



A CHAPLET OF YEARS



It was no easy matter to force one's way through the excited crowd to the steamer. After waiting two hours in vain for his chance, the Bishop, who was the head of the party, fearing the Sisters might catch yellow fever if exposed longer to the pestilential atmosphere, hired mulattoes to conduct the party to the anchored steamer three miles off. They agreed to do so for eight dollars. As there was no landing place, the mulattoes waded knee-deep to the boats, carrying their passengers on their shoulders. The Bishop was carried over first, then the priests and brothers, the Sisters looking on with dismay to think they, too, must be borne on the shoulders of those mulattoes. Nothing had daunted them so far, but to be hoisted on those naked shoulders, to grasp those mulatto necks, and to be grasped by those brawny arms, ah, this was too much!

Sister M. Conception, with true Celtic independence, positively refused to submit to this mode of travel, but finally had to yield to the inevitable. When the mulatto took her up she held on so gingerly that he nearly dropped her in the Pacific. The irate mulatto scolded her roundly for thus ruining his reputation as a carrier. Before consenting to carry over Sister Mary Angele, who was of generous weight and build, the porter demanded a double fare. This fact afterwards was often jestingly held up to the good natured Sister, with the reminder that as her passage had cost twice that of the other Sisters she was expected to do twice as much work.

THE CABIN CONVENT

The day after their landing the Sisters were to be seen at the great duty for which they had left Motherland, a severance which then implied voluntary exile. Their first work was to make their dwelling, which was a dilapidated cabin, fit for habitation. For some weeks the sleeping apartment of the Sisters consisted of mattresses spread on the floor of the living room, and piled in a corner during the day time. This "living room" came by its name most honestly: it was a school room, community room, parlour and office all combined.

The paramount duty in which the Sisters at once engaged was that of teaching the young that we are on earth "to know, love and serve God, and be happy with Him forever in heaven."

As a means to an end, the Sisters, then as now, imparted this vital lesson through the medium of secular learning. The first Catechism lesson given on Sunday, twenty-four hours after their arrival, was