

ANNALS
OF THE
PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH
COMPILED FOR
THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

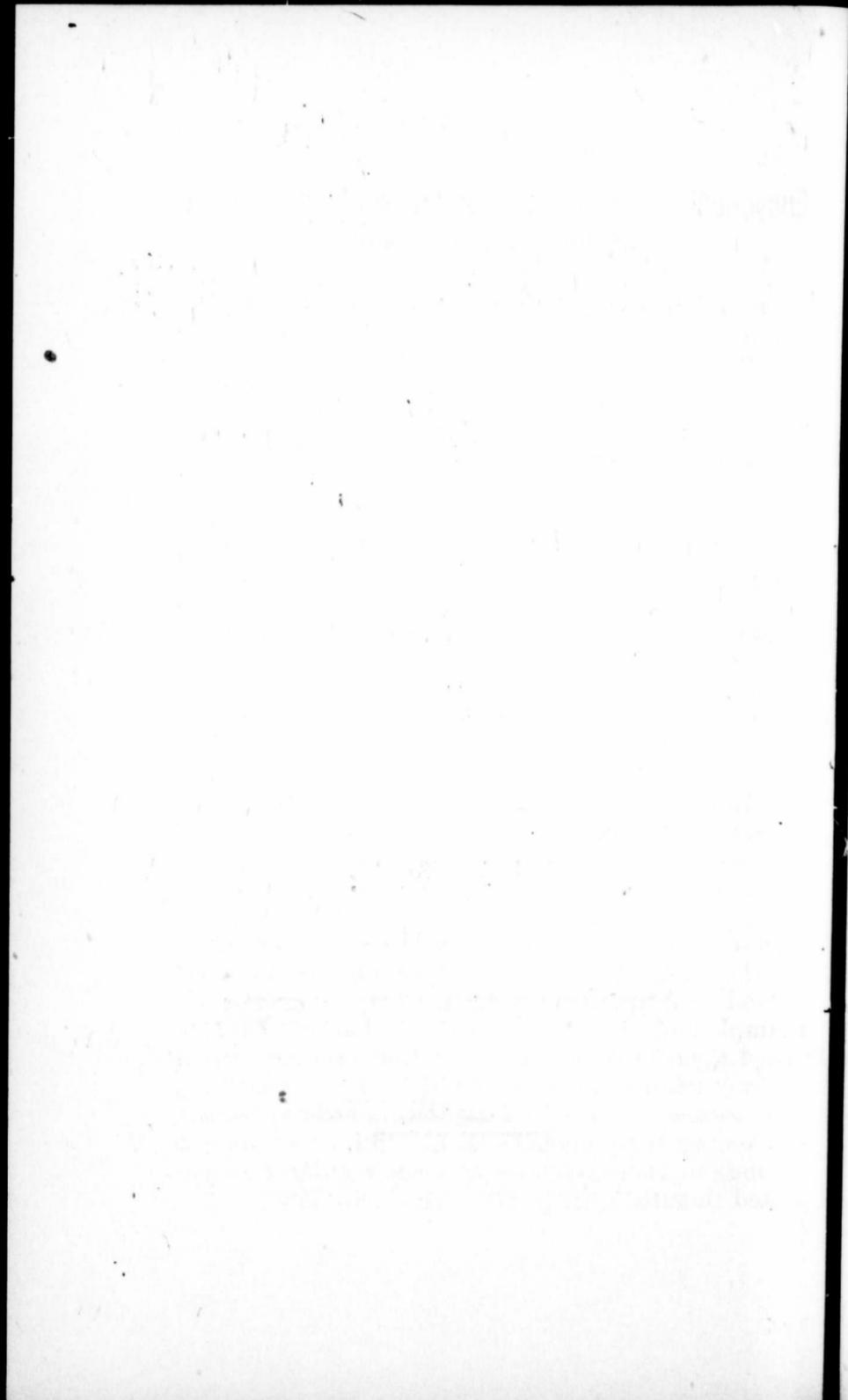


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THREE RIVERS.

PUBLISHED FOR THE INSTITUTION.



Encyclical Letter in favor of the work of the Propagation of the Faith.

To all the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic world, in grace and communion with the Apostolic See.

LEO THE THIRTEENTH, POPE.

VENERABLE BROTHERS,

Heath and Apostolic Benediction.

The holy city of God, which is the church, being limited by no boundary, received from her Divine Founder such force that *she every day enlarges the place of her tent and stretches out the skins of her tabernacles.* But though these increments of the Christian nations are due principally to the interior inspiration and aid of the Holy Ghost; yet, exteriorly they are operated by the labor of men and after a human manner.

Indeed, it behooves the wisdom of God that all things should be ordained and directed to their end by means proportionate to the nature of each. But it is not by the aid of a single class of men or of works that this accession of new citizens to the terrestrial Jerusalem is accomplished. For before all, they hold the first rank who preach the word of God, and this is what Jesus-Christ taught us by example and precept. It is also what St Paul insisted upon in these words: "*How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*" But this function belongs to those who have been regularly consecrated thereto.

