

ANNALS

OF THE

Propagation of the Faith

COMPILED FOR THE

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.



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THREE-RIVERS.

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## A GREAT CHARITY.

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ORIGIN OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROPAGATION OF  
THE FAITH, AS TOLD BY FREDERICK OZANAM.

Cries of distress, on the one hand from the East, and on the other hand from the West, reached the ears of two pious women dwelling in a provincial city of France, and inspired them with the design which, having been now happily realized, supports in our days, with efficacious aid, the missions of the two worlds. In the year 1815, Mgr. Dubourg, bishop of New-Orleans, on his return from Rome, where he had been consecrated, stopped for some time at Orleans. Full of anxiety on account of the extreme poverty of his diocese, in which he had everything to organize from the very foundation, he earnestly recommended it to the charity of the citizens of Lyons. In particular, he spoke of his anxieties to a truly Christian woman, a widow, whom he had formerly known in the United States, and told her that it had occurred to him to establish, in aid of the spiritual necessities of Louisiana, a charitable association, fixing the subscription at one franc a year. The kind-hearted widow entered at once into the Bishop's views, and spoke on the subject to some few persons; but she met with many difficulties. She had to await the heaven-appointed hour, and content herself meanwhile with collecting some trifling alms for those christian settlements of America, which were the objects of her maternal solicitude. About the very same time, that is to say, in 1816, the directors of the Seminary of Foreign Missions, which had been a year established at Paris, formed a desire to revive the union of prayers for the

conversion of infidels, organized in the preceding century. With this view, they obtained indulgences from the Holy See, and published an account of the destitute condition of their churches. These attempts had the effect of preparing the way, and favorably disposing many minds. Three years later, a young person in Lyons, whose life of active charity reminds one of the Christian virgins of the primitive times, received from her brother, a student of Saint Sulpice, a letter full of the saddest expressions. He told her of the deplorable poverty of the house of the Foreign Missions, and proposed to obtain regular resources for it, through the establishment of a charitable association. The pious sister took up the happy thought, and in the course of the year 1820, got together a society of persons, subscribing each one half-penny a week towards the support of the Seminary of the Missions. The work began among the pious workwomen, who honor by their hidden virtues, as they sustain by their labor the rich and popular trade of Lyons. During the six last months of that year, the foundress bore, single handed, the whole burden of her weighty undertaking. At that time, there was neither a union of prayer, nor a festival, nor a periodical publication. Soon, the number of associates reached to about one thousand ; a considerable result certainly, but not likely to increase, owing to the necessarily limited range of the influence which the originators could bring to bear. The collected offerings were sent as a pious memento from the church of Lyons to that ancient Asia whence she had received the faith. The amount was two thousand francs. It is pleasant to count the first drops of a dew which was one day to fall in greater abundance on a field of limitless extent. Meanwhile the correspondents of Mgr. Dubourg, seeing what had been done, were far from relinquishing the

hope of establishing something similar for the benefit of New-Orleans, when they received a visit in the beginning of 1822 from the Vicar-General of that See. His presence still further inflamed the zeal of the benefactors of Louisiana. But it had often been objected that a work for the Missions could never have a solid foundation, unless organized in a Catholic spirit, that is to say, for the assistance of the apostolate throughout the universe. The idea soon became general. A meeting was called, and the twelve who were invited responded to the summons. The proceedings opened with the invocation of the Holy Ghost. A priest was the first to speak ; and after giving a short account of the progress and sufferings of religion in North America, he proposed the establishment of a great association, for the benefit of the Catholic missions in the two hemispheres. The resolution was unanimously adopted ; and before the meeting separated a president was named and a committee of three appointed to prepare a plan of operations. Then it was that in adopting the principle of universality which distinguished the new enterprise from previous essays, the Association for the Propagation of the Faith was founded. Now, it so happened through divine Providence, which seems henceforth to have assumed the government of the Association, so as to conduct it without the aid of man, that this first meeting was held, entirely without premeditation, on Friday, the 3d of May, the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross. It was only when, shortly after the foundation-day was appointed as one of the two annual festivals of the society, that it was discovered how one of our future anniversaries was consecrated to the veneration of the redeeming cross, whose conquests our humble contributions endeavor to extend. The approbation of the ecclesiastical authority, without which no innovation,

however commendable, could be introduced among the Christian people, was solicited. This, before much time had elapsed, was obtained, and thus the labors of the founders were consecrated. The receipts of the first month had been 520*l.* 10*c.* for the diocese ; the total for the first year amounted to 15,272*l.* 15*c.* But the pious zeal of the Association could not be confined within the bounds of a province. A few days after the first meeting was held, one of the members of the Central Council of Lyons set about enkindling the ever-ardent charity of the cities of the South. Diocesan committees were held at Avignon, Aix, Marseilles, Montpellier, and Grenoble. The most eminent of the clergy joined with the most religious of the laity, and from the hopeful activity of so many worthy people, great things might be expected. Soon after this, one of the founders repaired to Paris. Through his exertions another central council was established there, and from that date the whole kingdom was included in the Association. In the following year a delegate from the Council of Lyons, prostrate at the feet of the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius the VII, of happy memory, obtained the indulgences which permanently enrich the Association. Soon words of encouragement were heard from all the episcopal thrones in France. The prelates of the neighboring countries began to move in the same direction. Belgium and Switzerland, the various States of Germany and Italy, Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal soon joined the crusade of charity. Nearly three hundred bishops raised their voices in its favor ; and finally, his Holiness Pope Gregory XVI., by an Encyclical of the year 1840, having deigned to recommend to all the churches the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, the society was placed thereby in the rank of the institutions common to all christians.

