.

While this is the only copy of an Irish printing we have, there can be little doubt from what we know of Bishop Young's attitude to Irish, the use he made of it in his administration and his insistence that priests in Limerick could not get by in their apostolate without Irish, that the Irish catechism must have been available before 1811. True, the predominance of English as the medium for the educated was a fact of life, and Young acknowledges this by including the English version of the catechism with the *Statuta* for his clergy. No doubt, too, the English text was the one more often employed for instruction at school. But the 'natives' remained to be instructed: the poor, with little material prospect, who spoke Irish but couldn't read it, needed instructors who had sufficient Irish and a phonetic text at their disposal. The phonetics were necessary too, if only because a Gaelic fount was not available.

The Irish version of the catechism in William Morgan's printing lacks Young's name on the title-page, and also the small rough woodcut of Our Lord on the cross, flanked by Our Lady and St. John, that appears in all the English printings; dropped also is the 'Manner of Serving Mass', which would, of course, have been in Latin. But the rest is there, faithfully reproduced, in sound at any rate, in Roman characters and for the most part in sheer phonetic form, without the accents but with some use of the 'h' for lenition or aspiration.

The sound system is erratic: *crediov* (faith) in one place, *creiday* in the other; *huitbirth* for sacrifice on p. 9, *loibirt* on p. 24; *léghheann*, lesson, is *leivion* at the beginning but later is written *leighioinn*—a manuscript that must have given William Morgan and his apprentices one great headache. Mistakes abound, as they do indeed in all the Irish language phonetic texts I have read. Young's text is long: sixty-four pages in small type, much of it barely decipherable; but the best of it is quite good, like the form of the Ten Commandments (*Deich Nahanta De*), familiar to many of us who had An t-Athair Peadar's catechism at School:

Mise do Thiarna Dia na bioch aon Dia eile agad acht me.
Na tabhair ainm De gan abhar.
Coimead an tsaoire mar is coir.
Tabhair dothaithir agus dod maithir onoir.
Na dein marvay, goid, na druis.
Na fianuis bhreige an aon chuis.
Na saintaig bean nach leat fein.
Clann duine eile na airneis.

For all Young's efforts to secure the future of his catechism, by banning all others, building it into his Statutes, and providing a Limerick text, it did not long survive.

It had certainly lost its official status in the reign of the bishop's second successor, Dr. John Ryan. The *Statuta* issued under the aegis of that prelate, "Limerici: Ex Typis Joannis F. O'Gorman, in via vulgo Patrick-Street, Typog. et Bibliopola Catholicus", 1842, has no reference to the catechism in the *Titulus de Confirmatione*; the paragraph about saving the diocese a diversity of texts is cut out. Renehan's *Collections*, Vol. II, on the Irish Bishops, p. 140, has this to say about the catechism in the account of Young's life: "For the instruction of children he published an excellent catechism in English and
Irish, which is still in use throughout part of the diocese”. Renehan died in 1857, although his book was not published by James Duffy and Sons until about 1875.

The Catechism: content and style

What to say of the catechism itself? One follows more conveniently the English text. It begins with a small, rough woodcut (in all the printings) of our Lord on the cross, flanked by our Lady and St. John. Beneath, the Sign of the Cross, “In the name of the Father, etc.” and this little prayer: “Blessed be the Holy and undivided Trinity, now and for evermore. Amen.” There follows in large print, the Apostles’ Creed, the General Confession, the Lord’s Prayer, the Angelical Salutation. In the smaller print, to be used throughout, a version of the ‘Long Acts’, Contrition, Faith, Hope and Charity, the writer has not seen elsewhere, with a list of the Indulgences to be gained by repeating them. Then, an assembly of the medieval-style summaries on which the catechism is about to expound:

The Ten Commandments of God
The Precepts of the Church
The Seven Sacraments
The Three Theological Virtues
The Eight Beatitudes
The Spiritual Works of Mercy
The Corporal Works of Mercy
The Three Evangelical Counsels
The Seven Capital or Deadly Sins
The Seven Virtues which are opposite to them
The Six Sins against the Holy Ghost
The Sins which cry to Heaven for Vengeance
The Ways of becoming Partners of the Sins of Others
The Four Last Things to be remembered.