Now, these preachers receive especial aid and succor from those who are wont either to supply the resources drawn from exterior things, or else to obtain for them celestial graces through prayers addressed to God. Wherefore, the Gospel praises the wom'en, who *gave of their goods* to Jesus-Christ preaching the Kingdom of God, and St Paul attests that to those who announce the Gospel, it hath been given by the will of God to live of the Gospel. We, likewise, know that Jesus-Christ, speaking to his disciples and followers, gave them this command : *Pray the Lord of the harvest that he send workmen into his vineyard,*" and that his first disciples, following in the footsteps of the Apostles, were wont to address themselves to God in these terms : "*Grant thy servants to publish thy word in all confidence.*"

These two kinds of aid which consist in giving and in praying, have this peculiarity, that being very useful to further extend the confines of the Kingdom of Heaven, they can be easily procured by all men of whatever rank. In reality, who is the christian possessing such a small fortune as to be unable to offer a paltry farthing ; and who is the man, let him be ever so much occupied with great affairs, that cannot sometimes pray to God for the messengers of the holy Gospel ? But apostolic men were always wont to supply these aids, and especially the Roman Pontiffs upon whom particularly devolves the burden of the propagation of the faith. Nevertheless, the means of procuring these succors have not always been the same, but have been diverse and varied according to the difference of the places and the diversity of the times.

In our epoch people delight in pursuing difficult, enterprises and in associating the counsels and forces of many ; thus have we seen societies every-

where founded ; and some have even been established with the view of propagating religion in certain countries. But that which shines resplendently among all others is the pious association which originated at Lyons in France, nearly sixty years ago, and which bears the name of *Propagation of the Faith*. Primarily, its object was to aid certain American missions ; but soon, like the grain of mustard seed, it grew and became a huge tree whose widespreading branches bear rich foliage, and to day, it extends its beneficent assistance to all the missions of the world. This celebrated institution was promptly approved by the pastors of the Church and honored by them with abundant testimonials of praise. The Roman Pontiff's Pius the Seventh, Leo the Twelfth, and Pius the Eighth our predecessors warmly recommended and enriched it with indulgences.

It was favored with much more solicitude and cherished with a charity truly paternal by Gregory the Sixteenth, who, in his encyclical letter, published on the 15th of August 1840, passed on this institution the following judgment : " It is assuredly a very great and holy work, a work which we esteem most worthy of the admiration and love of all good persons, which is sustained, increased and fortified by the slender offerings and the daily prayers addressed to God by each of the faithful ; a work which was founded to assist apostolic laborers, to exercise works of christian charity towards neophytes, and to deliver the faithful from the onslaught of persecutions. And it must be admitted that it is not without a particular disposition of Providence that in these latter days it has been of such great advantage and utility to the church. Indeed when the infernal enemy assails the well beloved spouse of Christ by all sorts of machinat-

ions, nothing could occur more opportune for her than to see faithful christians enkindled with the desire of propagating Catholic truth and unite the efforts of their zeal and resources to endeavor to gain the whole world to Jesus-Christ."

Having thus spoken, Gregory the Sixteenth exhorted the Bishops to labor with care, each in his own diocese, so that an institution so salutary might every day increase.

Pius the Ninth, of glorious memory, did not swerve from the footsteps of his predecessor ; for he lost no opportunity to favor a society so meritorious, and to further augment its prosperity. In fact, by his authority, the most ample priveleges of pontifical indulgences were conferred on the association ; the piety of christians was roused to aid this work, and its more prominent members, whose special merits were proven, were clothed with divers marks of honor ; finally, certain institution which had been blended for the purpose of aiding and seconding it, were highly praised and exalted by the Same Sovereign Pontiff.

At the same time, thanks to the spirit of pious emulation, two other societies were formed ; one called the *Holy Infancy of Jesus*, and the other, *Schools of the Orient*. The object of the former was to save and lead to Christian habits the unfortunate children whom their parents, urged by indolence or misery, inhumanly exposed, especially in China, where this barbarous custom most prevails. It is these children that the charity of the faithful tenderly glean, that it sometimes ransoms and endeavors to wash in the waters of christian regeneration, in order that they may grow up, with the help of God, for the hope of the church ; or at the very least, that if they die, the means may be given them to obtain eternal happiness.

The other society which we have mentioned is taken up with the care of youth, and endeavors, by all means, to instill into their minds sound doctrine, whilst, at the same time it takes care to avert from them the dangers of false science to which they are often exposed by reason of their imprudent curiosity to learn.

However, both societies come to the aid of the that society which bears the name of Propagation of the Faith, and united with it by a friendly compact, they conspire for the same end, relying also upon the alms and the prayers of christian nations ; for the aim of all is, by diffusion of the light of the Gospel, to bring the greatest possible number of those who are outside the Church to know God and to adore Him, together with Him whom He has sent, Jerus-Christ. It is, therefore, with reason that our predecessor Pius the Ninth, as we have already said, in his apostolic letters, lauded these two institutions and liberally granted them holy Indulgences.

These three societies have therefore flourished with the marked favor of the Sovereign Pontiffs, and have never ceased to prosecute their work with unrivalled zeal ; we have also seen them producing abundant fruits of salvation, powerfully aiding our Congregation of the Propaganda in sustaining the charge of the missions, and finally so far prospering as to give, for the future, the cheering hope of a more ample harvest. But the many and violent storms which have been let loose against the church in countries long illumined by the light of the gospel, have injured even the works destined to civilize barbarous nations. Indeed, many causes conspire to lessen the number and the generosity of the associates. And, surely, when so many perverse ideas, diffused among the people whet

worldly desires and banish the hope of celestial goods, what is to be expected from those who use the mind but to desire, and the body but to procure, pleasure ? Do such men, ask of God with importunity to suffer himself to be moved, and to lead by his victorious grace to the divine light of the gospel the nations sitting in darkness ? Do they assist the priests who labor and combat for the faith ? The evil of the times also helps to warp the generous dispositions of even pious persons ; whether it is that the extent of iniquity has cooled the charity of many, or that domestic want, political disturbances, to say nothing of the fear of still worse, times, have made them for the most part more economical and less disposed to give alms

On the other hand, numerous and grave necessities overwhelm and press the apostolic missions ; the recruiting of evangelical workers will every day become more difficult, and it may even happen that they cannot be found in sufficient numbers and with sufficient zeal to replace those whom death has carried off, old age has overpowered, and hard labor has broken down. For we see the religious families from which a great number of missionaries came, broken up by unjust laws ; we see the clergy torn from the altar and bound down to military service, we see the goods of both the religious and secular clergy exposed for sale

Moreover, new routes having been opened, the result of a more extended exploration of places and peoples, towards countries till now held impassable, manifold expeditions of the soldiers of Christ have been formed and new stations have been established ; thus do we to day require many workers to devote themselves to these missions and bring them seasonable assistance.