And thus it was that a few meetings, in which no difficulties occurred, and hardly a debate took place, laid the foundation of an Institution, the results of which were destined to affect the universe. In the easy and admirable working of this organization, which has shown itself equal to the greatest development, we recognize the action of the Eternal Wisdom, whose method is always so simple even in the midst of the infinite variety of its operations. The same Divine Wisdom has manifested itself in a still more striking way by the pronouncement of the Church, which is its organ. A mysterious strength has been given to us ; the sources of graces have been opened, and the blood of the Saviour has descended on our unworthy offerings, with the blessings of the Pontiffs ; the Holy Sacrifice offered up in every spot where an altar has been raised, with the prayers of the martyrs who remember their benefactors as they breathe their last sigh. Such is the providential character of the work, and the part that God has taken in it ; and such is the part He has entrusted to us

At first there was nothing but the pious desires of two humble Christian women ; but these two servants of God became the interpreters of two quarters of the globe. What can surpass in power such faith and hope ? and yet, this would have availed but little without the charity which united these desires and the interests of which they were the expression, and which prompted in each case the sacrifice of self for the general good. In the contact of these two sparks the flame was enkindled. The work came forth into existence in this way ; it grew in the same manner : such were its origin and its power, and the condition of its future progress ! It is maintained solely by the setting aside of personal

predilections and national susceptibilities, by its unity and Catholicity in the distribution of its funds, and the supply of its resources.

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PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA.

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WHAT IT OWES TO THE SOCIETY OF THE PROPAGATION OF  
THE FAITH.

The state of religion in the northern part of this continent was, previous to 1840, very different from what it is in our days. Throughout the vast region called the United States, there were only five dioceses ; namely Baltimore and New-Orleans, which are as old as the end of the last century, Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, which dated from 1808. In the meanwhile, every year brought to the shores of the New World crowds of immigrants. To hinder them from being lost in the midst of Protestants who flowed in from all sides, the Holy See increased the number of dioceses : but the clergy were very few. The expenses of bringing over the missionaries whom the Bishops were always asking from Europe, of building churches and presbyteries, founding colleges, schools, and hospitals, had all to be defrayed. The immigrants were for the most poor ; where could the indispensable means be found ? The Society for the Propagation of the Faith was the providence of the infant church of the united states, and *there is not a diocese even amongst those whose present prosperity Europe might envy, which had not, in the first years of its existence, to call upon us for assistance.* Their Bishops have recognized solemnly this fact, and often, collected together in councils, they have sent us, with their blessings and their prayers, the explicit testimony of their



gratitude. Doubtless we must see before all, in the success obtained, the action of Providence, and the devotion of apostolic men : but we may also say, without injury to the humbleness of our position, that the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, has been one of the secondary causes of these consoling results.

In 1840, there were sixteen dioceses in the United States ; at present there are sixty-eight, amongst which eleven are metropolitan. Those are Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, New-Orleans, New-York, Oregon City, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, Santa Fe, and as a testimony of the importance of this Church of the New World, the Holy Father has invested with the dignity of a cardinal one of its bishops. We can have an idea of the progress that Catholicity has made by casting our eyes on the chief city of the United States, New-York, which, from its importance, might be called their capital, though in an administrative and political sense that title does not belong to it. At present there are ninety-six churches in New-York, more than thirty-two chapels, and the number of Catholics is 400,000, on a total population of 1,050,000 inhabitants. The tide of immigration which brings Europeans by thousands into the vast regions of North America is far from its ebb. Then, in the eastern and southern provinces, we come across 4,000,000 of negroes, who having suddenly passed from slavery without any preparation for unbound-ed liberty, perish daily, victims of their brutal passions, and of their carelessness. This race should have utterly perished if the Catholic religion did not intervene to raise it up from its fallen state, by teaching it respect for the law of God, by which alone the nations live.

The continuance of the immigration rendered ne-

cessary the augmentation of the dioceses and therefore it is our society is called upon unceasingly to distribute to new missions the alms which it has ceased to give to the old ones. Let us now pass the borders of the United States to the north. There is a land which was formerly French soil, and whose inhabitants remain attached to their old country by language and affection. Quebec and Montréal have no need of our help ; but all around them have sprung up, as off-shoots of a great tree, other dioceses which at different times have sought our assistance. Finally, in regions which extend almost to the polar circle, we meet intrepid apostles devoted to the conversion of the population which wander amidst the icy solitudes. They live like the savages, they follow their encampments, reside in miserable huts often covered with snow. Without any communication with the rest of the world, except at rare intervals, those truly heroic pastors seek out the wandering sheep, and lead them to God. By degrees they civilize those semi-barbarous tribes, and save them from the ruin to which contact with the traders would lead them, unless protected by religion, which teaches them to conquer their depraved appetites, and to forego the fire-water, in which they find the nourishment for their vices, and the seed of the diseases which decimate them. To complete our review we have only to say a word about the Christian settlements scattered in the midst of the sea of the Antilles. These islands were formerly, for the most part, French or Spanish, and, it consequence, Catholic ; at present, under the British rule, Protestantism has become preponderant ; Trinidad may be cited as an exception from this, but even there our mission is not free from embarrassment ; for in these burning regions we can find scarcely any vocations to the priesthood ; life passes quickly, and to fill up the vacancies