The catechism proper, in its XLII Lessons, all numbered in the Roman manner, covers the creed, sacraments and commandments, beginning with a lesson “Of the Creation and End of Man” which is clearly based on O’Reilly’s opening chapter:

Q. Who created you and placed you in this World?
A. God.
Q. For what End were you created?
A. To worship and serve God in this World and by that means to gain everlasting Happiness in the next World.
Q. How is God to be worshipped in this world?
A. By believing in him, hoping in him, and loving him above all things, by sacrifice and by Prayer.
Q. How is God to be served in this world?
A. By keeping his commands and the commands of his Church, and fulfilling the Duties of our station in Life.

The style, however, is very different from O’Reilly’s. Young is always the M.A., D.D. (Louvain); when it comes to a choice he never uses the word that might be in a limited vocabulary. His Lesson V, Of the Consequences of (man’s) Fall, is worth quoting in full, it is so typical:
Q. What was the Consequence of the Transgression of our first Parents, Adam and Eve?
A. In Consequence of it, they and their posterity became subject to death, and liable to everlasting damnation.
Q. Was the Transgression of Adam attended by any other bad consequences to himself and his posterity?
A. Yes—Human Nature was stripped of all the privileges bestowed on it at the Creation, and changed entirely for the worse.
Q. How so?
A. The understanding of Mankind is darkened by ignorance, their will is disordered by Malice and their appetites are no longer under perfect Subjection to reason against which they frequently rebel, as Adam did against God.
Q. It seems then that the Transgression of our First Parents is the grand Source of the Evils of this Life, and of the wickedness and corruption of Mankind?
A. It most certainly is.

Thus much, the doctrinal and moral instruction; but Young thought his work incomplete without a little catechism on the ascetic ideal by way of an Appendix to the catechism proper, and the Instructions that follow for the use of “Catechists of the Confraternity of the Christian Doctrine”. This section embraces two further ‘little catechisms’: Instructions for making a good Communion and Of Spending Time to advantage. It is in these addenda, especially, that the bishop emerges as a teacher of quality. In the little catechisms and in the instructions one discovers the makings of the Tridentine Catholic soul.

The catechism of ascetical theology, for such it is, comes in eight lessons:

Of Christian Perfection, and the advantages of good works
Of the Impediments of Christian Perfection and the means of getting over them
Of Self-examination
Of Mortification
Of Christian Sanctity
Of the Conformity of our Wills to the Will of God
On the Sufferings of Christ
On the Festivals of the Year

What is the motivation for so stark a regimen of restraint and effort? It is the sovereign goodness of God, and the divine inability to counsel or command but what is absolutely good and becoming our nature. All this defined with scholastic lucidity, but incarnate in the other ‘most urgent motives’, the sufferings of Christ, Christ “traitorously betrayed by one of his Disciples, forsaken and denied by the rest of them, belied, falsely accused, unjustly rejected, and found guilty of death...” This evangelical recipe for coping with pain had primacy of place in the formation of the faithful and in their devotional life. Young is doubtless stressing it here as a sort of antidote to the rationalisation of the faith in terms of ‘Principles’ with which the catechism proper is preoccupied. Later on this traditional devotion to the sorrows of Christ came to be formalised in the Stations or Way of the Cross.