We pass over in silence the difficulties and

obstacles begotten of contradictions. Often, indeed fallacious men, sowers of error, set themselves up as apostles of Christ, and, abundantly provided with every human resource, shackle the ministry of Catholic priests, insinuate themselves into their places, or raise up pulpit against pulpit, and by their efforts make the way of salvation doubtful to those who hear the word of God announced differently by both. Would to God that they succeeded not in their designs ! But how lamentable that such as hold in disgust like teachers, or who have never known them, and who aspire to the pure light of truth, often have not an apostle to instruct them in sound doctrines and lead them into the bosom of the Church ! Little children, they ask for bread, and there is no one to break it for them, the countries are as a bleached harvest, and that harvest is rich, but the laborers are few, and they will perhaps be still fewer.

Since such is the case, Venerable Brothers, we deem it our duty to stimulate the pious zeal and charity of christians, that they may exert themselves, whether by their prayers, or by their alms, to aid the work of the missions and favor the propagation of the faith. The good which is proposed, the fruits to be reaped, show the importance of this holy undertaking. It has, verily, for direct object the glory of God's name and the extension of the reign of Jesus-Christ on earth ; it is also an inappreciable benefit for those who are drawn from the mire of vice and the shades of death ; for not only do they become capable of eternal salvation, but they are also brought from barbarism and a savage state of morals to the full light of civilization. Moreover, it is a work extremely useful and fruitful for those who participate in it, since it ensures to them spiritual riches, supplies them a

subject of merit and makes, as it were, God their debtor.

You, therefore, Venerable Brothers, who have been called to partake of our solicitude, you we exhort more and more to unanimously come to the aid of the apostolic missions, with zeal and ardor, putting your entire confidence in God, and suffering yourselves to be repulsed by no difficulty. The salvation of souls for which our Redeemer offered up his life is at stake, and to us Bishops and Priests he has confided the holy work of completing his body. Wherefore, each one remaining at the post where God has placed him, and guarding the flock which he has confided to him, let us all earnestly endeavor to bring to the holy missions the succors which, as we have already reminded you, have been in use since the commencement of the Church, namely, the preaching of the gospel aided by the prayers and alms of the faithful.

If, therefore, you know men zealous for the glory of God and at the same time disposed and fit to depart for these holy expeditions, encourage them, in order that the will of God being well known and manifested, they listen not to flesh and blood, but hasten to correspond to the call of the Holy Ghost. Insist that the other priests, the religious orders of both sexes, and in fine all the faithful confided to your care, merit by their incessant prayers to obtain the Divine assistance in favor of the sowers of the word of God. Let those who pray, invoke the Virgin Mother of God, who has the power to destroy all the monsters of error, and her most pure spouse, whom many missions have already adopted as guardian and protector, and whom the apostolic see recently constituted patron of the Universal Church. Let them also invoke the princes and the whole college of the

apostles whence went forth the first preaching of the gospel unto the entire world ; let them, finally, invoke all men, eminent for sanctity, who consumed their strength in this ministry or gave up their lives with their blood. To suppliant prayer let alms be added, the efficacy of which is such that they will make of persons the most distant and the most occupied with other affairs, the coadjutors of apostolic men, the partakers of their labors and merits. In our time many suffer from family embarassments ; but let none of the faithful be on that account discouraged. The tax required for this work cannot be a burden to anyone, although many small subscriptions put together might eventually amount to quite a considerable sum.

Let each one, therefore, by your exhortations, Venerable Brothers, consider that his liberality, far from being injurious to him, will on the contrary profit him much ; because in giving to the poor one lends to God ; besides the practice of alms giving has well been called the most fruitful of all operations. In fact, if, according to the testimony of Jesus-Christ himself, he who gives a glass of cold water to one of the least, will not lose his reward ; he surely shall have a very great merit who by the least farthing given to the holy missions and by his prayers, exercises works of charity, works at once numerous, and varied, which the Holy Fathers have proclaimed divine among all since by them one becomes the auxiliary of God for his neighbor's salvation.

We are convinced, Venerable Brothers, that reflecting on these things and enkindled by your exhortations, all those who glory in the name of Catholic, will not fail in this pious duty which we have so much at heart. Yes, their efforts for the extension of the Kingdom of Jesus-Christ will

not suffer them to be outdone by the zeal and dexterity of those who labor to propagate the domination of the prince of darkness.

In this hope, praying God to be propitious to the pious enterprises of Christian nations, we grant you most affectionately in the Lord as a testimony of our special good will, the apostolic benediction, to you, Venerable Brothers, to the clergy and people confided to your charge.

Given at Rome, near St-Peter's, the 3rd December 1880, the third year of our pontificate.

LEON XIII, POPE.

WHY I BECAME A CATHOLIC.