which occur in the ranks already denuded of the missionaries, we have to call upon Europe unceasingly for new priests. We have the same story to tell of the missions situated in that part of Southern America called Guiana, which has no recognized masters. There the unhealthiness of the climate is added to the needs of various kinds, which we have enumerated. Our assistance is consequently indispensable there.

The American countries over which the action of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith extends, and the progress made by the aid of its alms for those thirty years, will be better understood by the following table :

RECAPITULATION.

	1840		
	Bishops.	Priests.	Catholics.
United States.....	16	487	1,270,000
English possessions.....	8	133	437,000 ?
Holland possessions.....	8	9	44,000
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Total .....	24	629	1,751,000

	1878		
	Bishops.	Priests.	Catholics.
United States.....	68	5,548	6,000,000
English possessions.....	29	1,751	1,799,200
Holland possessions.....	2	30	44,966
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Total.....	99	7,329	7,844,166

*(From the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith.)*

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

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*Brief sketch of the life of Saint Francis-Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies.*

St. Francis Xavier, the great Apostle of the Indies, as he is called in the Bull of his canonization—the celebrated Thaumaturgus of the 16th century, the irrefragable witness of the truth of our holy religion, the ornament of the Society of Jesus, and of the entire Catholic Church,—was of royal lineage, and was born of illustrious parents, at the Castle of Xavier, in the kingdom of Navarre, in Spain, on the 7th of April 1506. Having passed his childhood, he was sent to the University of Paris, to study the liberal arts, for which he evinced an especial inclination. He applied himself so diligently and made so much progress, that he was not only created Doctor of Philosophy, but also appointed to instruct others in that science. All his aim was to gain honors and to become great in the eyes of the world. His father intended to recall him home after some years, but his sister, who was Prioress in the Convent of the Poor Clares at Gandia, and had the reputation of being a Saint, knew by divine inspiration the great work for which her brother was destined by the Almighty, and persuaded her father not to insist on his return, saying in a prophetic manner, that Francis was chosen to become the apostle of many nations. Whilst Xavier was teaching at Paris, St. Ignatius came to the same city to finish his studies. Knowing, by divine inspiration, how much good Francis, who was so highly gifted by the Almighty, would be able to do for the salvation of souls, he sought the friendship of the young Professor, and gradually showed him the emptiness of all temporal greatness, and

drew him from his eagerness to obtain worldly honors by repeating the earnest words of Christ : « What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? » These words of our Saviour, coming from the lips of a St. Ignatius, so deeply pierced the heart of Xavier, and made so indelible an impression, that he became entirely converted. Then, and forever after, Francis gave himself unreservedly to gain souls to God. After a brief apostolate amongst his countrymen in Rome, he was sent by St. Ignatius to the Indies, where for twelve years, like another St. Paul, he was to wear himself out, bearing the Gospel to Hindostan, to Malacca, and to Japan. Though vested with the dignity of Nuncio Apostolic and Superior over his religious brethren, he only used his authority to take for himself the largest share of the toils and dangers of the work. Thwarted by the jealousy, covetousness, and carelessness of those who should have helped and encouraged him, neither their opposition nor the difficulties of every sort which he encountered could make him slacken his labors for souls. He was ever preaching, baptizing, hearing confessions, discussing with the learned, instructing the ignorant ; and yet all this was done with the greatest pains, as the elaborate instructions and the long letters which he has left behind prove. The vast kingdom of China appealed to his charity, and he was resolved to risk his life to force an entry, when God took him to Himself, and he died, like Moses, in sight of the land of promise. He died of fever on the island of Sancian, at the age of 46 years, having been in the Indies less than twelve years. During that short space of time, he had preached the Gospel to over a hundred islands or kingdoms, worked innumerable miracles, raised eight dead persons to life, and converted to Jesus Christ more than a hundred thousand souls. His body

was placed in a coffin and covered over with unslacked lime, in order to accelerate its decomposition, and he was buried without solemnity on the following sunday.

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*Proposed exhumation of the relics of St. Francis-Xavier.*

An East Indian (protestant) secular paper said a few months ago : « An important ceremony in connection with the Roman Catholic Church in India is shortly to be celebrated at Goa. It has been determined by his Majesty the King of Portugal and his Holiness the Pope, that the time is opportune for the exhumation of the body of St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of India, which has remained sealed in its gorgeous mausoleum erected by the piety of Donna Maria Secunda, late Queen of Portugal, in the cathedral of ancient Goa since 1859.