The Appendix is rounded off with a “Form of renewing the Baptismal Vows, which may be made by Children, previous to their First Communion”. This should come at the age of twelve “where possible”, the Statuta directed in Titulus VII, De SS. Eucharistia. The form is lengthy and lofty in tone; but it has rhythm, and should have presented little difficulty to smart pupils trained in recitation—however they may have been able to cope with its sentiments, the young, as Cardinal Newman put it, not knowing what they say:
...I...present myself here at the foot of the Altar, before your Divine Majesty, to renew the covenant under which you received me to Mercy, and to declare in your presence, and in the presence of all your Angels and Saints, my resolution to abide by it for ever more; whereof, in the presence of Heaven and Earth, I renounce the Devil for ever, I renounce his works; I renounce giving my consent to the sinful inclinations of my corrupt nature—I renounce abiding by or following the sinful maxims and bad examples of this wicked world—I profess to believe the Holy Catholic Faith, whole and entire....

The Instructions

The catechists of the Confraternity must have been considerable in number because they had to cater for thousands of children in the chapels, after Mass, "every Sunday"—they were all lay men and women, not a single teaching Nun or Brother being in the diocese at the time the catechism was written. Dr. Young's 'Instructions' are nothing so elaborate as those of his nephew Henry. There is no reference to organisation, only to the tasks the catechists had to perform. The bishop begins by declaring the basic principle of catechesis, i.e. not enough to be instructive, it has to be formative:

To render the knowledge of the Christian Doctrine of utility, the catechists are not only to instruct the classes they take under their charge in the Catechism; but also to labour to make them practise the duties which it teaches and strongly inculcate them on their minds. To effect this salutary purpose, they ought to interrogate them individually every Sunday.

The interrogation on the children's moral and spiritual lives suggests the monastic confession of faults in chapter. Have they said their prayers and acts every morning and evening? Cursed or said any bad words? Resisted temptation, avoided bad company? Examined their consciences? The Appendix to the catechism lifts the interrogation to the level of the ascetic, even the mystic. Have they accustomed themselves to the practice of self-denial, by not gratifying their own will and desires? Reflected on the pains of Christ, submitted to humiliations, borne contradictions in imitation of Jesus? Meditated on the everlasting delights of the kingdom of heaven?

The instruction for confession is very detailed, and is urged on the catechists as of primary importance. The example given of an 'Integral' confession, turning on the sins of pride, illuminates the Tridentine penitential scene:

Beginning — In the name of the Father &c. — Bless me Father, because I have sinned. — I confess to Almighty God, &c. — through my exceeding great fault.

I find by experience, that Pride is the leading vice of my heart; as I am most tempted by it of any other, and Sin of pride through it.

Sins of Thought — I undervalued a fellow creature twice, because he was poor, and not as well off as myself, and held him in contempt each turn for about ten minutes.

Of Word — I treated another with insulting language once, and called him by abusive names in the presence of three others, because he contradicted me, when I was really in the wrong; this ill-treatment lasted for a quarter of an hour.

Sins of Deed — I struck a person slightly once, for saying he was as good as myself — no other person was present.

Omission — I omitted asking pardon of one, as I was ordered, to whom I was insolent. Thus Pride reigned throughout the sins I have committed, but I purpose by the Grace of God, to watch the pride of my heart more closely, and to resist its suggestions....

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Conclusion—For these and all my sins, I beseech God’s mercy, and hope for pardon of them for Christ’s sake, and beg absolution of you my Ghostly Father, and penance to satisfy God for offending him by them. Therefore I beseech &c.

The little catechism, “Of spending Time to advantage”, the Christian’s rule of life and daily exercise, dates from Challoner’s time and has been included in the English ‘penny’ catechism ever since. The later Butler catechisms in this country carried a version too. Questions such as these are to be found in Young’s: “What should a Christian do when he wakes in the morning?” “What ought he do when he is dressed?” “How ought he behave at his occupations?” “How ought a Christian conclude the day?” Young pushes for daily Mass; even those who lack the leisure, “as a Servant or Labourer”, are urged to unite their employment with the Masses said that day, and so benefit, though absent. He concludes with an interesting observation, typical of his time. The ones who can “save their Souls with the greatest facility” are those under obedience or the control of others, “as Children, Scholars, apprentices, Servants, Soldiers, Labourers, &c”. Authority was always supreme but, noblesse oblige, like the aristocratic ideal, heavily charged with duty.

