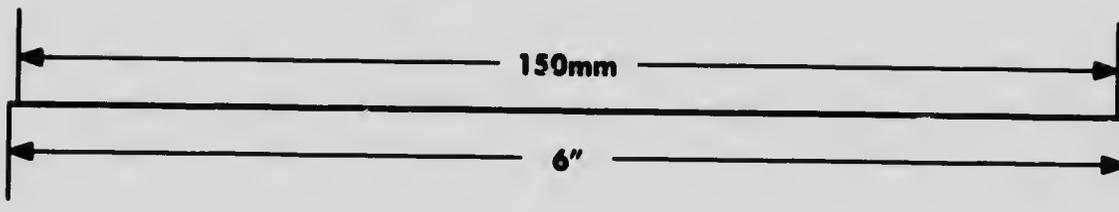
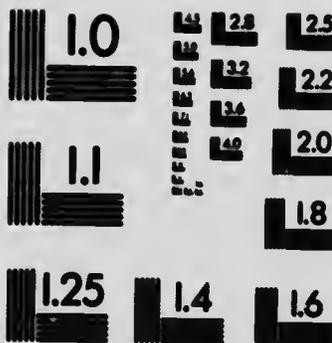
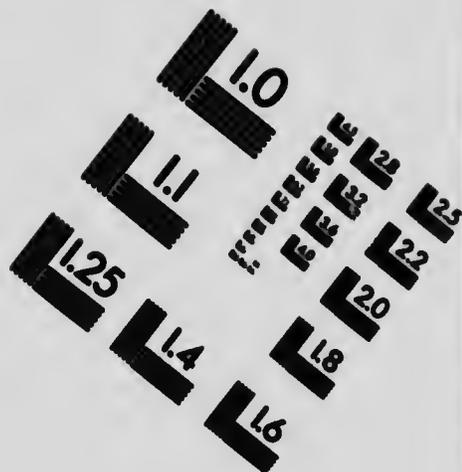
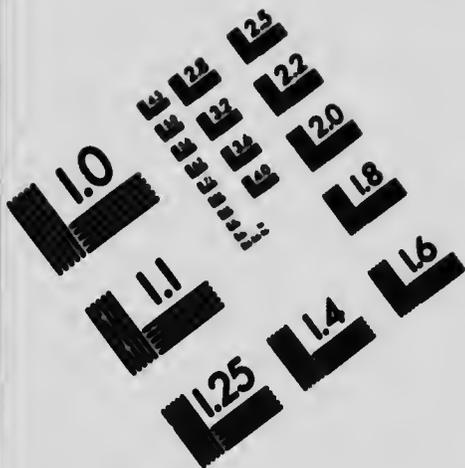


IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



APPLIED IMAGE . Inc
 1653 East Main Street
 Rochester, NY 14609 USA
 Phone: 716/482-0300
 Fax: 716/288-5089

© 1983, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved

**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1994

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur

Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur

Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée

Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées

Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée

Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées

Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque

Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées

Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur

Pages detached/
Pages détachées

Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)

Showthrough/
Transparence

Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur

Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression

Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents

Continuous pagination/
Pagination continue

Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure

Includes index(es)/
Comprend un (des) index

Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.

Title on header taken from: /
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

Title page of issue/
Page de titre de la livraison

Caption of issue/
Titre de départ de la livraison

Masthead/
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

Additional comments: /
Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below /
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	14X	18X	22X	26X	30X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12X	16X	20X	24X	28X	32X

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

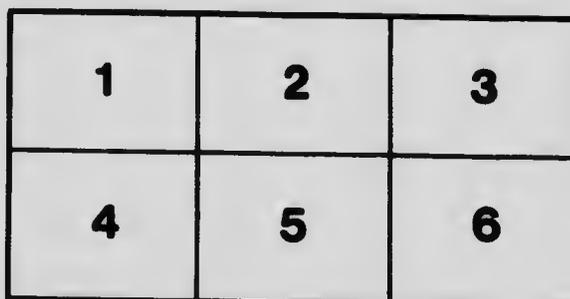
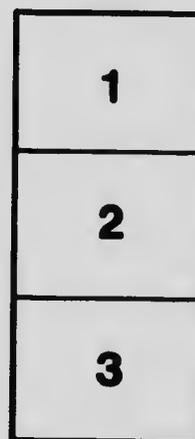
National Library of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

