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THE BOLLANDISTS.

Rev. Pere Charles De Smedt, Bollandist and rector of the College St. Michel at Brussels, has been celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his entrance into the Society of Jesus, writes the London correspondent of the "London Catholic Times." The interesting event is a reminder that the old college in the Rue des Ursulines over which Pere de Smedt presides has been for many years the centre of the literary and scientific activity of the little band of Jesuit fathers who are known as the Bollandists, the continuators of that monumental work which was inaugurated upwards of two hundred and fifty years ago by the renowned Pere Jean de Bolland. It may with truth be said that the fame of the "Acta Sanctorum" and of many of the men identified with that splendid undertaking is in all the churches. In the many numerous folios tomes of the "Acta"—the first volume appeared in 1643; the sixty-second, the latest issued, was published in 1894—are amassed such treasures of hagiographical, historical and critical information as render the work unique among the publications of the kind. For the execution of so comprehensive a design, a scheme involving an immense amount of minute and curious research, the progress of its writers and compilers has necessarily been slow. Omitting the long period during which the labors of the Bollandists were suspended in consequence of the suppression of the society in 1773 and events following the French Revolution, we find that the preparation of each volume occupied on an average from three to four years.

INCEPTION OF THE WORK.

Pere de Bolland, or Bollandus, who has given his name to this fraternity of Jesuit writers, was born near Maestricht in 1596 and died in the year 1663. Although the name of this distinguished hagiographer is so intimately and indissolubly connected with the "Acta Sanctorum," the first suggestion of the undertaking is attributed to another member of the order, like him a Fleming, Pere Heribert Roesweyde (Roeswede)—born 1569, died 1623—who spent more than thirty years in the collection of materials, but passed away without having been able to commence the realization of his project. The task fell to Pere de Bolland, who, having chosen as his collaborators Pere Godfried Henschenius (Henschenius) and Pere Daniel Van Papenbroeck (Papebroke), two eminent scholars, had the satisfaction of seeing issued from the press the initial volume of the "Acta," which was dedicated to the then reigning Pontiff, Urban VIII.

When this work was first started it was by no means contemplated that it should ever reach the dimensions it has since assumed. The original purpose was to produce a series of lives of the saints, solidly and accurately written, in substitution of similar works of mediocre value which were then in vogue, but in a short time its promoters found it desirable to modify their plan and impart to the publication that scientific and critical character which has so long distinguished it. To their important undertaking this trio of hagiographical experts devoted the greater and best part of their lives, Bollandus having toiled uninterruptedly on it for thirty-four years, Henschenius for forty-six and Papebroke for as many as fifty-five years. The first fifty years was perhaps the most brilliant period of the Bollandist work, the earlier volumes of the "Acta Sanctorum" rivaling, if not excelling, in merit the great historical publications which appeared in that age from writers of such distinction as the Benedictine Mabillon, the Oratorian Leconte, Duchesne, etc. The following periods, during which the work was directed by Peres du Sollier, Stilling and De Bye, although less brilliant, were still very remarkable. Year after year the continuators of Bollandus pursued their arduous task, giving to the world at irregular intervals the fruits of their patient toil, until the enemies of their illustrious order succeeded in 1773 in securing its suppression.

VICTIMS OF PERSECUTION.

In the event of the progress of the Bollandist work was necessarily greatly impeded during several years. In 1773 they were forced to leave Antwerp, till then the seat of their labors, but found a temporary shelter at the Abbey of Caudenberg. Hardly, however had they been settled down at Caudenberg when, in 1780, all the abbots of the country were suppressed by Joseph II., thus sending them once more adrift. The former college of the society at Brussels next afforded them a refuge but after a few months the little company was definitely dissolved. Their valuable library having been put up at auction, the greater part of it was purchased by the abbot of the Premonstratensian Monastery of Tongerlo, Pere Du Bye, the surviving member of the Bollandist group, repaired to Tongerlo, and there, with the assistance of four of the Norbertine monks, issued in 1794 the fifty-third volume of the "Acta." The good father was not for long permitted to pursue his peaceful avocation, for in 1796 the Premonstratensians were expelled from their abbey, the library pillaged and its precious contents scattered, a considerable number of the valuable manuscripts which it contained being taken to the Royal Library at Brussels, where they are still preserved. A small part of the collection remained at Tongerlo and was several years later restored to the new Bollandists. Following the publication of the fifty-third volume was an interval of more than forty years, during which period the society was unable from various causes to set apart any of its members to continue the work of the "Acta Sanctorum." It was only in 1837 the little community of hagiographers was reconstituted at Brussels, the successors of Bollandus and his confreres being Peres Van Hocke, Boone, Van der Moore and Oppens, A. G. GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY.