«The tragic death of this remarkable and good man, which occurred some three hundred years ago at Macao, whilst engaged in propagating the great doctrines of Christianity, is matter of history—and how his body was brought by sorrowing and loving friends to Goa and there interred—and how he was canonized by the Roman Conclave and his right hand sent to Rome—since which time the body has been periodically exhumed and presented as one of the miracles of the Church to the thousand of devotes who, on those occasions, congregate from all parts of India to take part in the ceremony. At each of these exhumations the remains have been subjected to the most rigid inspection by the best medical faculty procurable, in the presence of all the great dignitaries of the Church and realm, including the Governor-General in person, that no deception may be used, and that every minute circumstance in the appearance of the body may be observed and clearly and distinctly noted down in the report, which report,

after having been signed by all the officials present, is sealed up in the coffin to remain until its next presentation. It is affirmed that no species of fraud could by any possibility be admitted.

“ I happened to be travelling in that part of the world in 1859, and as I was intimately acquainted with the then Governor, having served in the same regiment with him as a youngster, he readily admitted my request for a private inspection, although not of the Roman Catholic faith. Proceeding accordingly to the cathedral, accompanied by the Archbishop's chaplain and an aide-de-camp, I found the body in its massive silver coffin, inlaid with the richest embroidery, open in a glass case, lying at the foot of the altar. The front of the case forming a door, composed of one solid piece of glass, was unlocked with a key brought, firmly fastened round his wrist by a gold chain, by the aide-de-camp. The coffin was drawn out on truckles, and I knelt by the side for a closer view. It represented a man of about forty years, rather under than over the medium height, in a most perfect state of preservation. The frame was that of a slightly built man, and the countenance had the appearance of a holy calm and peace. In fact it wore an expression of unutterable love which was fascinating. I remarked that a slightly darkened spot appeared under the left eye, and this I was told had appeared since the previous inspection some twenty years before, and was supposed to be occasioned by a blow received by the Apostle at the time of his murder. The present occasion, it is thought, will be one of the greatest gatherings that has ever occurred, as notifications have already been received of the intended presence of almost all the Roman Catholic bishops in India, as well as several from Europe, who will take advantage of the Suez Canal, available for the first time for the pilgrim

age. Apartments have also been taken for persons of high rank amongst the laity, and it is confidently reported that his Royal Highness the King of Portugal's brother, will make one of the number. The ceremony will probably come off in November, unless delayed by the absence of the new Governor-General. I should recommend all who intend to be present on this interesting occasion to make early arrangements, or they will not find a place in which to lay their heads.»

(This account, coming from a Protestant source, errs, as will be evident to all who know the facts of the life and death of St. Francis Xavier, in one or two important particulars. He was not martyred, or "murdered," at Macao, for he never entered China, but died of fever on the island of Sancian, in sight of the China coast.)

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## AN ASTONISHING MIRACLE.

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THE BODY OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER FOUND UNCORRUPTED AND UNCHANGED, AT THE RECENT EXAMINATION IN GOA.

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TESTIMONY OF AN EYE WITNESS, BISHOP LEO MEURIN, OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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*Graphic Account of the Opening of the Tomb and Coffin of the Apostle of the Indies at Goa.*

Unnoticed by the Protestant press of Europe and America, almost unnoticed by the Catholic press, the ancient town of Goa, once the mistress of the East, was during the early part of last month the scene of the revelation once more to public knowledge, of the astounding miracle of the preservation incorrupt of the body of St. Francis Xavier, who, after death, was thrown into a



vessel of unslacked lime ; then buried in moist earth, but whose body, nevertheless, " was not allowed to see corruption." Three times since its final burial in Goa, the Portuguese capital of the East, the Saint's tomb has been opened. The last of these occasions was on December 3, 1878, the Feast of St. Francis Xavier. The result of the examination of the relics is told in the following terms by Bishop Leo Meurin, S. J., Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, in a letter to a brother Jesuit. We owe this letter to our excellent Oriental friends of the *Catholic Examiner*, whose files also furnish us with an account of a similar examination in 1859, from the pen of Bishop Canoz. But for this we cannot find space to-day. Bishop Meurin, S. J., writes :

" I hasten to fulfil the most cheerful duty of giving you an account of my pilgrimage to the shrine of our glorious brother, the Apostle of the Orient, St. Francis Xavier, whose body, miraculously preserved up to this day, has just been exposed to the admiration and veneration of the faithful. I do not intend to speak of the past, of the travels, labors, virtues, and miracles of our Saint, nor of his death on the 2d of December, 1552, on the island of Saucian, the door to China, which death closed to his insatiable thirst for souls. I only wish to call to your memory the following historical facts : that his body was placed in a coffin filled with unslacked lime, for the purpose of accelerating decomposition, so that the bones might be ready to be removed at the time of the return of the Portuguese to Malacca ; that on re-opening the coffin on the 17th of February, 1553, more than two months after the burial, the body was found uncorrupted, and, on an incision being made in the thigh, fresh blood issued copiously from it, a fact which repeated itself when, on the 23d of March of the same year, the body was hurt whilst being placed in a

