

[From the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.]

MISSIONS OF OCEANICA.

Letter of the Reverend Father Rougeyron to the Very Reverend Father Colon, Superior of the Society of Mary.

On Board the *Brillante*, Aug. 13, 1847.

MY VERY REVEREND FATHER,

"In the account which we sent you, we have announced to you the sorrowful occurrences which are after passing at New Caledonia. I hasten to inform you that, if our cross is heavy, it is not, however, without consolation. Our little flock of neophytes, and many of our catechumens, have given us affecting and admirable proofs of a sincere conversion. Oh! how powerful is the grace of baptism upon a soul properly disposed! by means of it wolves are changed into lambs. Here are some details which will not fail to comfort your heart, afflicted by the preceding narrative.

"Young Augustin has been our greatest assistance while we were besieged. He was engaged the entire day in watching what passed without; he forewarned me of the plans of the savages, and the perils we ran. One day that the danger appeared to him greater than usual, he took out of my hands a saleable object, in order to convey it himself to the savages, no doubt with the intention of allaying them by this present. When I inquired the reason of his conduct, he answered me that he did not wish they should treat me in the same way as Brother Blaise. 'As to me,' he added, 'they will not kill me, and when they will do it, their fault will not be so great.' These words, from a young child, drew tears from me, but they were tears of happiness. I found myself well recompensed for the pains I had taken in his instruction.

"Another day, seeing me sorrowful, 'Father,' said he, 'I see plainly that you are going to abandon me.' 'But no,' I replied; 'you are very wise; I love you.' 'Very well, if you love me, why do you not write me a letter, which would be very useful to me in case they should kill you all? I will present it to a captain of some ship, and he will take me to some part where I can make my confession.' There upon a great difficulty arose in his mind:—'Where shall I go to confess? Who will be able to understand me? Ah! how happy would I be to perish with you! Every day, I hear of the death of some one who wished to continue alive; and I, who wished so much to die to go quickly to heaven, do not see my last hour arriving.' And large tears rolled from the eyes of this poor child. I consoled him by saying, that we should leave our lot in the hands of God, who is a good Father. Before his conversion, Augustin was, perhaps, the most savage child of his entire tribe; to-day, his aspect formerly so fierce, has become sweet and calm, and his countenance smiling. It is not yet a year since baptism was wrought this wonder.

"One of our catechists of Poéou, named Gregory, has come in these calamitous times to reside in the midst of us, in order to serve us with more ease. As we could not leave the house, he went to discharge the most dangerous commissions, and a fact which is still more wonderful, he has won for us the affection of the chief of the village. While all conspired our destruction, this chief and Gregory came and brought us the fruits of their fishing. The most beautiful fish were always reserved for us,

"But the catechist who displayed most heroism was Michael. He contended against his own friends to protect us. Overcome by numbers, he saw his cottages burned, his plantations destroyed. Notwithstanding the hostilities directed against us, this good neophyte found means to come on board the ship we had taken refuge. After our flight from Balade I had not seen him. The moment I met him he began to sob vehemently; I endeavoured to speak to him, to console him; he could not answer me, so much was he grieved at our departure. When he had come to himself a little, he begged me to hear his confession once more. His confession ended, he pressed me to remain in his village; but our sojourn in the island becoming impossible, he promised that he would supply our place as well as he could, to continue the Mission, and have churches built. I have induced him to baptize, as he had done before, those who might be in danger of death. He was in hopes that the people of his tribe, finding themselves punished by our departure, would reform, and that on our return we would find a good number disposed

for baptism. Are not all things possible with God? Who can fathom the designs of Providence! Who knows, Reverend Father, but that this event was necessary for the conversion of the New Caledonians?

"Anthony, another young Christian, was beside Brother Blaise when the latter was massacred by blows of a club; he related to us that they cut off the Brother's head, then that they despoiled him of his garments, and that they exercised horrible cruelties on his body; he added, that our minor little chapel had been destroyed, the ornaments profaned, the sacred vessels cast in the dirt, and every article of worship trampled under foot. While the crowd were busied in pillaging our house, Anthony ran to look for the bread mould; he had in view, as he said afterwards, the holy Sacrifice of the Mass; he knew that this was the only one of the kind we had in Caledonia, and this was the reason why he saved this article in preference. He took away in addition, to send to us, a chalice and a small sum of money. This behaviour surprised me the more, as the child was neither one of the most intelligent nor most daring character; but Religion speedily changes a soul.

