

REV. EDWARD PATRICK LORIGAN, Priest at St. John's Cathedral, was born within seven miles of the River Shannon, County Limerick, Ireland, in 1840. His parents were farmers, and died in his minority. He came to this country in 1850, and was educated principally by his brother, Hon. B. S. Lorigan, Manitowoc County, Wis.; began his studies for the priesthood at the Benedictine College, near Latrobe, Westmoreland County, Pa., on the 3d of September, 1853; left it in 1858. Meeting Bishop Spalding, of Louisville, in Philadelphia in the vacation of 1858, he was induced to proceed to St. Thomas Seminary, near Bunstown, Ky., where he completed his classical course and finished his studies in philosophy. His professor in philosophy was a Louvain clergyman, who gave him a great longing to complete his course at the Seminary of Louvain, Belgium. Mr. Lorigan did not like slavery, which prevailed, though in a mild form, in Kentucky. Coming West in 1860 to see his relatives in Wisconsin, he was recommended by Doctor Salzmann to Bishop Henni, who at once sent him to St. Francis' Theological Seminary, Milwaukee County, Wis., where he fell sick through a severe cold, which ended in inflammatory rheumatism in the Spring of 1862. He was placed in St. Mary's Hospital, Milwaukee, where Dr. Blanchard advised him to visit his native land in order to get better. With letters from Bishop Henni, he sailed for Ireland in 1864. He spent a year in his native country, visiting the notable places in the provinces of Munster and Leinster, Cork, Thurles, Limerick, Dublin, and intermediate cities. He was in intimate relationship with the Irish clergy in the districts which he visited, and often enjoyed their hospitality, though a student. The sweetness of their manners, the purity of their lives, and solid, though unostentatious, learning, increased his esteem of the sacred calling to which he aspired. He spent the Lent of 1865 in Dublin, and was edified by manifest devotion of the faithful of his Church in the capital of Ireland. While in Ireland he saw the great ecclesiastic, Cardinal Cullen, and the patriot, John Martin, and other Irish celebrities. The International Exhibition was being held in Dublin during his sojourn in that city. It was uppermost in his mind to go to Belgium and finish his sacred studies. But the humidity of the Irish climate did not allow his health to improve much, he therefore returned despondent to the United States in November, 1865. Fearing to come West during the Winter, and getting leave from his Bishop, he bent his course towards the sunny land as far as Mobile. On his route through Virginia, the two Carolinas and Georgia, he beheld with sorrow the devastations of the war just ended. Charleston, the city of the great Bishop England, was the worst wrecked city he saw on the route. He visited Fort Sumter. But the flowers and fruits which he saw even in Winter delighted him. He saw oranges on the trees in Charleston in December, and already felt the invigorating effect of the southern breezes, and rejoiced in the prospect of soon being able to resume his studies. The candor and generosity of the Southern people proved to be all he had expected. The proprietors of a hotel in Charleston and Montgomery, on learning he was a student, declined pay for his sojourn at their hotels. The railroad officers also passed him free from Norfolk, Va., to Mobile, Ala. They were as courteous as if he had paid richly. But there was danger at every movement; the cars and boats being no better than decayed lumber and bent iron. He spent two months making the journey from New York to Mobile, but the time was well repaid, for he felt almost well on arriving in Mobile, Ala., in 1865. The air was attuned by the song of the mocking bird and sweet-scented by the balmy odor of the magnolia. The vegetation was as far advanced then in Alabama as it is in the West in June. He at once entered St. Joseph's College, near Mobile, where he completed his course of Theology, began in the far West and interrupted for three years. At this college he became acquainted with the admirable system of the most famous order of his Church. There he saw the Jesuit Fathers, knowing everything, from the habits of the minutest insect to the abstruse questions in sacred science—so simple, so guileless, so gentlemanly, so kind and so pious, so unconsciously learned. His physician counseled him an active life, and a prolongation of his stay in the South. Bishop Henni, with whom Mr. Lorigan corresponded, concurred with the view of the physician, and he was ordained on St. John's day, June 24, 1866, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Mobile, by Right Rev. John Quinlan, the Bishop of that See (Mobile). There, for two terms, including a space of five years, Father Lorigan had charge of the North Alabama Missions, extending over a distance of two hundred miles. His nearest brother priest was at Memphis, Nashville or Chattanooga, Tenn. His headquarters were at the charming city of Huntsville, called the Queen City of the South, on account of its lovely situation among the spurs of the Virginia mountains, extending into Tennessee and Alabama. The next seven years he was assistant pastor of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Mobile, and pastor of the united churches St. Xavier and Bridget, in the suburbs.

During the last two years of his term at the cathedral at Mobile, he acted as Secretary to Bishop Quinlan, and made out the census of the Diocese in 1870. In the Fall of 1870 the yellow fever broke out in Mobile, spreading alarm and dismay on all sides. Among the deaths were four Sisters of Charity and three doctors. But Father Lorigan's cheerful temperament, through the mercy of Providence, carried him safe through the epidemic, although he attended many cases daily. He was presented with a horse and buggy by his fellow-citizens after the cessation of the malady. While in Mobile city, Father Lorigan was the associate of Father Pellicier, afterwards Bishop of San Antonio, Texas, and Father Ryan, the poet-priest of the South. He was also acquainted with men who took a leading part in the war on the southern side—Pope Walker, C. C. Clay and Admiral Semmes, names well known in the history of the Confederacy. The monetary crisis of 1873 crushed the industries of the South, and sent many to seek employment in other fields. The Catholic population of Alabama perceptibly diminished. Father Lorigan received a call to St. John's Cathedral, Milwaukee, where he is still stationed, on the 16th of April, 1878.