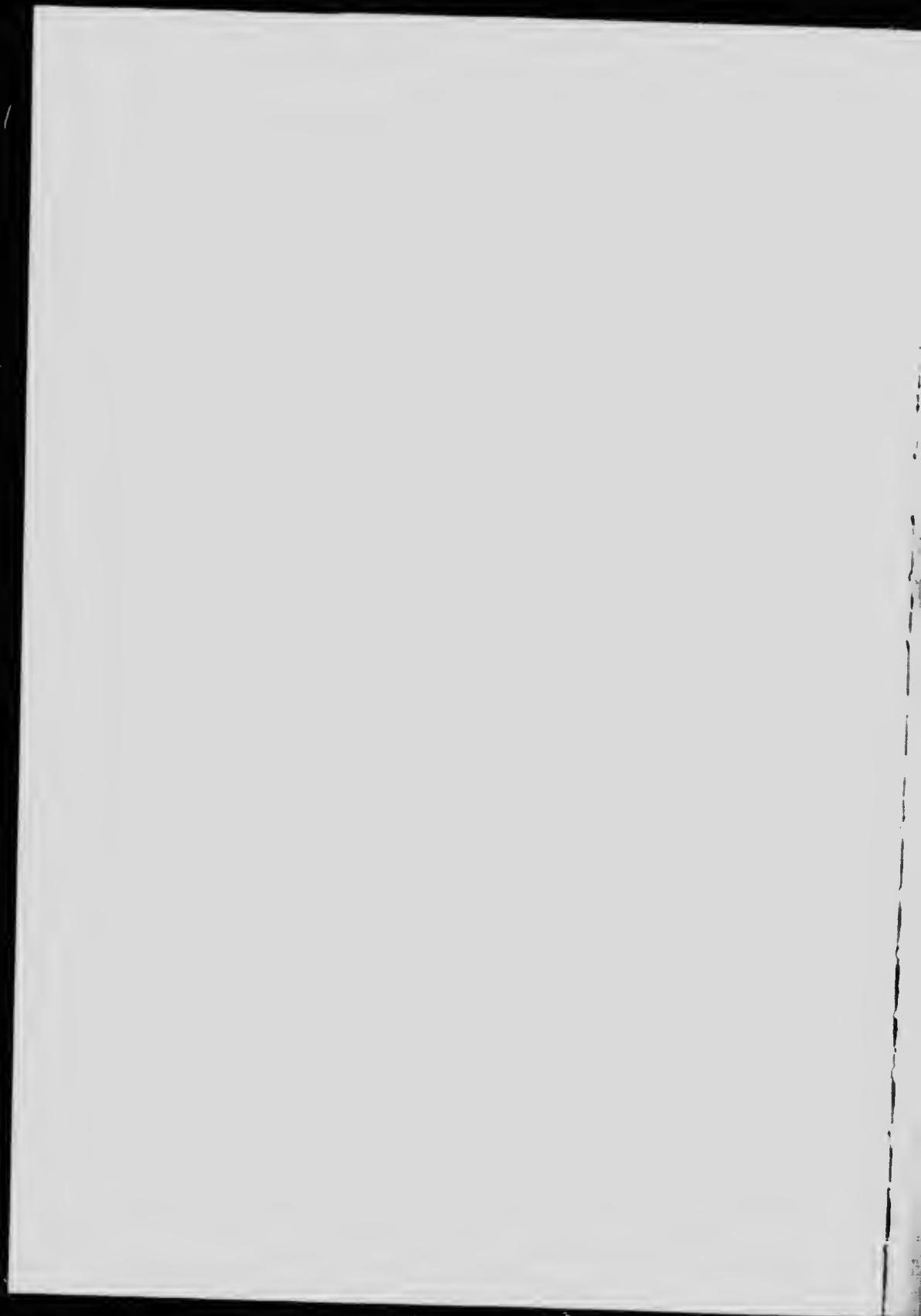
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



**Saint
Vincent de Paul**

the

Friend of the Poor

by

Peter Anthony



PRICE 5 CENTS

MONTREAL

Saint
Vincent de Paul

the
Friend of the Poor

by
Peter Anthony



MONTREAL
1915

RIDEAU STREET CONVENT
STUDY CLUB

BX 5700

100

151



St. Vincent de Paul
the
Friend of the Poor

BY
PETER ANTHONY.