"How will I speak to you concerning our little Christian Mary? The sentiments of religion which she displayed in this instance are deserving of the highest praise. Whilst the savages were hatching their detestable plots, she made herself acquainted with everything, and came to inform Father Grange of what was passing. When Brother Blaise was wounded, she remained with Anthony beside the dying man, and when he had breathed his last far from abandoning him, she shed bitter tears at his side, then began to say her prayers and repeat the Rosary for the repose of his soul. By a particular inspiration, she cut off a piece of the Brother's garment. The relic was well selected; it was the very piece which had been pierced by the stroke of the lance. It was dyed with blood; she hastened to bring it to the tomb of our first Christian, where she concealed this precious deposit. Some days after she sent it to the catechist, Louis, who gave it to me. What was most astonishing, was the fact that I had never spoken of relics to this child; I do not know who could have given her this religious idea. It was in vain that both men and women ridiculed her sorrow; in vain did they make use of threats and promises to make her take part in their devastations. She would have no hand in their thefts. When night came on she profited of the occasion to pay to the good Brother the honours of burial. Alone, and by means of a little stick, this child of twelve years succeeded in scraping a trench, wherein she laid with her weak hands the mutilated members of the deceased. More than once did she come to weep and pray over this tomb. I was not able before my departure to visit this young girl; but I commended her to Michael. He promised me that he would make her come to his house with three other Catholics of the same age, 'and there,' said he, 'we will pray together.'

"It was not alone the Christians who consoled us in our distress, but likewise the catechumens. Mangora, a child about nine years old, brother of the great chief, Poébo, lived with us for three months. He was gifted with much intelligence, and had excellent dispositions. I endeavoured to bring him up in the best manner I could, and he corresponded to my care. Lately conversing with Louis, he said to him, 'If they kill the Missioners and that they spare me, I know well what I will do. I will conceal myself behind the door; then I will open it suddenly, and before they recognize me, a shower of lances will fall and kill me; this is what I wish for, as I desire to die with them.' Do not these sentiments denote a great soul? He and his brother Koine, eight years of age, came the day of our departure to apprise me privately that their brother Kenon, the great chief of Poébo, was inclined to betray us. This was true. We would all have been betrayed had it not been for the providential warning of these two children. In order to evade the vigilance of their friends who wished to detain them, they made a feint of going to the mountain, they then descended across the ravines and morasses upon the bank of the river, where they found us, and gave us

* Brother Blaise Marmouton, born March 16, 1819, at Yssac la Yourette, diocese of Clermont, left for the Foreign Missions in 1843, with the Right Rev. Dr. Douanne, Bishop of Amata. His piety, his docility, and his devotion made him valuable to the Mission which has just lost him, and which received from him important services.

warning. At the sight of these two poor little creatures, covered with mud and dripping with water, I could not restrain my emotion.

"Three other Christians, Victor, Raphael, and Magdalen, in like manner, rendered us every service in their power.

"I have told you nothing yet about Alexis, the principal chief of a populous village at Poébo. It was he who died, some time ago the death of the just. Every evening, at the sound of a little bell which I had given him, he assembled together his followers, his wife and children, he said with them prayers and the Rosary, then gave them short instructions. For some time previous every one remarked the progress which grace was making in this soul. His faith and his piety constituted my happiness in Caledonia. The good God demanded from me a sacrifice; He took from me my beloved neophyte. I trust he will be a gem in my crown in heaven. The Mission has sustained a great loss in him, as it had done before in 1846 by the death of the pious Elizabeth, an admirable woman, whose zeal had changed her into an apostle in the midst of this tribe. These two neophytes were our dearest hope; but the work of God suffers contradiction, and it is at the moment when everything seems lost, that success is oftentimes nearest.—God wishes to let us see that conversion comes from Him alone, and not from men.

"Our Christians have shown themselves so deserving of the name—so faithful to us, even in our misfortunes, that I would wish to die among them. It is true we leave New Caledonia the theatre of our toils and of our sufferings, but it is not for ever. I trust that the moment for our return to this land of desolation, where we have sown the seed of Christians, will soon arrive. Alas! these poor savages understand not what they are doing; they are deserving of every pity. The more they persecute us, the more we love them in Jesus Christ, who died for them as well as for us. We do not cease to pray for their conversion, and we would willingly give a thousand lives if we had them, for their salvation and happiness.

ROUGEYRON, *Missioner-Apostolic of the Society of Mary.*

(From the London News.)

OPENING OF ST. GEORGE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, LONDON.