narrow vault outside of the Church of our Lady of Malacca ; that, when taken out from that humid resting-place, one day of the following August, it was found as fresh as before and diffusing a sweet fragrance, but the face was injured by a falling sharp stone ; that it was taken to Goa, and placed, on the 15th of March, 1554, in the Church of St. Paul, of which now only the facade remains, whence it was removed in 1560 to the Chapel of St. Thomas, to the College of St. Paul, and then to the professed-house of the Bom Jesus ; that on the 3d of November, 1614, his right arm was cut off by order of Paul V., who wished to possess the arm that had built up the Church of the Orient, on which occasion blood issued again copiously from the body ; the arm was taken to Portugal, and thence to Rome, where I had the great consolation to see it in 1869, in the Church del Gesù. The body, which from that time began to shrivel was translated in 1655 to the Church of the Bom Jesus, where it has been kept up to this time, and twice exposed to the view and veneration of the Christian people, first from the 9th till the 12th February, 1782, and them from the 3d December, 1859, till the 8th January, 1860. It is not here the place to recount the miracles which happened on all the occasions mentioned ; they have been duly examined, and when found to have evidently been the work of God, have been declared as such by the competent ecclesiastical authority. At the invitation of his Grace Dom Ayres d'Ornellaste Vasconcellos, the present zealous and virtuous Archbishop of Goa, I repaired to Goa together with their Lordships Bishop Bonjean of Jaffna, and Bishop Barbero of Hydrabad, the Very Rev. Fathers Pagani, Pro-Vicar Apostolic of Mangalore, and Colgan, Vicar General of Madras, and a number of other clerical companions, leaving Bombay on the 29th November at ten A. M., in the

steamer *Alabama*, chartered and fitted up for the Bombay pilgrims, and reaching Goa on the following day at ten A. M. Having anchored before Nova Goa or Panjim, the Governor's barge, manned with fourteen men in their state dress, received and conveyed us in about an hour's time to Goa Velha, the city of ruins, the former capital of the once Majestic Portuguese Empire of the East, still grand in the magnificent churches and convents, partly standing well preserved, partly fallen more or less into ruins. How often already have the lamentations of Jeremias been recited over this city, and how often hereafter will travelers recite them ! It is impossible to look at Old Goa without remembering the « Threini. » Will they after another three hundred years be repeated over our Bombay ? Through shrubs and rubbish we wound our way to the palace of the Archbishop, contiguous to the cathedral, a stately building, sufficiently put in repair to be used occasionally by the Archbishop and those whom his amiable hospitality calls to that marvellous city, which is now inhabited by nobody except the canons of the cathedral, who are at the same time guardians of the still extant churches and convents, and by St. Francis Xavier, resting, so to say, alive in his magnificent silver shrine of the beautiful church of the Jesuits of old.

How can I call dead him whose body dwells there preserved from corruption by God's power, and preaches with open lips to all who come to receive from the sight of an evident miracle a confirmation of their faith, consolation in their hearts, and perhaps, relief from bodily ailments ? Being received by the Archbishop with truly brotherly love, we were lodged, as many as possible, in his palace, the others finding a resting place in the cells of the old convent of St. Monica, prepared for the occasion. On the three first days of December we

were able to say Mass at the shrine of St. Francis in presence of the body still closed in the beautiful chest, but already lowered, so as to be conveniently taken to the magnificent baldachin prepared for it in the transept of the church. Permit me to refrain from recounting the feelings the heart experiences, and the host of thoughts that cross the mind on an occasion like this. To say little is to say nothing ; to say much is to say too-little. The man, the Christian, the religious, the Bishop, had his say, his emotions, his petitions, not in a defined logical order, but in a throng, like the multitude that moved about the shrine, every one pushing his foreman, and being pushed on by others after him. It was very gracious on the part of the Archbishop to give to us bishops a prominent place, not only in the solemn and gorgeous procession which moved on the festival day at 8 A. M. from the Cathedral to the shrine of the Saint, and thence with his body to the sanctuary of the church of the Bom Jesus, but also during the Pontifical Mass at his right side, and especially at the opening of the chest, after the Mass, sermon and Papal blessing were over ; for it was at his direction, that only we bishops had to assist him in removing the lid. I am told that it was a moving and imposing sight, when we four bishops, in mitre and cope, lifted up the cover that hid the Saint's body, a standing miracle, from the view of the faithful, and thus exhibited it to the eager eyes and hearts of the thousands that thronged the church in the nave below and in the galleries above. I did not observe the multitude ; I stood for a long time gazing at the head, the hand, the feet, for they alone were uncovered, a rich chasuble, embroidered with gold and pearls, covering the rest of the body. I looked at him, as others did three centuries ago, and stood convinced that this was the same body, once the tabernacle of that