I.

THE chief work in the life of Vincent de Paul was the reformation of the clergy of France, the greater number of whom were, in his day, unworthy of their high calling. Incidentally he did a marvellous work for the help of the poor and it is as a sociologist that he will be considered in this short sketch. His work is of particular interest at the present moment for then, as now, there were vast multitudes needing to be cared for. The country was devastated by war and it was Vincent who was one of the chief pioneers of that organized ambulance work that we now associate with the efforts of the Red Cross Society.

Vincent de Paul was the son of a poor peasant living at Puy in Gascony. The father, by dint of great sacrifices, made the boy a priest putting him with the Franciscan Fathers. Vincent was early noted for great piety, brilliant mental gifts and charming manners. When only 12 years old he held the post of tutor to the sons of a lawyer. He lived some years with this family and later spent seven years at the University of Toulouse. He became sub-deacon

in 1598 and priest two years later. At Toulouse, Vincent took pupils to board with him. A wealthy noble of the neighbourhood was so impressed with his learning and character that he wished to help him to a bishopric. But here, as ever, we see that marked humility that distinguished Vincent, that genuine poorness of spirit that later helped to win men's confidence and secured their co-operation in his schemes.

In 1605 he had occasion to take a journey by water and was captured by African Pirates and sold as a slave at Tunis. After some ill-treatment and changes of masters he was sent to the mountains to work under a renegade catholic who had given up his religion and lived like a Turk. The Turkish wife of this man became interested in Vincent. She ordered him one day to sing the praise of his God. He did so and gave her instruction. She became converted and brought her husband back to the faith. The couple then helped Vincent and his companions to escape and they managed to get back to Avignon where they were received with rejoicing. The papal Vice-Legate took Vincent to Rome where he met Cardinal d'Assat who had so high an opinion of him that he sent him to deliver an important message to King Henry IV of France. He executed the difficult mission with devotion and inviolable secrecy. The King, Henry IVth, was attracted by his charm of manner which was of that kind which springs from an exquisite kindness; from the instinct to love and condone, rather than criticize or blame. He also approved of the wisdom and honesty of this simple priest and had Vincent desired the path was open to him to play such a part as Cardinal Wolsey did or Richelieu, the great Minister of France; to become an ambitious prelate to whom the things of the world were more than the things of God.

But Vincent had no taste for the world and no wish for honor for himself and having discharged his mission he went to Paris. Here he lived very quietly teaching and helping the poor and doing on a small scale what he afterwards did on a big one. At this period he determined to enter more fully in the ecclesiastical state and spent two years with the Oratorian Fräners. He declined an abbot's

mitre to take charge of Clichy, a very poor parish. Here he laboured hard amongst the poor, intensely beloved, never sparing himself, an ideal parish priest.

II.

COUNTRY MISSIONS AND FRATERNITIES OF CHARITY.

Two years later Vincent left his country parish to become tutor to the sons of the Count of Joigny one of the greatest of the French nobles. This was a post of high importance as these lads would later fill lofty stations. No doubt Vincent's advisers considered that his immense power for good should not be limited to a little parish but should have a wider field and that it would be well for his influence to be brought to bear upon those in high places. The Count and his wife were admirable people, religious, kind, just, always anxious to do good. In their household Vincent found plenty of outlet for his missionary zeal, specially when he accompanied the family to their country estates. His influence was for peace and helpfulness and his patron were only too glad to have his help and advice in their plans for helping the poor. In the country districts he was distressed at the little provision there was for the spiritual instruction of the poor. With that ardent charity which never loses patience with dullness or ignorance he gave all his spare time to instruct them. To remedy this need the countess set aside a sum of money to found a permanent mission in whatever place Vincent might think best.