From the reign of Queen Mary to that of Queen Victoria there has been no such remarkable day in London for the Roman Catholics as that which the scene of Tuesday presented at Lambert parish, upon the opening of the new church in Westminster road. For the first time since the year 1558, there were seen clustering together in the immediate neighborhood of the Archbishop of Canterbury, foreign archbishops and bishops, some 300 or 400 priests, monks in their white gowns and hoods, friars of various orders, and all wearing rich robes or poor habiliments, indicative either of the high rank to which they have attained in the Church, or the poverty which they have devoted themselves. The new church of St. George, which was now opened for the first time, was erected at a cost of £40,000. It is a noble pile of building, a specimen of the pure old Gothic, and capable of containing 4,000 persons. To those not acquainted with the form of Roman Catholic churches it may be necessary to state that it represents in the interior a cross, of which the body constitutes that portion which is allotted to the laity, whilst the head and arms, separated by rich screens of ornamented brass-work from the congregation, for three chapels; the centre containing the high altar, and one on the right being devoted to the peculiar worship of the sacrament, and that on the left to the commemoration of the joys and sufferings of the Virgin Mary. Each of the side chapels as well as the centre, contains alters, and at these it is intended to have mass celebrated every day in the week. Along each of the sides are arranged confessionals, which are formed in the wall of the building, and not projecting from it as they may be seen in churches on the Continent.

THE REWARD.—Hulme, the guard of the Great Southern and Western Railway, who arrested Mr. Smith O'Brien, at Thurles, has received the full reward of £500, promised in the Lord-Lieutenant's Proclamation. He was paid the money on Tuesday, at the Bank of Ireland. It is stated that Hulme, who is an Englishman, intends to leave the country.

(From the Catholic Advocate.)
MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES.

Catholicity is surely not responsible for the low state of Mexican civilization. It had to work in Mexico with inferior or bad materials, and considering everything, its success has been beyond any merely human calculation. The Catholic Spaniards found the Aztecs debased heathens, addicted to frightful orgies and human sacrifices; they converted them to Christianity, softened their manners, and brought them gradually to better principles and to more human practice. On the ruins of the blood-stained Teocalli, they reared the graceful Christian temple, which was speedily crowded with devout worshippers. They intermarried with the natives, and brought them gradually to perhaps as high a state of civilization as they were capable of. If they could not raise them higher, it was surely not their fault, much less that of their religion.

Now what have we enlightened Anglo-Saxon Protestants of North America done to improve the social and religious condition of the aboriginal inhabitants, who roamed over our forests before we ever set foot on the territory of this Union? Echo answers—*what?* Verily the Mexican might say to us with a derisive smile, that we have won immortal laurels in this field. We have civilized and Christianized the Indians with a vengeance! Those whom we have not utterly exterminated—and their number is also comparatively small—we have humanely driven from post to post until at last we have expelled them from the beloved graves of their fathers, and scattered them through the forests which lie beyond the utmost western bounds of our inhabited territory. We were so proud of our blood, and so elated with our Bible enlightenment, that we could never brook the idea of living in the same territory, or breathing the same atmosphere with our red brethren. These have melted away before the march of our civilization, as the snow before the rising sun.

What heathen nation, in fact, has Protestantism, with all its proud boasting, ever converted or civilized? We have not yet heard of one.

When speaking of the Mexican Indians—who even now constitute more than one half the entire Mexican population—we should never forget our own Indians of the North. The Aztecs still live in their descendants; but where are the hundred tribes which once peopled the Eastern and Middle States of our confederation? Where are they? Gone forever,—thanks to our superior enlightenment and humanity!

CONVERSION.—John E. Bowden, Esq., of Trinity College, Oxford, was received into the Catholic Church, by the Rev. Dr. Fergusson, on the 2nd inst., at the Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham.—*Tablet.*

IRELAND.—A writer in Douglas Jerrold's newspaper says that Ireland has cost England £150,000,000 since the Union; that being the net excess of the expenditure for the Irish Government over the receipts of the Irish revenue. But this money, it must be understood, has not been spent for the benefit of the Irish people, but the English people governing Ireland. Ireland is actually made to contribute about £20,000,000 per annum to the support of the government, and it is small consolation to her that the English poor are also fleeced for the selfsame purpose.

Births

SEPTEMBER 1.—Mrs Dillon, of a son.
" 1.—Mrs Leary, of a son.
" 2.—Mrs Newman, of a daughter.
" 4.—Mrs Bowler, of a son.
" 7.—Mrs W. Murphy, of a son.
" 7.—Mrs J. Murphy, of a daughter.
" 8.—Mrs Monahan, of a daughter.
" 8.—Mrs Kelly, of a son.
" 10.—Mrs Hanigan, of a son.
" 10.—Mrs Geraghty, of a son.
" 10.—Mrs Gully, of a daughter.

Weds.

SEPTEMBER 11.—John Mealy, private of the 1st Royal Regt., native of Ireland, aged 38 years.
" 11.—James, son of Wm. and Jane Butler, aged 7 months.
" 14.—John, infant son of J. and Mary Nowlan, aged 18 days.
" 13.—Johannah, infant daughter of Patk and Bridget Deegan, aged 1 year and 3 months.