The Belgian Government, esteeming the enterprise as one redounding to the honor of the nation, accorded an annual subsidy of 6,000 francs to wards the expenses of publication, a grant which was regularly paid until 1867, when it was meagrely withdrawn by Bars, the rabidly anti-clerical Minister of Justice. Notwithstanding the zeal and diligence with which Van Hocke and his associates addressed themselves to their task, it was not before 1845 they were able to send from the press the fifty-fourth volume of the series. The volumes which have since appeared were published at the following dates: The fifty-fifth, in 1853, the fifty-sixth in 1858, the fifty-seventh in 1861, the fifty-eighth in 1867, the fifty-ninth in 1870, the sixtieth in 1880, the sixty-first in 1887, the sixty-second (Vol. II, for November) in 1894. The sixty-third volume, which is now in preparation, has been delayed owing to the extent and variety of the researches which its compilation entails.

It is superfluous to say that the "Acta Sanctorum," being specially intended for the learned and as a work of reference, has not run into many editions. Nearly a hundred years elapsed before it was found necessary to issue a reprint. Between 1734 and 1770 a second edition of the series up to the forty-fifth volume was printed in Venice, the following volumes up to the latter year being reissued by the Belgian publisher Graess. In 1863-69 Palme, of Paris, republished the whole series to date, but the edition was in many respects defective. The work is, of course, very expensive, each volume costing no less than 75 francs. In 1882 the Bollandists commenced the publication of a special review, the "Analecta Bollandiana," which is a valuable repository of documents and dissertations of critical, historical and hagiographical interest, but, as may be guessed from the nature of its contents, its circulation is confined almost exclusively to a comparative small circle of scientists and specialists.

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"Ancient" is the official intermediary. Their work they apportion among themselves according to the intellectual tastes and aptitudes of each, with, however, a certain method in the distribution of the labor. The existing arrangement is that two of the fathers devote themselves to the study of the first five centuries, two to the earlier Middle Ages and two to the later Middle Ages and the modern epoch. They are shortly to receive an accession to their number in the persons of three of their religious confreres who are now engaged in acquiring a thorough mastery of the Oriental, Slavonic and Celtic languages with a view to their future studies.

Antwerp was the cradle of this grand undertaking which reflects so much honor on the Jesuit name, and in that city all the volumes of the "Acta" were compiled and printed until the work was interrupted by the suppression of the society. When the labors of the continuators were resumed, "Brussels became the headquarters of the Bollandists, their museum," or workshop as they call it, being housed in a special wing of the College St. Michel in the quiet Rue des Ursulines. Their library contains nearly 100,000 printed and manuscript volumes treating exclusively of history, philosophy, philology, archaeology and patology.

Away from the hum and bustle of the busy world the little band of savants pursue with patient and unremitting industry their literary and scientific labors, each contributing his quota towards the completion of the imperishable monument of ecclesiastical learning which close on three hundred years ago was commenced by their illustrious "ancestors." Rarely, however, is the Bollandist community an occupier of St. Michel, one or more of its members being usually absent, engaged on researches or collecting materials in some famous library abroad, the results of their investigations being turned to profitable account in the pages of the "Analecta" or reserved for use in a future tome of the "Acta Sanctorum."—Standards and Times.

Canada is our country. Our first duties as citizens are to her. We are proud of the races from which we are sprung; but our native land is the peer of any of the lands from which our forefathers came; and we were born here. English, Irish, Scotch and French are living here, say rather, their descendants are living here—we are all Canadians, and British subjects. The man who takes no interest in the history of his race is a poor man indeed. The man who reads of how his Scottish ancestors fought the English, or suffered from English hostility, the Frenchman who reads of his people's famous wars with England, the Irishman who reads of centuries of hard laws and hard blows and all the strife between the Irish and English peoples, and feels no stirring of his blood, receives no impulse from the heart-throbs of history, is a wooden man. But the man who goes out to argue with his neighbor of a different race across the line fence about all this is worse than a wooden man—he is a fool. We are all Canadian, and Canadian jails waiting for men who disturb the peace of the community—even though the disturbance was precipitated by warm and noble feelings and sympathies with the wrong of his race in days gone by. It is well to remember the brave deeds of our races in days of old; it is well to know what they suffered and how they bore their sufferings or resisted oppression and tyranny; but it is folly madness, to excite ourselves and those about us by hot disputes about subjects which they can never see with our eyes, and on which they never would acknowledge us to be right, even if we convinced them fully. And if they did acknowledge that their ancestors were wrong and ours right, in the dreadful strife of the long ago, what would be accomplished by the securing of such admissions? Let us be ready to reply and maintain the truth, whether it refers to history or anything else, but we must, if we would do our duty as citizens, never prolong a dispute, nor enter into real battle, save when present-day subjects, and present-day rights are in question. "Let the dead past bury its dead" is one of the wisest sentences ever penned.—Casket.

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No other disease makes one feel so old. It stiffens the joints, produces lameness, and makes every motion painful. It is sometimes so bad as wholly to disable, and it should never be neglected.

M. J. McDonald, Trenton, Ont., had it after a severe attack of the grip; Mrs. Hattie Turner, Bolton, Mo., had it so severely she could not lift anything or could scarcely get up or down stairs; W. H. Shepard, Sandy Hook, Conn., was laid up with it, was cold even in July, and could not dress himself.

According to testimonials voluntarily given, those sufferers were permanently relieved, as others have been, by

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