Young’s book closes with “A Form for devoting our Actions to the Honour and Glory of God…”, the ‘Manner of Serving Mass’, in Latin, of course, and in Latin too, Psalm CXXIX, the De profundis.

To sum up the tradition of piety Bishop Young inherited and wanted to pass on, it is perhaps worth concluding with his “Form for devoting our Actions to the Honour and Glory of God, which ought to be done on waking in the morning”:

Lord Jesus Christ, I, a Poor, naked, blind, and miserable sinner, present myself at your feet to offer up the best thanks I am able for your merciful protection of me from the dangers of the night, and bringing me safe to the beginning of this day.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

I devote to you from the bottom of my heart all the actions of this day and of my life, I desire to do them only to please you, I desire to do them with the humility, the repentance, the perseverance, the fervour and gratitude becoming my misery and your greatness.

I desire to unite them with everything that will be done throughout the Catholic Church this day to please you. I offer them up in satisfaction for every offence you will receive this day, I desire to unite them with the homage and adoration of all your Angels and Saints, but above all I desire to unite them with your sacred actions, and with the eternal love your Father bears you.

I offer them up in the homage and adoration of the most Holy Eucharist, in thanksgiving to you for the institution of it, and of the Sacrifice of the Mass, beseeching you to fill the hearts of all creatures with the love, reverence and gratitude due to these most Holy Mysteries…

So it proceeds, repetitive, laborious, in the manner of the Ireland of Young’s day, a form of piety rooted in the concept of God’s majesty and man’s misery.

NOTES

2. The girls who became nuns in the Ursoline Convent, Cork, were Mary, the eldest of
the family, and Johanna, nine years her junior, in religion Mary Ursula and Mary
Louisa. Ursula was the author. In 1815 she published three history manuals, "Sketch
of Irish History compiled by way of question and answer for the use of schools";
"A History of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from the Earliest
Ages to the Treaty of Amiens in 1802"; "Questions on the History of the United
Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland". These works, especially the little catechism
of Irish history, aroused enormous ascendency ire; there was a question in parliament.
The Ursoline Manual was not Ursula's work; it was compiled by Mother Mary
Borgia McCarthy but put through the press in 1824 by the dynamic Ursula. (See the
work by Myles Ronan, about to be cited, pp. 115f.). My copy of the Manual was
published by the Dublin printer Richard Coyne in 1855. I have two other books by
'a Member of the Ursoline Community, Blackrock, Cork', "The Catholic Offering:
Counsels to the Young", James Duffy, 1859, and "The Month of Mary", Cork,
Daniel Mulcahy, n.d. I have not verified the authorship.

3. See Begley, loc. cit., and for a bright and racy account of Young's involvement in
the Veto controversy see Bishop Newman's Maynooth and Georgian Ireland, Galway
1979, p. 73ff.


5. This list is taken from the later edition, published in 1808: Limerici, Typs Georgii
M'Aulfiff, Titulus XXII, pp. 43-44.

6. The writer has a copy of this volume in his collection, through the courtesy of his
colleague, Canon James Culhane, parish priest of Bruff.

The catechisms came from four printing houses, all located in the heart of old
Limerick, John and Thomas M'Aulfiff, George M'Aulfiff, William Goggin and
William Morgan. They might appear to have been a group of Catholic printers like
the 'chapel printers' operating at the same time in the Cook Street area of Dublin,
so vividly described by Thomas Wall in The Sign of Doctor Hay's Head, Dublin,
Gill, 1958. But they were not. See Robert Herbert's Limerick Printers and Printing,
Limerick City Library, 1942. Only the M'Aulfiffs were papists. Herbert suggests they
were official printers to Young, and this, he says, "may explain their lack of prominen
cence in public affairs, and hence the absence of reference to them in either Municipal
Records or the local newspapers". The Goggins were under no such disadvantage;
the descendants of William, if not William himself, were Provincial Grand Printers
and Stationers to the Freemasons. William Morgan, who in 1811 printed the copy of
the Irish version of Young's Catechism served his apprenticeship to William Goggin.
The catechism is the only relic left of Morgan's printing.