The abundant marks of affection and respect and the honor in which he was held in this household were not to his liking. He did not wish to be glorified. So, much to the distress of the Joigny family he went to Chatillon where he worked as he had at Clichy with the same results.

One day when he was going up to the pulpit to preach a lady begged him to recommend a very poor family to the charity of the congregation. He did so and spoke with the pathos of one who held the need of the poor as his own. Going to visit the same family on the following day he found that they had not only been relieved but they had more food that they knew to do with. "Why, he said, this

charity needs guiding." So he organized a system of relief called the Confraternity of Charity for the spiritual and corporal relief of the sick poor. He formed a committee of the most charitable ladies of the place; appointed certain officers amongst them and gave them rules. These confraternities were approved by the Cardinal De Retz, uncle of his pupils and by other authorities and were soon established in various towns. In the meantime the Joigny family were so distressed at the loss of Vincent that he was induced to promise not to leave them during the life of the countess.

In considering the works of Vincent de Paul we must remember that before his day lay charity was not organized: it was left to depend on the instinct of the individual so that a few had too much and a great many had nothing. Vincent was the first to set charitable works on a practical basis and so prevent waste of strength, goods or money.

III.

VINCENT AND THE GALLY SLAVES.

The count of Joigny held the office of Master of the Gallies to King Louis XIIIth., Admiral of the Fleet, as we say to-day. The gallies were the ships of the period as we see them in old pictures, with holes in the sides for the great oars to come through. They were worked by the lowest class, mostly criminals, miserable poor creatures, who plied the oars for long hours at a stretch, Harsh task masters, lashed them with whips if they attempted to relax. They were half starved and infected with disease. And if their bodily condition was miserable their spiritual condition was worse for the fetid air in which they worked was the more unendurable with foul oaths and blasphemery. The criminals of that day were uncared for in every sense. It seems strange that the Count de Joigny, an honorable and good man should have permitted this condition. But many have the habit of looking on certain things, as inevitable. The galley slaves were criminals; their condition one of punishment, so they must suffer; justice demanded it.

But Vincent saw always a Deity of love and mercy rather than of judgment. His heart yearned over these unhappy

ones as soon as he realized their miserable state. He visited them, talked kindly, wept with them; in a short time he worked a wonderful change in them, transforming these wild reckless broken creatures whose hands were against every man, into human beings who realized their wrong doing and whose hearts were moved by love and kindness.

On one occasion he was deeply distressed at the broken hearted grief of a young man who had just been brought to the galleys. He learned that the poor fellow feared that his wife would starve now he had been carried away. In a flash Vincent cried: "Go back, I will take your place." It is not known how long he sat chained with the convicts, bearing the stinging whip and the galling ankle gyve before the exchange was discovered and he was set free. But it was long enough to make him lame for life.

He visited also the prisons to which the criminals were sent before their removal to the galleys. Here horrible sights of disease and mutilation met his gaze but he never quailed. His position enabled him to get subscriptions and to take a house where the sick amongst them would be cared for. He remained there for days and months preaching and giving the sacraments especially if there were a contagious illness in the place. At the instigation of the countess the King made him almoner to the galley.

IV.

MAÇON.

Vincent now followed the galleys to carry out his work of mercy and obtained permission to associate priests from other orders in it.

His travels led him to the town of Maçon which was infested with vicious, idle, ignorant beggars who brutally threatened ill-treatment to those who did not give them alms. The genuine, deserving poor people had no chance against them. Vice was rampant and fierce, noisy impostors got the help that was deserved by many in desperate misery. When Vincent de Paul realized the condition of things he longed to improve matters but his path was difficult. The Canons of the Cathedral and the leading

citizens thought the task helpless and did not stir themselves. Nothing daunted Vincent set to work and begged from house to house for help for the miserable. Many doors were shut in his face but often people put themselves on his side and he gained the patronage of many bishops and leading clergy.

Having secured a large sum of money Vincent divided the poor into two classes; one association for men and another for women.