Rev. John S. Siebold, an Episcopalian minister, formerly rector of St. Mark's Church, Newark, N. J., was recently admitted into the one true fold of Christ. The reporter of a daily paper called upon him for the purpose of learning the causes which led him to abandon a ministerial office with a large salary and an easy life in order to become a plain layman in a church not considered bon-tonish by the elite of the society he had left. We copy the following conversation which will explain itself:

"Mr. Siebold, will you please give me your reasons for

"EMBRACING THE CATHOLIC FAITH?"

"Yes. I have been a Protestant clergyman of the 'high church' order for twelve years. The first thing which drove me into the Catholic Church was the continual discord in the churches and the dissensions even among the rulers of the Protestant churches."

"Of course you had other reasons?"

"Yes. My other reasons were purely doctrinal ones. The Church must have been founded by Christ. It was divine and could not err, whence I believe in its infallibility. The Church cannot err but individuals may. The sayings of the bishops, *ex cathedra*, that is in general council, are inspired by the Holy Ghost, and he being one of the God-head, his inspirations are divine, and consequently infallible.

THE ROMAN CHURCH

Is the oldest institution, and brings a line of Popes down from the time from Christ himself. If the Church could not err, then the reformation of Luther was a reformation of something which was in itself perfect. The only way to help matters is to stay in the fold. No good can result of leaving it. My change of faith, I might say, in short is a

MATTER OF CONSCIENCE,

And my friends will only respect me all the more for acting up to my convictions."

"What are your worldly relations?"

"I have as you know, a wife and two children one a boy, the other a girl. They are still Protestants,* but I hope they will follow my example in time. Of course I cannot take orders in the Catholic church and will have to 'live in the world.' I did not leave the Protestant church because of any ill-feeling or for any worldly cause, but it was an act I had contemplated for three years. I always had pleasant pastorates in the Protestants fold and the salaries were always promptly paid."

"Was not your change of faith something of a surprise to most of your friends?"

"Two weeks ago I attended divine service at St-Paul's cathedral and

MET BISHOP COXE,

Who was always a very good friend of mine, and I suppose that he is yet. Last Sunday I had an invitation to fill Rev. Mr. Smith's pulpit in this city, and a leading Detroit church sent me a request to preach at their anniversary to-morrow. However, the surprise was not very great to many of my friends, some of whom had expected that the event would occur before it really did."

*[They have since been received into the Church.]

THE NUN OF KENMARE.

INTERESTING SKETCH OF SISTER MARY FRANCIS CLARE.--KENMARE CONVENT AND ITS BEAUTIFUL SCENERY.--THE HOLY CHARITY OF THE POOR CLARES.

The charity of the people of Portland has manifested itself so abundantly in response to the appeal from the Nun of Kenmare, that we feel the readers of the *SENTINEL* will be gratified to peruse the following brief sketch of this glorious Bride of Christ.

Miss Cusack was born on May the 6th 1830. Dublin has the honor of being her birth-place, and the spot around which are entwined the associations of her childhood. She belongs to a family which has played no unimportant part in Irish history—a family which produced such a name as Lord Chancellor Cusack, who was an intimate friend and admirer of the great Hugh O'Neill, of Tyrone. Early in life Miss Cusack's health was delicate; nevertheless, she was from her infancy zealous and hard-working. She was educated in England where she formed many friendships, but where she never for a moment forgot that she was an Irish-

woman. "I have the old blood in me," she writes, "although I was educated and lived in England many years." At the age of sixteen she commenced to pen articles for the press. Being of an exceedingly studious nature, and gifted with a refined taste, she took a delight in tracing on paper the thoughts she entertained on various subjects. These essays, the germs of a young imagination, were but the forerunners of the many works, more mature and profound, which in latter years have made the Convent of Kenmare synonymous with being the home and habitation of Irish literature. Miss Cusack was always of a deeply religious turn of mind; from her childhood she possessed an innate desire to do works of charity, and help the needy; and prompted by a wish to devote her life to a mission of such a nature, in an untrammelled position, she entered a community of sisters of her own religion—the Protestant one—where she entered on her career of charity. Here, however, she did not find herself altogether at home: some idea induced her to believe that she was not perhaps in the right place; this idea afterwards grew into a conviction, and ere long we see her bidding adieu to the community in question, and embracing the Catholic faith. It appears that as long as she remained a member of the English Church, she enjoyed some valuable private property of her own; but of the greater portion of this she was deprived, on account of her change of religious persuasion. However, no motive of a worldly nature should weigh aught in the balance where the peace of one's soul is weighed and considered; and far from Miss Cusack's mind was such a motive, when she sacrificed to a sense of duty her own private advantages. Her entry into the Catholic Church was quickly followed by her novitiate and

subsequent profession as a nun. The same late eminent ecclesiastic, Cardinal Wiseman, who confirmed her, received her into the convent soon after, on July 25, 1856. From the period when she became a Catholic, his Eminence urged her to work at the pen. He saw how talented she was, and he desired that her talents should be properly exercised and cultivated. Like his successor, Cardinal Manning, Cardinal Wiseman held Miss Cusack in high esteem, he encouraged her in all her undertakings, and a few days before his death he sent her the last work he ever penned.