noble and holy soul, chosen by God for the salvation of millions and millions of souls. I kissed most reverently the feet of him that preached the Gospel of peace ; and was then carried away from the privileged place I occupied, by the order of the day, which was to grant to as many faithful as possible the consolation of seeing God's marvel in His Saint. In the evening, on that and on the four following days, the Archbishop took us again to the body of the Saint, in a private manner, when we had full leisure to pour out our prayers for ourselves and for those in our charge, and to examine most closely the body in its present state. We clearly found the statements corroborated, which the historians made about the injuries the body had received on the afore-mentioned occasions. I was allowed to lift up the right foot, and, being by no means of an enthusiastic frame of mind, to inspect it leisurely from all sides ; the same I did with the hand and the head. The right foot was quite complete and intact : the heel, the sole, the toes, the nails, the muscles and tendons beneath the skin, everything in perfect order and well preserved, though hardened, shrivelled, and of a brownish color. The left foot I found somewhat injured ; the second toe hanging brooken, the three smaller ones were missing, and the skin of the heel was in some parts detached, yet very strongly coherent like the strongest leather. The right cheek and the tip of the nose appeared injured, but the eyes were full and not at all sunk in, so too the abdomen, as the physician told me, who had examined the body. The left hand showed in like manner the sinews beneath the skin, and the fingers with the nails in perfect preservation. *Nowhere any sign of decay !* (Italics in the original.) Considering that the body has never been embalmed, but on the contrary, subjected to the most efficient decomposing agency of fresh and

unslacked lime, and to the humidity of an underground burial place : that not even the *viscera* have been taken out, but are still discernible, as the official enquiry made by the physicians assures us, and that according to the laws of nature, and their invariable action, in every other instance of a dead body, the body of the Saint could not be preserved incorrupt, as it is, I wish to know who will gainsay that here is a miracle of the first order attributed to no other power than the divine, which alone can inhibit the laws of nature, and suspend their action for some higher purpose. The purpose of God's working this undeniable miracle is to prove the sanctity of His servant and the veracity of his teaching. It is impossible for God to confirm by evident miracles a false doctrine. The religion taught by St. Francis-Xavier is therefore a divine religion. It is the only one that ever has been confirmed by the visible finger of God, by miracles which neither nature, nor angels, nor devils are able to perform by their own innate powers. The poor Goanese have to thank the Portuguese nation for very little besides the precious gift of that holy faith, which, however, suffices to fill their hearts even now with grateful attachment to a Government from which they receive and accept nothing, except now and then a good shepherd and the permission to see the body of their apostle and patron. Possessing in their Catholic religion an infallible guide to heaven, they can afford to ignore the scoffings of those who, in their ignorance and wilful prejudice, are unable to discern the supernatural from the natural, and call our veneration of god's saints superstition. We left Goa on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, filled with great and ineffaceable consolation, ready to give witness to every one of the marvellous honor bestowed by the Almighty on our brother, the great Apostle of the East,

St. Francis Xavier, to walk in whose footsteps is our heartfelt desire and sole ambition.

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CONFESSORS OF THE FAITH

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« *The Exiles of Siberia* »—*Sufferings of Polish Priests in the Slave Gangs of the Muscovite — Memoirs of an Escaped Convict.*

A series of interesting biographical memoirs of the one hundred and sixty Polish priests exiled to Siberia by the Russian Government, appears from the pen of one who escaped, in the *Souvenirs de la Sibirie*, from which we make the following extracts :

« Words fail to sufficiently extol the virtues of the distinguished captive ecclesiastic, the abbe Onufry Syrwid. He is an old man, past the age of three score and ten, but from his appearance one would readily take him to be at least twenty years younger. He is mild, peaceful and amiable and his reputation for learning (he was educated at the University of Wilna) seems but to increase his remarkable humility. A few incidents of his life will better serve to make known the reasons for the esteem and admiration in which he is held by all who have the happiness of knowing him.

« In the year 1863, at the time of the Polish insurrection, he filled the post of parish priest at Wasiliczki, department of Lick, and read publicly from his pulpit the ordinance of the National Polish Government, which enfranchised the serfs and constituted them the owners of the land which they then occupied. For this act he was arrested by the Muscovites, tried by a court-martial, and condemned to be shot. The abbé Iszora had already been sent to his death for a similar offense. The news of his condemnation spread through-

out the country, and coming to the ears of a noble fellow, named Klimontowicz, one of the insurgents, who had formerly been a captain in the Muscovite army, he determined to save the abbé's life at all hazards. He therefore presented himself before the court and confessed that it was he who had compelled the abbé, under threat of instant death, to publish the ordinance of the National Government. This heroic action roused a dormant sentiment of honor in the breasts of some of the members of the court, and both of their lives were spared and their sentence commuted to imprisonment with hard labor, for life. In the meantime his parishioners, unaware of the commutation of sentence and believing that their beloved curé would be led to death according to the order of the court, gathered together to the number of 4,000, peasants and landowners alike, so much were they all attached to their pastor, and waited on the road with the intention of attacking the Russian escort and of freeing the abbé by force. They remained in their ambush many days and nights, and refused to disperse until assured that their pastor was not to be put to death. After the new sentence of perpetual imprisonment was imposed on him, the abbé was loaded with chains, and having his head shaved bare, according to the Russian law, he began his weary way to exile and suffering, clothed in the garb of a criminal.

« On the arrival of the convicts at St. Petersburg, the Governor-General, Count Shouvaloff, (the present ambassador to England) wished himself to inspect the exiles on their journey, and for that purpose visited the prison where they were confined. He had scarcely entered the door and cast his eyes on the holy old man, then he was unaccountably struck with the angelic expression of his face and figure, and expressing the greatest indignation he immediately ordered his irons to be



struck off and forbade any one in the future to put on him the indignity of shaving his head. Arrived at Akathia the abbé was driven with the rest to their daily tasks, but his companions in suffering did not long permit such a terrible humiliation, and after much exertion they obtained from the authorities that in place of laboring with the condemned, he should be employed as keeper. Among his new duties was that of sweeping the dungeons, and although his companions wished to relieve him of this task and do it themselves, he would never permit it.