In these confraternities each had employment, some cared for the sick, others looked after the poor. There was a plan for caring for strangers, giving them a night's lodging and sending them on with a small sum of money. This caused those who entered Maçon to be registered and gave some sort of security to the town, freeing them from the pest of disorderly strangers. Beggars now assembled in an orderly manner at fixed hours in places where food and clothes were distributed to them and where they also received lessons in piety and conduct. *All able-bodied men and women were made to work.*

In three weeks Vincent had so dealt with the problem of poverty, ignorance and vice that the citizens of Maçon were now preserved from brutality and imposture, the genuine poor were cared for and the ignorant instructed.

The higher clergy, the magistrates and the leading citizens, now convinced of his power for good, wished to send him on his journey with honors. But when on the day of his departure they called at the monastery where he had stayed his room was empty. He had gone on his way as unobtrusively as he had come.

V.

FATHERS OF THE MISSION.

In the meantime the mission for instructing the poor which the Count of Joigny had given money to found was at last erected into a congregation. His brother, the archbishop, established Vincent, with the title of principal in an old 13th. Century College known as "College des Bons

Enfants." This was the cradle of the large order that soon spread as far and wide as Italy and Poland. The mission began with Vincent and two other priests who went from village to village catechizing and teaching. The Pope gave it the title of "Priests of the Mission". As others joined Vincent divided it into different bodies, going himself to Lyons where a reform in conduct and morals was much needed and where the mission was attended by an extraordinary success. The poor were instructed and helped and many wealthy persons who had never given a thought save to their own pleasure entered eagerly into Vincent's schemes for aiding the needed.

He always exhorted his preachers to adopt a simple style and address themselves to the hearts of their hearers. He exhorted with a touching fervour that rarely failed to find response and did not deal in biting personal invective. Various noble ladies paid the expenses of these missions for a term of years.

Vincent's view was that the church was ruined in many places because of bad priests and that to restore the blessing of the Church priests must be specially prepared and must humble themselves.

The bishop of Beauvais opened his palace as a kind of Seminary where those preparing for holy orders might come for retreats and at a later date we read of Bossuet and Fenelon giving instructions. There were also retreats for the public at which nobles, beggars, mechanics and all shared the same simple meal.

These were later known as the retreats of the Priory of Saint Lazarus, a religious house with a regular canons of which Vincent was induced to take the charge.

"I do not know that there is anything more edifying to the Church of God than the sweet odour that your Company spreads everywhere. We must pray to God to give additional solidity to a design so advantageous for the good of souls," wrote a celebrated Abbé.

Vincent de Paul was now 48 years old. His friend and biographer has left a description of his appearance.

"In person he was of middle height and well formed; his head was somewhat large but proportioned to the rest

of his body : his forehead broad and commanding ; his face neither too full nor too thin ; his aspect was gentle, his glance piercing, his hearing quick, his deportment grave, his gravity benign ; his countenance was simple and unaffected ; his manner affable ; his disposition extremely kind and amiable." In describing his character Abelly remarks, "He never entered lightly into any investigation ; but when he had once seriously taken the matter in hand, he laid it bare to the very bone ; he weighed every circumstance whether great or small, he anticipated the inconvenience and consequences that would arrive ; and yet for fear of deceiving himself he did not decide at once unless he was pressed to do so ; and he came to no conclusion until he had carefully weighed both sides and was even then very glad to consult others. In everything he said simplicity was combined with prudence."

A powerful citizen once gave him to understand that if he would help his son to get a rich bishopric the house of Saint Lazarus would be given certain privileges. Vincent refused point blank saying "I will never do anything against God and my conscience for all the possessions of the earth. This mission will never perish through poverty. I fear rather that it will perish when it ceases to be poor."

It was not long before the news of these conferences came to Richelieu's ears, then the chief Minister and actual Ruler of France. The great states man whom nothing escaped, was quick to suspect a political motive in the Saint Lazarus' conferences and retreats. So he sent for Vincent and questioned him. But that master mind, skilled in the art of reading men, saw at a glance the absolute innocence and goodness of the head of the new congregation.