In the year 1861 the late Miss O'Hagan, sister of the present Lord O'Hagan, founded the Convent of the Poor Clares at Kenmare. To assist her in her enterprise, and to work it out successfully, the services of Miss Cusack were put into requisition, and it was then she left England, and threw in her lot with the Abbess O'Hagan and the other sisters who were entering upon their holy work in the wilds of Kerry. It was a consolation for Miss Cusack to be thus placed in a position to toil for those she loved best, the Irish poor, and it was with a grateful heart and strong determination she settled down in the convent which she was soon after to immortalize all the world over by the products of her genius. The convent which has been, and still is, the scene of Miss Cusack's labors is an edifice of much beauty. It lies imbedded amid the heath-clad mountains of Kerry, and at the mouth of the river whose name it bears. Situated in one of nature's own recesses, and girt by heights that look down upon it in all their solemn majesty, it seems an abode just as meet for an Irish nun of Miss Cusack's disposition as the "sweet little island in lone Gougane Barra," was for the Irish poet, J. J. Callanan.

Here the broad Kenmare sweeps in its serpentine course, reflecting the verdure of an Irish sky ; while on one side, the placid lakes of Killarney repose in all their grandeur, and on the other picturesque Glengariff, and farther on the bay and the hills of Bantry vie with one another in charms of scenery. Farther off still the Magillicuddy's Reeks, the peak of Cairn Tuathal, the cliffs of Ballybunion washed by the foaming Atlantic, the fastnesses of Derrynane, and the summits of the far away Toomies raise their heads to the sky, and seem to stand sentinels over this lovely spot. In such a home Miss Cusack lives and toils. Here it is that she, in the words of John Mitchel, bids fair to outrival any of the learned Irish monks of old—making Kenmare as famous and illustrious to lovers of Irish history and literature as the Abbey of the Four Masters ever was.

"The Convent of the Poor Clares," writes Mr S. C. Hall, "is a very graceful structure, designed and built by Pugin, situated amid scenery that ranks among the most perfect in Ireland, midway between Killarney and Glengariff, in the midst of mountains and at the head of a bay second to none in these kingdoms, where the whole navy of Great Britain might anchor, and in a district fertile of wealth—lacking only the application of capital. The convent consists of twenty-five ladies in the higher as well as in the ordinary sense of the term. The principal of the Sisters is a lady who occupies a prominent position in literature. They are *Poor Clares*, who give to the poor and needy whatever of wealth is theirs, and dedicate their lives mainly to the duty of rearing and educating children, acting on the Divine precept—'Suffer little children to come unto Me ; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.' But the children are not only taught,

they are partly fed and partly clad ; indeed, were it otherwise, their education would be a hard task, for many of the little ones would be compelled to go hungry and almost naked to their lessons. It is a beautiful sight, one that cannot fail to give delight to any 'loving soul' to see, as I saw, four hundred little ones arming in the convent to fight the fight of life—four hundred, from infancy to girlhood, clean, comfortably clothed, well-mannered, happy in their looks and happy in their voices, and to know how much of their future, and the future of many who will more or less depend upon them, is the result of teachings in several ways they receive in the Convent of the Poor Clares. It is a scene I cannot sufficiently well describe—a scene of hopeful joy, of intense delight ; indeed, I must leave it to the fancy of the friends I address—while asking them to help me that I may help these 'little ones.' ”

It is only a few months ago since this testimony in favor of the Poor Clares was given by Mr S. C. Hall, after his recent visit to their convent ; but what was said of them then could be said of them any time since they started in that place their mission of charity and love.

CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN AFRICA.

Interesting Account of the Peoples of the Equatorial Regions of the Country.

THE EFFECTIVE AND APPRECIATED WORK OF THE MISSIONARIES AND THE SISTERS.

New-York Sun, January 16.

A few days ago two Fathers of a Roman Catholic order called at the office of the *Sun*. They said that they had just arrived from equatorial Africa, where for some years they had been engaged in missionary work. The object of their visit to America was to collect money to enable them to prosecute their labors. One of them is a Frenchman, the other an Italian.

The Pere Describes, the Frenchman, was born in the Hautes Pyrences about thirty-three years ago, but the looks fully ten years older. He is strongly built, with a full, flowing beard like a Capuchin. Some silvery streaks can be detected here and there in its reddish mass. His head is bald; the brow is broad and bespeaks will power and mental vigor. His eyes are soft, and look with glances of benevolence out from his spectacles. He is endowed with the eloquence and enthusiasm of a true apostle of the faith. He studied at the African Missions in the city of Lyons, and after being ordained was despatched in 1871 on a mission to the kingdom of Dahomey. Broken in health by three years sojourn in that pestilential region, he was recalled to France, and appointed to found and direct another seminary like that in which he had himself been educated at Clermont-Ferrand, in the department of Puy de Dome. After a few years of

comparative repose he set off again for Western Africa, where he has remained till the close of last year, passing from one mission to another in his zeal to further the spread of civilization.

Father Ferdinando Merlini is a native of Milan. He is about twenty-eight years of age, but, like his companion, looks much older. His frame is more delicately built than that of his brother missionary, and shows deeper traces of the hardships he has undergone. Trained in the Seminary of Milan and afterward in the aforesaid African Missions at Lyons, he was ordained priest by particular dispensation from the Pope when he was scarcely twenty years of age. Sent to the missions in Upper Egypt and Nubia, he has spent four or five years chiefly working among the black populations of the Upper Nile. During his sojourn there it has been his privilege to meet with a great number of the Africa explorers. Of the seven companions with whom he set out, only one survives. Fever carried the others off after a brief residence. According to his statement, missionaries rarely have been able to endure the climate for more than four years.

