

12 miles from Bamako, the graceful capital of Soudan, the Missionaries' residence looked from a distance almost pretty, with its straight pisé-walls and its bran-new straw-roof. When looked upon from near by, it was simplicity itself, almost poverty as is becoming Missionaries for whom comfort is but too frequently, and for good reasons, considered as a secondary matter.

For the last few days, the pretty residence has been but a heap of ruins. The walls alone have been left standing, a violent and altogether unexpected fire destroyed everything in a very short space of time.

It was with the greatest difficulty that, thanks to the help given us by our boarders, by our Christians and a few Pagans, we have succeeded in saving a part of our belongings.

The chapel, towards which we hastily directed our steps as soon as the fire was discovered, was nothing but a blazing furnace in which we were unable to penetrate.

Holy Hosts, sacred vessels, sacerdotal clothes, all has been reduced to ashes.

\*\*\*

Here we are, on the eve of winter, forced to find a shelter, the best we can, under a few branches hastily covered with a little straw.

But what grieves us above all things, under these sad circumstances, is much less to see ourselves deprived of everything and walking in the mud and among ruins, than to think that, for a long time to come, Our Lord will not even have a decent roof to shelter Himself, unless Catholic Charity comes to our help.

From one of the neighboring stations, we borrowed a portable chapel so that we can celebrate Mass every day ; but we feel ashamed, on Sundays, to be able to give our Christians but the shelter of a poor shed and the shade of our still poorer verandahs.