Richelieu was overwhelmingly ambitious. He subordinated the claims of the Church to those of the state ; at the same time he had a sincere respect and admiration for goodness. He had no wish to see power in the hands of villains, and provided his own plans were not intercepted, he wished that justice should be dealt and power be in the hands of those who would use it wisely. So from that time onwards he assisted Vincent in his schemes and took his advice on many matters, especially on appointment to bishoprics. This was never suspected, least of all by the recommended

candidate for Vincent's Secrecy was inviolable. And it is worthy of note that not once did he recommend one of his priests for honors. For them, like himself he had chosen the path of humility. "True Missionaries, he said, should be Cistercians at home and apostles abroad."

After the death of King Louis XIII., Vincent was created a member of the celebrated 'Council of Conscience,' the work of which was to decide on appointments to offices of state. Richelieu's successor, Mazarin, was one of the other two members.

VI.

SISTERS OF CHARITY.

Mention has been made of the Confraternities of Charity. Many ladies of rank joined from piety and wish to help the poor. Others because it was the fashion. Thence came difficulties for, if the lady could not go herself she sent her maid, who too often proved unskilful or unsympathetic. Then an effort was made to find suitable maids, preferably country girls.

Circumstances were gradually shaping a new religious order. There was a certain Mme le Gras, a rich young widow of high birth, who had given up the claims of the world to serve God in the needs of the poor. For two years she entreated Vincent to allow her to devote herself to this work, teaching suitable girls and making a home for them. At his suggestion Mme le Gras visited many of the established confraternities of Charity about the country. At each place she met the confraternity, gave practical instructions, helped them to add their number when more were required using always the greatest tact to avoid giving offence. Vincent instructed her to care for her own health for love of the poor, pointing out that one of the artifices employed by the devil was to tempt people to more than they were able to perform, so that their efforts for good were stopped.

Having thus studied the matter carefully Mme le Gras obtained permission under the name of "Sisters of Charity" to open a home in Paris for girls who consecrated their lives to the service of the poor under the name of "Sisters

of Charity." She began with four but the number soon multiplied. This idea of a religious order that went about in the world seems to have been new. Nuns until then were more or less enclosed. As their founder Vincent said of these Sisters of Charity the houses of the sick must be their convent, the chamber of suffering their cell, the parish church their chapel, the streets of the city or wards of hospitals their cloister.

Vincent frequently instructed them and in exhorting them to humility would say "You and I, dear Sisters, are the children of peasants." The rigor of their rule protected the sisters from temptation in their daily life. They rose at 4; ate the plainest fare and were always at the call of the sick. Soon this band of "Sisters" became extremely respected and beloved and did marvellous work especially in the 30 years War; that was still raging and in the war of the Fronde. Vincent lived to see 28 houses of Sisters of Charity established in Paris and many others throughout the kingdom, in other lands and even in Poland. Their devotion, their kindness won all hearts. Besides the care of the sick poor, Vincent gave them the care of widows and orphans, of wounded soldiers and of convicts. It was a part of their work to give all spiritual help possible and to sanctify themselves as much as possible by uniting the inward exercises of a religious life with outward acts of charity.

VII.

HOTEL DIEU.

The greater number of the sick poor in Paris at that date were treated in the Hotel-Dieu, an enormous hospital capable of accomodating 25,000 persons in a year. There was a good staff of doctors but a very small number of chaplains. It must be remember that medical knowledge was slight at that date, and sicknursing extremely hap hazard.

The patients were nursed by nuns, many of whom were unskilled and all of whom were overworked. Many of the patients suffered from insufficient attention. There was a lack of funds and those who were too lonely or too poor to have friends to bring them comforts and food suffered

from insufficient attention. Vincent asked Mme Goussault, a noble lady at the head of one of his confraternities, to help in this work. Some 200 princesses, countesses and leaders of Society put down their names as willing to help with the nursing or to do whatever might be required. Vincent gave them a few strict rules. They had to dress simply — the dress of the wealthy and noble of the day was extraordinarily rich; they were to be gentle and to hurt no one's feelings by an appearance of patronage. They were to be especially careful to treat the nuns in charge with deference; to obey them in all things and never to annoy or oppose them. A house was taken in the neighbourhood, and here some Sisters of Charity were established to do cookery for the sick in the hospitals. Vincent divided his helpers into 2 bands, some to give temporal assistance and some spiritual, so that each could do the work to which she was best suited. The confraternity worked in bands for three months at a time. Those going off duty left a written account of their work to help those coming on and to add to the general knowledge.