The French African missions were first organized by Monseigneur de Marion-Bresillac. It was in 1856 that this prelate obtained from Pope Pius IX, authority to establish a seminary where priests could be trained for the perilous task of carrying the Gospel to the negroes of Africa. In 1858, three missionaries started for the coast of Guinea. A year later, Monseigneur de Bresillac set out in person to join in the good work. At sight of the African coast his joy was such as can only be understood by those select few who are born with the faith of martyrs. At Freetown the intelligence met him that the country was ravaged

by a terrible epidemic. The Captain of the vessel attempted to prevent his landing, but in vain. He landed, but only to witness the death of the first three missionaries who had set their foot on the fatal shore in the previous year. Within three weeks the venerable prelate and the six newcomers had all paid with their lives for the zeal they had displayed in bringing assistance to the numerous native sufferers from the plague. Pere Planque continued the work of organizing new expeditions and seeking for new recruits for the missionary army to fill up the gaps which death was continually creating in its ranks. At present there are upward of one hundred missionaries engaged in the work, and as many have perished in the few years since the missions have been in operation. Dahomey is naturally the country which demands and receives most victims. The population over which the mission of Dahomey extends is estimated at twenty millions, divided into several kingdoms, and the Fathers can boast of having made 25,000 converts from barbarism.

The people of this vast region are models of beauty in ebony. They are well-made, physically very strong, but undisposed to labor. Two distinct races can clearly be traced, named respectively the Nagos and the Djedji. The former are more robust; the latter are more intelligent. Each of these main stocks is subdivided into tribes, and each tribe dwells in its own villages, and is under the rule of its own king. They are usually known by the names of their kingdoms or of the principal villages, as Houssa, Nufi, Ornago, Eko, Lagos, Egbas, Yabou and Dahomey. Each tribe has a kind of tattooing peculiar to itself, by which its members can be at once recognised. The members of the tribe of Haoussa are tattooed round the head, with

the exception of about three inches in the center of the forehead, with a series of perpendicular lines half an inch long and composed of fine dots, while on the cheeks are six oblique lines, three on the outside of the prominent cheek bones, running down to the corner of the mouth, and three on the inside, ending at the nostril. The Nufis, a tribe of the Nagos, have merely three short lines on each side of the mouth, and while the Huossas have the head clean shaven the Nufis wear a round patch of hair on the top of the skull. The Djedjis have a similar arrangement of the hair, but are marked with only one perpendicular line at the angle of the eye. The negroes of Dahomey shave the entire head, and have one vertical line on each cheek while the Egbas are unshaven and bear on each cheek two long lines curving from the eye to the chin.

Quite different from the above described system of tattooing in straight lines is that of the Yabous. They adorn themselves with three small circles on each side of the mouth, and a circle on the brow just above the nose. The Diedji chiefs of Porto Novo have a small circle on each cheek, three short vertical lines between the ear and eye, and a perpendicular mark in the centre of the forehead, while the freemen of Dagos have the same marks as the Nufis, but the heads unshaven. In spite of all this barbarous tattooing, the character of the heads of all these tribes is remarkable for the absence of most of the traits which we associate with the negro race. The reverend missionaries have in their possession some photographs which one would fancy represented some old Romans, rather than Africans of the coast. The men of Dahomey are especially unlike negroes in the shape of the head and features ; the portrait of one exhi-

bited to us, indeed bears a striking resemblance to the bust of Cicero ; in fact, of all the photographs only that of a Lagos freeman has any strikingly negro feature.

The missionaries have establishments at Lagos, Porto Novô, Whedah [in the interior], Tocpo Abbeokuta, and other places. Lagos contains the parent house of the mission. They have there two very flourishing schools—one for male, the other for female children, the latter being kept by Sisters attached to the mission. They have also a hospital in which the patients are gratuitously cared for, as well as a church. Each of the seven stations of the Dahomeh Mission is in charge of at least three Fathers. One attends to the school, one to the practice of medicine, and the third to the business affairs of the station. The school teacher is aided by assistants selected from the brighter pupils, some of whom make very good teachers. The results attained by the Fathers in the schools have been satisfactory beyond their expectation. A great distinction must be made between the children which attended school when the missions were first established and the pupils of to-day ; that is between the children of pagan parents and those of parents who have been converted to Christianity. The negroes of the second generation may be called, the Fathers say, members of a civilized community. It is not rare at Porto Novo, at Lagos, and at Abbeokuta to find negro children carrying off the prizes from the children of Europeans domiciled in those localities. Mathematics and music are the chief studies in which the native pupils distinguish themselves. The Fathers have great hopes from the third generation which is just rising. A third generation may arise in the space of twenty-five years, for marriage is entered upon between the

ages of ten and fourteen. When a boy has attained the age of thirteen he is advised by the Fathers themselves to select a wife from some of the girls who are in the convent school of the mission. The children are obtained by the Fathers from their parents without any trouble, as the latter willingly part with them. This arises not from any lack of natural affection, but because they readily see the advantages which the children derive from education. The children, who are maintained by the missions, are called by the natives "white," as they are provided at once with clothes, usually of a white color, as best suited to the climate.

Agriculture and various trades, which are the foundation of all progress, are taught by the Fathers. The introduction of Indian corn, which bears easily two crops a year, has done more to facilitate the labors of the missionaries than anything else. The country was frequently devastated by famine. Whenever the rain fell too abundantly the fruits, which constitute the staple diet of the natives, rotted, and starvation followed. Corn being not subject to such damage, the natives regard its introduction as a gift of Providence.

The Fathers who practice medicine are perhaps the greatest personages after the kings in all this region. They have only to threaten to go away and generally they at once obtain any concession they demand of these sovereigns. The huts in which they live are besieged every day by patients. The kings themselves consult them, sometimes performing a journey of a month for that purpose. Surgery is held by the natives as a higher art than medicine. A Surgical operation is always rewarded either with a pair of chickens or of ducks, or with a cow or an ox according to the rank of the patient. A king always gives an ox. It may be added that

cows and oxen, indeed all animals, are of very diminutive set, the ox being only as big as a small American calf.

