

A Mexican Cathedral.

Giacor, the Mexican correspondent of the *Southern Cross*, of Buenos Aires, Brazil, gives this brief description of the magnificent Cathedral in the capital of Mexico: "On entering its doors for the first time we stood fairly bewildered by its magnitude and vastness, as well as by the richness and splendor of its interior decoration. Your cathedral in Buenos Aires is a plain, unpretentious structure in comparison to this. In fact, no cathedral in America can be at all compared to it in point of size and magnificence. It is 475 feet long, 200 feet wide, and 175 feet high. On each side of the imposing facade two towers, surmounted by cupolas, rise to the height of 247 feet. The cathedral is built on the site of an Aztec pagan temple. The work was greatly delayed by the marshy nature of the soil. In 1615 the walls were only twenty feet above ground. Philip the Third, desirous of hastening on the work, sent out his own architect with a simpler plan. It was inaugurated in 1667 with great pomp and ceremony; but the choir was not finally completed until 1730, when the wonderful balustrade which divides it from the sanctuary was put up. It is composed of silver and bronze. The building of the cathedral cost the Spanish Government two million dollars. Several millions more were spent on the decoration of the interior. The interior is composed of five naves, which gradually decrease from the central to the lateral ones, which are occupied by fourteen chapels. The floor is of wood, which is kept scrupulously clean. The cathedral contains several paintings by Murillo and other Spanish masters.

They Never Came Back.

"It was a rainy day," said the book-seller, "and the wet shoes and dripping umbrellas of customers had made the floor quite wet and slippery just inside the store door. All our clerks happened to be in the back part of the place when the door opened and a large and very stout lady hurried in. Just as the door swung shut behind her she slipped and fell flat upon the floor.

"Before any of us could reach her she picked herself up with surprising quickness for a woman of her size, gave a stony stare all around the room, and then, without uttering a word, turned around and opened the door and walked out in the most dignified manner."

"None of us has ever seen the woman since, and I suppose her pride will prevent her from ever coming into the store where her first appearance was so mortifying.

"It was only a day or two after that," the salesman continued, "when we lost another customer. A lady who had bought a book from us a week or so before came in and asked to exchange the volume for another one she thought she would rather have.

"I explained to her that it was our rule never to exchange books, and though I talked as politely as I could I could see she was getting angry every second. She was indignant, and didn't hesitate to say so, and she had begun to make me rather nervous, when, in the midst of what was really a regular tirade, she snapped out:

"I suppose your rules are as unchangeable as the laws of the Pedes and Mersians—I mean the Pedes and Mesians—or—I mean—the Merds and—"

"And then she stopped, took a long breath, made a break for the door and disappeared, and we have not yet exchanged that book."

The Vicar-Apostolic of Kiang-Kiang China, has received 100,000 francs indemnity for the damage inflicted on Catholic property in his jurisdiction during the recent riots. The native Christians received about 7,000 francs besides.

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A Need of Our Times.

The armies of the unemployed are made up of all classes. The members hail from all parts of the country and represent every national and religious element of our population. Those from the far west under the leadership of Gen. Kelly, are mostly Irish or Irish Americans. There are hundreds of Catholics among these poor workmen—no doubt of it. But there is no priest to accompany them on their long and weary journey across the continent, nor ever go among them when they halt for rest or refreshment, to cheer their drooping spirits, to show the sympathy of the Church with them in their privations and sorrows, to counsel them against lawlessness. The class of people represented by these knights of labor has largely drifted away from the Church and the ministers of religion have not as yet gone after them. They have no apostle, sad to tell; and, sadder still they do not seem to feel the need of one. If St. Francis were living in our time and country, we feel sure he would be found ministering to the common-wealers, as the most spiritually destitute portion of Christ's flock in America.

Think of the numbers—increasing year by year we are told—in all our large cities who never go to Mass who are as far from religious influence as though they were in Darkest Africa; who live and die unmindful of God and eternity. We are building countless costly churches, which in the next century will be empty or frequented only by the sex that is devout. No church where there is not a school will be needed then. Much priestly energy is expended in efforts to propagate supererogatory devotions when thousands upon thousands need to be impressed with the necessity of morning and night prayers, and with the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays. Men are exhorted to be patriotic who take no thought of their heavenly country. Total abstinence is preached to scores, when untold numbers have long since ceased to approach the life-giving Sacraments. The time has come when preaching should not be restricted to churches, or priestly ministrations confined to regular parishioners. Apostles men of God, lovers of the lowly are needed for the strayed sheep and the neglected lambs far removed from the influence of parishes. These new Apostles need not be canonists or cosmogonists, only fearers of God and lovers of souls. It will not help them to know the structure of the sunnet, to be skilled in ecclesiastical habiliments, or to be Very Reverend. We hear much in the praise of men who are said to be in touch with the times—who can feel the public pulse; but one must be poor, and love the poor, to feel the great, throbbing heart of humanity.

How, it has been asked did St. Francis influence the masses so wondrously? By preaching to them the life of the spirit, not by teaching them doctrines and precepts of men. As in the days of our Blessed Lord, there is now much "washing of pots and cups." The Commandments of Almighty God are lost sight of to hold the traditions of men. Trade disputes and race struggles and political strifes are things of a day; like fevers and agitations, they pass away and are forgotten. "The life of the spirit remains, and is the one thing in the world that has an infinite value." Oh, for a St. Francis! —*The Ave Maria.*

The Rev. Finlow Alexander, sub-dean of the Episcopal Cathedral, Fredericton N.B. has severed his connection with that church and embraced Roman Catholicism, as soon as the Bishop of Fredericton became aware of the circumstances, he suspended Mr. Alexander and cancelled his authority. It is said this action was taken because it was the intention of Mr. Alexander to publicly explain his reasons for his change of views. He was then cut off from doing so.