VIII.

FOUNDINGS.

The conditions of the city of Paris, the licentiousness of many, the dire poverty of others, the lack of proper civic regulations resulted in a terrible number of deserted children. These poor little creatures, worse than orphans were left at the church doors, on the steps of the citizen's houses, in the very streets, to be left to starve or to be the objects of chance charity. The only authorized care for them was a badly kept house, rented by the State, run by a widow who had no proper means of subsistence. She had little skill and insufficient food and clothes to give them. The place was indescribably dirty. The children died in great numbers. Some were sold at a low price to anyone who would buy them. Others were mutilated to make interesting beggars.

This house had come to Vincent's notice. He had visited it and was bitterly grieved to find so many helpless infants in such wretchedness and destitution. We can imagine how

earnestly he pleaded with the ladies of his Confraternities of Charity that they would bring their hearts and their minds to bear on this matter. The ladies visited the wretched place and were as horrified as Vincent had been. They realized that for the present at least, it was impossible to cope with the evil in its entirety. They must work by little. The war that was raging rendered all their fortunes insecure. It was no good attempting more than they could perform. After much consideration they cast lots and took charge of twelve of the children. These they placed in a house that they rented under the charge of Madame le Gras, and the Sisters of Charity. To these they added other children from time to time according to their means. Vincent laid the matter before the Queen, Anne of Austria, who obtained the revenues of five large farms from the king for the charity. This supported it for some years but troubles caused by the war proved a great strain and then a time came when the ladies of the Confraternity declared it must cease. Vincent then convoked a special assembly at which the ladies of the noblest families were present.

He spoke with fervour, weighing as was his wont all reasons for and against. He showed them how they had saved innocent lives; how innocent beings in learning to speak had learnt to know and serve God. That some were already beginning to work.

"Compassion and charity have caused you to adopt these little creatures as your own. You have been their mothers according to grace when their own mothers had forsaken them. They will live if you will continue your charitable care of them but they will die if you abandon them."

The ladies determined to keep on the charity at any cost. The king presented a château: two houses were bought in Paris. The arrangements were only just completed when the War of the Fronde broke out and the country knew the horrors of civil war.

IX.

VINCENT'S WORK IN WAR TIME.

We have considered several of Vincent's works for improving the conditions of the poor in town and country. These although important and considerable were within certain limits as to numbers. We have now to consider how he dealt with vast masses of people in the appalling conditions of poverty and famine brought about by war.

During the Thirty Years War the independent kingdom of Lorraine on the East of France, was neutral; but the neutrality was broken when the ruler went to the help of the German Catholics. The reigning duke was defeated by the Swedish king, Gustavus Vasa, and on his return found the kingdom over run by French regiments. France now seized Lorraine, which was at the same time over run by fierce Germans under Bernhard of Weimar. Famine wasted the land. Towns and villages were left without a living inhabitant. Pestilence was everywhere. Fierce flocks of wolves, maddened by hunger roamed the streets of the miserable towns. The most terrible deeds were committed. Cannibalism was not unknown.

Vincent, now known throughout France as "the good Mr. Vincent", was appealed to for help.

He began by giving away all the money in the House of Saint Lazarus and reducing the very plain fare of the mission to famine rations. No one grumbled. Then he called his confraternities. Richelieu's niece, the wealthy and powerful Duchesse D'Aiguillon helped readily. So did Madame de Goussault, who had done so much to organize the work at the Hotel Dieu, and many other noble ladies. The Queen, who had recently given birth to a son after twenty years of married life, was most anxious to show her gratitude to the Almighty, and her charities flowed forth under Vincent's guidance. She gave with an unbounded liberality and Vincent was never afraid to apply to her. She would empty her purse and give him her jewels. Once she gave him an ear ring that was value and sold for \$85,000. She begged him to keep secret her gift but Vincent said, "Your Majesty must pardon my disobedience. I cannot keep secret so noble a deed, which resounds to the glory of God

and which is so bright an example to others." Thus Vincent obtained the direction of a large sum of money.