The dwellings of the natives are made of bamboo cane thatched with palm leaves, beds are simply mats of palm leaves. Fishing and hunting are little practiced, as they require more bodily exertion than is agreeable to the natives. The disposition of the people is so mild that it is a mystery how they can indulge in the cruelties, such as human sacrifices, for which they have become famous. The missionaries believe that but for the fetish priests, who are exceedingly shrewd, and have a strong interest in perpetuating them, as their power is based on these bloody sacrifices, the country could be civilized easily. The Fathers have uniformly exerted themselves strongly in opposition to these brutal rites, and have often succeeded in entirely preventing them, especially if they had been informed in time.

Under the reign of Guezo, the late King of Dahomey, human sacrifices had become comparatively rare, but his successor, Greriy, a slave to fetish priests, has revived them with greater cruelty and more lavish expenditure of life than ever. The missionaries under his government have been powerless to check this shedding of human blood. The number of slaves who annually perish in this way is estimated at several thousand. The King of Dahomey is, as is known, the most ferocious and powerful ruler in the whole region. During ten months of the year he makes incursions on the neighboring territories to catch as large a number of slaves as possible. He is chiefly assisted in this work by his two celebrated regiments of amazons. The prisoners made in these expeditions are divided into three classes ; one is sold to the slave merchant

of the interior, and was formerly intended for the European trader ; one portion, chiefly women, is fattened and sold to butchers, who, revolting as the fact may be even to relate, openly sell human flesh in their shops ; the third portion is reserved for the human sacrifices which take place in the months of August and September during the celebration of the "Grand Customs." These ceremonies have a double purpose : that of pacifying Ogun, the god of war, and other deities, and also that of recalling the memory of dead kings and of sending to them supplies of men and provisions. There exists a belief among the savages that a man, passing into the future life, takes with him all that is placed in his grave. For this reason in Dahomey, as in other savage countries, provisions are placed in the tomb. When a king dies, all his women, slaves and ministers must follow him.

During the past year the King of Porto Novo died of poison administered by a rival for the throne. His funeral lasted nine days. For the whole of this time a considerable number of human victims were sacrificed every night in the fetish forest, destined for the "Grand Customs." The missionaries from their neighboring dwelling could hear the cries of the sufferers, whose mutilated bodies were seen every morning in the public square of the town, arranged in lines. The heads had been cut off and nailed along the walls of the royal palace. At 8 o'clock on the morning of the ninth day the new king and his suite, preceded by the fetish priests, moved to the sacred wood where the grave of the late King had been dug. The sacrifice began. Seven slaves were slain, and their blood was mixed with earth to form a kind of plaster, with which the grave was lined. The seven heads of the victims, with provisions of all kinds,

were deposited at the bottom. The body of the King was then lowered. Next were seen approaching nine of his women in their brightest garments, purposely intoxicated beforehand with copious doses of British *tafia*, or rum. They crossed through the throng, casting smiles on each side, believing themselves the objects of an ovation. When they reached the edge of the open grave they were made to kneel down, stunned with a blow on the head before they had any suspicions, and thrown still alive down upon the body of their royal spouse. Earth was then flung in to cover the whole pile of dead and living. At a distance of a few steps, a stake was prepared. There the King's ministers were to be burnt. But these astute politicians had dressed up some slaves in their robes of office, who perished in their stead, while they themselves made good their escape.

The sacrifices to the gods are marked by greater and more varied refinement of cruelty. The form of the shrines is that of a dog-house, very appropriate dwellings for such hideous-looking monsters as their idols are. The ceremonies begin with a dance. A circle is formed in front of the shrine by the leaders of people sitting down, while the mob remains standing. The priest dances to the centre, holding a tuft of human hair, while the circle utter savage cries, clap their hands, or play some wild instruments resembling bells, tambourines, and cymbals. During the night the fetish priests provide the god with one or more victims. The most common form of sacrifice to the war god, Ogun, is to behead the human offering and nail the body upside down to a tree, with the head placed above the feet. At other times a young tree is stripped of its branches, bent down by means of a rope, and retained by a kind of trigger. The victim is either

inclosed, with the exception of the head, in a wicker-work globe, and suspended head down-ward, or has his head incased in the stumps of the leaves which formed the crown of the palm tree. The priest lets the rope go, the tree springs back and the man is left swinging in the air. Birds of prey soon dispose of the body.

On Sunday evening, January 30, a sacred concert will be given in Steinway Hall in aid of those African missions. Between the parts Dr McGlynn will deliver a lecture on the subject.

WEST AFRICAN MISSIONS.

To the Editor of the London Tablet :

SIR.—In your edition of October 16th you were good enough to publish a letter of mine giving some information about the Catholic mission at Lagos, West Africa.

Since then I have received a letter from the Superior of the mission, containing an account of his journey to Abbeokuta, an immense town about forty miles inland, and entirely under native control, which I hope may interest some of your readers. I therefore send you a translation of it:—

“ I left Lagos in company with Pere Holley, on July 29th, at five A. M., soon crossed the Lagoon in a canoe, and we then entered a narrow channel, the outlet of the river Ogun. As we proceeded, the river enlarged, and we then found ourselves in fresh and limpid waters almost as broad as the Lagoon of Lagos. The impenetrable forest and gigantic trees, the cries of the monkeys, and still more of the parrots, filled us with wonder and

seemed to animate the immense solitudes. We arrived at Abbeokuta in four days and a half, thanking God for our safe journey.