« All the sufferings and humiliations to which he is constantly subjected do not draw from him either complaint or reproach. To witness the heavenly serenity of his countenance one would suppose that the severity of his exile caused him no pain or sorrow. He is accustomed to encourage and cheer the despondent, often using such arguments as the following : Let us be firm and courageous and all our woes will be changed into joy ; by our sufferings we do honor to our beloved country, for they only prove that we have decided to bear anything and everything, rather than betray her.

« There is also at Tunka another priest very much like the abbé Syrwid in disposition ; in fact the abbé Kochanski and the abbé Syrwid are the two guardian angels of our exile ; their prayers call down upon us, abandoned by mankind, the benedictions of heaven. Their behavior, full of sweetness and resignation, give us courage to support our many sorrows.

« I will bring these memoirs to a close by saying a few words of two other venerable priests, condemned, like the others, to perpetual banishment, to which, indeed, death would be far preferable. One, the abbé

Antoine Kawecki, had been curé of a beautiful and prosperous parish in the diocese of Mohilew ; the other, the abbé Augustin Lopo, had been the successor of the first named in the same parish, and the manner of his succeeding to the charge of the parish so well exemplifies the character of both that I here relate the circumstance. M. Lopo was the curate of M. Kawecki. when he was nominated to the pastorship of a neighboring parish by the Archbishop of Mohilew. He was preparing to depart for his own charge when his pastor thus addressed him : « Listen, my dear friend, why do you leave us ? have you not been happy and contented in my companionship ? Are you not conversant with the people and the affairs of this parish and everything that concerns their welfare ? I know that the Archbishop has promoted you as a recompense for you zeal, very well ; but what prevents you from being parish priest and at the same time remaining here ? As for me, I am old and the duties of a pastor begin to weigh heavy on my shoulders ; believe me, I have made but an indifferent pastor while you have been the best of curates. Take, therefore, my place and give me yours. » The abbe Lopo, after serious reflexion, and in order not to be separated from his friend, consented to the proposition and the Archbishop was induced to ratify the change. Not long after these two holy men were arrested and condemned to perpetual labor and imprisonment and were sent to Tunka as a place of detention where the abbé Lopo, the parish priest, is employed in the manufacture of cigars, and the abbé Kawecki mends old garments. »

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## A MIRACULOUS CONVERSION.

The following detailed account of a very strange incident, which occurred about the year 1863, at Dungarvan, in Ireland, will be read with interest. It is given in the words of the Rev. F. Fox, O. M. I., and is copied from the *Ace Maria* :

About six or seven years ago we gave our first mission in Dungarvan. Its object was to reconcile some of the leading families, who happened not to be on speaking terms. Towards the close of the mission, when we were about to fix the cross, we had the Procession of the Holy Cross, or, as it is called, the « Penitential Procession. » Two constables were among the crowd, attracted by curiosity. One of them was a good practical Protestant, the other a wild thoughtless young man, a Protestant also, or rather one who professed no religion. As the procession moved along, and the cross, borne by Father Cooke, the Superior, came in view, the people all knelt down. The first mentioned policeman, whose name was Mulligan, said to his companion :

« Behold the idolatrous people ! Were my commanding officer here, and should he with fixed bayonet command me to bend my knee before that cross, I would refuse. I could not obey, even if it should cost my life. I frequently heard that Catholics were idolaters ; now I am convinced of it. »

As the procession approached the place where he stood, Mulligan lifted his eyes to look on the Cross, which the beings whom he considered so deluded reverently knelt before. No sooner did his eyes rest on the sacred symbol of our redemption than he fell powerless on his knees. A radiant light emanated from the Five Wounds, darting its beams into his soul and illuminating the eyes of his spirit ; so that he was in a moment

fully instructed in the doctrine of our holy Faith, while it at the same time deprived him of his corporal sight. For twenty minutes he remained in this condition. His companion, having been ashamed to remain standing alone, had also knelt.

After the fixing of the Cross the people arose, and Mulligan's comrade said to him, « Stand up ! »

« I cannot, » he replied.

Again his companion said : « Stand up ! you see all the people are standing. »

« I cannot ; I have not strength. Lift me. »

And when he did lift him the crowd was so great that he did not fall—he was supported by its density. After twenty minutes he gradually regained his strength and his sight, and with his comrade slowly left the church. By this time the congregation had dispersed, and he said : « I want to see the clerk ; I shan't be many minutes away. » His companion took no notice of this, as the residence of the clerk was close by the barrack, and the policemen used to meet and converse with him occasionally.