7. Ut evitetur confusio in juniorum instructione, quae ex Cathechismorum diversitate
oriiri nata est, aliis quoscumque Catechismos praeter illum qui in usum Dioecesis
authoritate Revmi. D. Dionysii Conway editus est, penitus inhibemus, ut idem
dicamus omnes. Caveant ergo Parochi sub paena nostrae displicentiae, ne alium
Catechismum in suis Parochii doceri permitiant.
8. Letter dated Oct. 28th, 1811, from Fr. Lawrence Callanan, O.F.M., Cork, to Fr. Philip Devereux, O.F.M., Wexford, published in *Studia Hibernica*, 6 (1966), 156-157, concerning the application of a Mr. Wm. O’Meara for entry to their Order. O’Meara had been a student for years in Bishop Young’s seminary, and the Bishop was providing an Exact “for this young man for want of an knowledge of the Irish language, which is necessary for his diocese”. In the event, O’Meara had a distinguished career as a Franciscan, and by an irony of fate, Irish or no Irish, nearly became Bishop of Limerick. (See Bartholomew Egan, O.F.M., “An annotated Calendar of the O’Meara Papers”, *Archivum Franciscum Historicum*, An. 68, Roma, Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1975).

Further evidence of Young’s policy towards the language, in the *Archiv. Hib. xx*, 1957, Suppl. 302: reference to the year 1797—“Admonition issued by the Right Rev. Doctor Young, which has been read in all the Roman Catholic Chapels of the Diocese of Limerick, and its principles explained in Irish”. For this evidence with commentary, v. *Studia Hibernica*, 6 (1966), 155-157—“An Dr. de Siún, Easpar Luinnigh (1796-1813), agus an Ghaelige”, le Pádraig Ó Súilleabháin.


10. From the ‘First Report of Commissioners of Education in Ireland’, May 30th, 1825, p. 88, turning on the sodalities of lay people for giving catechetical instruction: “In the City of Limerick, it occurred to One of the Commissioners to witness on one Sunday upwards of 4,000 Children collected in Four Chapels for this Purpose....” Quoted from Dr. Martin Brenan’s art. in the *Ir. Eccles. Record*, June 1934, p. 566, “The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in Ireland”.

11. Challoner’s version of the “Rules for a Christian Life” is given at the end of his *Think Well On’t*, a little book of meditations for every day of the month, very popular in this country. The 43rd edition was printed by John Coyne, 74 Cook-St., Dublin 1820, in a bilingual edition, Irish on the left, the English on the right, the Irish translation by a Limerick man, born in Cnoc Aíne, Eugene O’Cavanagh: “Smuain go Maith Air—no Learsmuainteachd air Mhoirfhirinnidhe an Chreidimh Chriostagh do Gach lè San Mí’. There are 16 ‘Rules’ in brief paragraphs, numbers 9 and 11 as follows:

Biodh caoindúthracht mhór agat do Pháis Chriost; agus macntaigh go minic air a dheacraibh.

Meabhrigh da chlaonta is treise dfaghail amach, agus saothraigh le hionmlán do chomhacht chum iad do dhibirt uait.

Have a great devotion to the Passion of Christ, and often meditate on his sufferings. Study to find out thy predominant passion, and labour with all thy power to root it out.

12. So in the 13th edition printed by W. Goggin that has been quoted throughout this paper, Goggin puts the ‘Form for Renewing the Baptismal Vows’ directly after the Appendix catechism, as in the 1802, 6th edition. George M’Auliff’s 29th edition prints the two Forms at the end, before the ‘Manner of Serving Mass’.