"It is difficult to describe this town. It is built upon hills at the foot of ravines, and upon rocks from which three rivers flow. The walls which serve as ramparts, are 40 kilometres in circumference, and within them there are some 200,000 inhabitants who came from the Yoroba country, in order to escape from the wars and cruelties of the King of Dahomey. There are the remnants of 140 or 105 towns established together in this place, in order to defend themselves against their common enemies, Dahomey and the Ibadans. Each of these towns, though living together, has preserved its own king, its manners, and customs, and also its own proper name. The various kings are independent of each other, and only unite for the purpose of war. Each town has its own war chief, called Ibalogons, but the towns have elected one general-in-chief of the warriors of all the towns. This dictator is elected for life, and is called Ogudipe. He is a man who inspires great terror, and is renowned amongst the Egbas and Dahomians, being very skillful in the use of arms. He received us in a most kind and cordial manner, and it was by his orders that the kings gave us land on which to establish our mission. The Rev. Mr. Faulkner of the Church Missionary Society, at once went to Ogudipe and begged him to drive us out, and on no account to allow us to settle at Abbeokuta. The famous chief replied that, since he did not wish us to be allowed to settle here, he should go first in company with all his ministers, but that as for us, his friends, we should remain. The Rev. gentleman retired in confusion, but, nothing daunted, he tried all he could to rouse the Protestants and

Egbas against us. It was useless. We are fixed in very large tracts of land refused to the Protestant sects, but given to us gratis. It is the good God, and He alone, Who has done this, with St. Peter, under whose protection we placed this mission before we left Lagos. Abbeokuta is a country of rocks. St. Peter will found his Church there, and hell will not prevail against him.

“ I left Pere Holley, with a boy who went with us, to take in hand this new and interesting mission. All our possessions consist of a bell, a vestment, and a chalice for Holy Mass. I have written to France to obtain some assistance, and the God who has blessed us hitherto will provide for their subsistence. Pere Holley has written to me that his health is excellent on the mountains of Abbeokuta, and that he lives on the same food as the natives, without bread or wine, and that his strength is excellent. I was there for more than twenty days, and can assure you that living as the natives do, so far as food is concerned, I never was better. Fever there is unknown. There is abundant cultivation, with a good supply of river and spring water. There is neither lagoon nor pestilential miasma. The air is pure and healthy, and our missionaries, who are so tried on the coast, will go to Abbeokuta to recruit their health and strength, instead of making an expensive voyage to France. As missionaries I do not believe we could wish for more.

“ As regards the probable success of Christianity in this country, I believe that in this point also Abbeokuta affords the best field, both because of its vast population, and also because the Egbas are less tormented than the other African tribes, and they are the most active and best workers. Their country is entirely cultivated, and never in Africa have

I seen so pleasant a sight as the immense fields of yams, maize, capada, &c., which are there. It is a country in which one can live well, and one can say that there are no poor there.

"I think you will be pleased to hear the following incident that took place. On our first visit to the King of the Toko tribe, we found the Protestants had set him against us. All the same, after we had been begging some land of him, an old chief and counselor came and, prostrating himself before his Chief, said :

"O King, my master, you must know this, that these white men, who came from afar, are sent to us by God. If, then, it is God who sends them to instruct our children and to do us good, how can you refuse to receive them and to grant them some land to to establish themselves upon? O King, it is here, here, here (pointing out the land with his fingers), it is here on your lands that you ought to keep them.)'

"The King reflected for a moment, and then with a loud voice said :

"Since it is so, as it is God who sends these white men to dwell among us and on my lands, all the unoccupied land in my kingdom belongs to them.' Then, turning to his brother, he said : 'Take good care of these men ; show them my lands and grant them what they shall ask. Make them take plenty, so that they may be satisfied, and not make us run any danger of seeing them leave us.' We left the residence of this good King much moved by his good dispositions, worthy of a Christian. His brother made us choose, and we accepted a large piece of land near the town, which was granted to us for ever in the name of the King.

"There are about twenty Catholics at Abbeokuta, who have come from Brazil. Pere Holley

will have a school-master and a brother missionary, and in the meantime has opened a school with more than ninety children, heathen or Catholic. I myself inaugurated the mission by baptizing five little children of Catholics. Our missionaries are living in the house of a Catholic native until they have something better.

“Two other kings in Abbeokuta have accepted our requests with favor and have each made us a grant of extensive land, one of which will do for the Sisters, and the other for the school. Here, therefore, we have a large field opened for our missionaries, who are all very glad of it.

“Death has again come among us, laying upon us another sacrifice. Pere Murat, one of the two priests who commenced the Gold Coast Mission at Elmina, died of fever shortly after his arrival. Pere Pages has also been taken from us here at Lagos after three day's illness. (May they rest in peace.)

“On the 26th of last month the distribution of prizes took place in our schools: His Excelency the Governor intended to preside, but unfortunately was prevented by an attack of fever. He wrote a letter when in bed, saying it was impossible for him to attend. Mr. T—, the acting judge, took his place. All the Government officials and many other gentlemen were present. Mr. T—opened the proceedings, and read the letter from his Excellency. The children recited speeches and poems, and played a little piece, which, with their songs, occupied three pleasant hours. Everybody seemed pleased. The next day Mr. T—received a visit from one of the Protestant missionaries, who reproached him fiercely for having attended a meeting at the Popish priest's house. So you see how jealousy annoys these reverend gentlemen.”

October 25th, 1880.

J. M.