Mulligan went round to the sacristy, and asked the clerk if he knew any of the missionaries, and if he could see one of them. The clerk said he could not even tell the names of the missionaries, and that they had all left the church. « But, » said he, « if you come at six in the morning, you can see the two clergymen, who come to offer the holy sacrifice at that hour. »

Mulligan promised to be in the sacristy at the above mentioned hour, and took his departure. On arriving at the barrack he at once repaired to his room, and there on his knees he prayed with all the fervor he was capable of for grace to accomplish God's holy will. After a few moments he heard a knocking at the wall ; he

looked about to discover what it was. Not succeeding in his own apartment, he went into the next room, which was unoccupied, being used chiefly for lumber. He searched around and under the furniture, thinking one of his companions had concealed himself for amusement at his expense. Not succeeding in discovering any one, he returned to his own room, and resumed his prayer. The knocking was repeated, and Mulligan in surprise inquired : « Who is that ? » An unearthly voice distinctly replied, « Go to Father Fox. Go to Father Fox. » He had never heard Father Fox's name before.

The following morning he was in the sacristy at half-past five o'clock, awaiting the coming of the priests. At six, when Father Cooke and myself arrived, and prepared to vest, the clerk said : « There is Father Fox. »

Mulligan advanced towards me, but Father Cooke, who was nearer, motioned him back, saying :

« You must wait, good man ; we cannot speak before our Mass ; afterwards we can see you and speak to you. »

Seeing the poor fellow disconcerted, the clerk said : « If you please, Father, this is a Protestant who wishes to become a Catholic. He is anxious to have a conversation with Father Fox. »

« Since such is the case, » said Father Cooke, he « may, by all means. »

Mulligan then ingenuously disclosed to me all that happened, and how he had been directed to come to me. Fearing a delusion, I brought him to Father Cooke. We both considered his account very strange, but seeing that he was sincere, Father Cooke desired him to kneel there, and after Mass I would devote some time to him. He immediately obeyed.

After Mass and a short thanksgiving, I went to ins-

tract him, but I found him fully instructed, though he had never read a Catholic work, having always had a horror of such books. Indeed, so great was his horror of them, that if he saw one he would move away from it as from a venomous viper. He, at the moment the rays of light issued from the cross, received intuitively a perfect knowledge of the Christian doctrine, and he could not only answer my questions on Catholic articles of faith, but explained them fully and clearly. He begged most earnestly to be regenerated in the sacred laver of baptism. His request was granted without delay.

About this time, the Bishop, Dr. O'Brien, *en route* to Cappoquin, dined at the Presbytery in Dungarvan, but for fear of being too late to perform the ceremony for which he was called to Cappoquin next morning, he declined sleeping there. After much pressing, the Very Rev. Dr. Hally, parish priest, convinced him he would be in good time for his appointment in the morning, and he consented to remain. We recounted the particulars of Mulligan's extraordinary conversion to the Bishop, and he listened to them with the deepest interest. Scarcely had we seated ourselves at the dinner table, when the waiter informed me that a man who was in the hall begged earnestly to see me. I desired him to say I was at dinner, and that, as the Bishop presided, I did not like leaving the dining room ; I would, however, see him immediately after.

« He is aware of that, » said the waiter, « but he says he cannot wait, as he must be on duty this evening, and will only detain you a few minutes. »

I then said to the Bishop, « My lord, that poor man is outside, and seems most anxious to speak to me. He says he cannot wait ; may I go to see what he wants ? »

His lordship said, « By all means. »

The poor fellow apologized for calling so unseasonably, but was prompted by the desire he had for confirmation, saying it would strengthen his faith so much. Already he had begun to suffer persecution. The chief of police had been in town, and had reproached him with having embraced the « Popish religion. » « Father, » said the poor fellow, « if you will speak to the Bishop, I feel assured he will not refuse me this favor. »

Accordingly I did speak, and his lordship at once consented. On the following morning before leaving for Cappoquin, confirmation was administered to him, and his lordship was greatly edified at the pious, humble demeanor of the poor policeman.

From that day Mulligan suffered much from his companions and superiors, and was soon removed to a mountainous district, as the severest punishment they could inflict. He bore all with consummate patience. This country barrack, Ballinamult, was within eight miles of Mount Melleray, and neither the frosts and snows of winter nor the burning sun of summer deterred him from walking these long eight miles across the mountain, every Sunday morning, for counsel and direction from the good Cistercian Fathers, and to assist at holy Mass and nourish his soul with the Bread of Angels.

For two or three years he persevered thus faithfully, and from time to time wrote an account of himself to me, and expressed an ardent wish to join the Oblates of Mary, as a lay brother. Having persevered three years in his desire, he wrote asking if I would be at Glencrea when he would pass through Dublin, which would be in a few days, as he had got leave of absence, and meant to visit his parents and brothers and sisters,

who lived in the County Monaghan. He desired most earnestly to have an interview with me. He also requested prayers for the conversion of his family, whom he dreaded to meet, as they had not an idea of his having embraced the Catholic faith, and they had as great a horror of Catholicity as he had before his conversion.

I replied, inviting him to spend a few days with me at the monastery at Glencrea, an invitation which he joyfully accepted. After his visit he continued his journey to Monaghan. But what was his joy and astonishment, on arriving there, to find every member of his family a Catholic. Yes, these dear ones for whose conversion he had been sighing and praying for the past three years were now fervent children of the holy Church ! They were not aware of his conversion, and were quite as much afraid of telling him of theirs as he was of telling them.

A little later Mulligan entered the novitiate as a lay brother. He is now (1878) at Natal, in South Africa. in a house of the Order.

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