He sent twelve missionaries to Lorraine, skilled in medicine and surgery. They were ordered to take no important step without consulting the authorities of the place. Thus friction was avoided. These missionaries carried funds and stores and also advised the authorities how relief should be arranged. In all places where the Fathers of the Mission were established they received crowds of wounded and sick. There was a daily distribution to the infirm and aged. Young girls, who had been left orphans by the war and were in danger because of the unsettled state of the country were assisted to Paris under the care of the fathers. Religious houses made destitute by the war were supported. There is a document in the town of Toul showing how a Dominican community was kept from starvation for two and a half years by the Fathers of the Mission.

The blessing of God was shown in a marvellous way on the work of Vincent for although the country was infested with thieves, the father whose task it was to carry the money from Paris made fifty three journeys without losing it. He fell more than once into the hands of thieves but by his ready wit he managed to conceal the money. Once he tossed his purse into a ditch just before the robber came up with him; he recovered it later. The Queen used to enjoy hearing this father tell his experiences which always concluded, "The God of Vincent de Paul journeyed with me and guarded me on the way."

For many years Vincent maintained several towns by his efforts. Charity is infectious and he had that intense belief in the help of God that has helped many ardent lovers of the poor in difficult circumstances.

Amongst his many practical works for the benefit of the distressed he opened soup kitchens. This we are accustomed to look on as a very modern institution. He also formed bands for burying the dead and others for disinfecting the streets and lanes that had become poisonous from the number of dead. He made use of the Daughters of Charity letting them follow in the wake of the Mission fathers and work under their guidance.

The ambitious motives that governed the chief men of France at that date were a very great grief to Vincent, who had so much sympathy for the afflicted. He knew that if the principle of ambition had been subordinated to those of Christian charity the war would have been over long before. Urged by pity he went to the great Cardinal and remonstrated with him, crying "Have mercy on us. Have mercy."

Perhaps Vincent was the only man in the kingdom who dared to oppose the mighty minister. Richelieu was touched. He took Vincent's words in good part and explained that treaties for peace were already in progress and he hoped they would soon be concluded.

X.

WAR OF THE FRONDE.

The Parliament of Par's had little constitutionnal importance and it lacked the power to protect the people against the arrogance of courts and nobles. In the hope of bringing about a better state of things the people of Paris allied themselves with two political parties that were known as the "Old Fronde" and "New Fronde." To the "Old Fronde" belonged the party of the lawyers that wished to strengthen the Parliament. This group was headed by Vincent's old pupil the Cardinal de Retz. With this party were also those that wished to reform civic matters. These were headed by the Duc de Beaufort. The New Fronde consisted of the party of princes and nobles under Conde.

If the people were unhappy sacrificed to the ambitious schemes of Richelieu, who was now dead, their state was worse under his successor, Mazarin. They lacked a legitimate way of expressing their grievances and so were the more dependent upon individuals. Louis 13th. was dead and the regent, Anne of Austrias, could, as we have seen, be very kind-hearted but she was frivolous and lacked the depth to understand the inwardness of the political situation. She was indignant at what she considered the want of respect shown by the city of Paris and she resolved to starve it out.

The prospect of such awful misery to thousands of his poor terrified Vincent and although he had received so many

kindnesses at Anne's hands he resolved to withstand her, although he well knew that such boldness might mean his own death.

Paris was under arms. Vincent rode to Ruel where the Queen was. His single companion was alarmed "But I thought," he said later, "the God would not permit the people to ill-treat a man who had consecrated his life to them. But Vincent was recognized by the crowd and the fact that he was going to see the Queen and Mazarin inspired distrust.

He spoke with vehemence to the Queen, telling her that to sacrifice thousands of innocent persons to punish thirty or forty guilty was inhuman. He urged her to send away Mazarin, for it was against him that the anger of the people was especially directed. The Queen would not answer definitely but sent Vincent on to Mazarin. Vincent afterwards blamed himself for not speaking more gently to the Queen, "For never have harsh words succeeded with me," he remarked "And I have always learned that to reach the mind one must not exasperate the heart."

He went on to Mazarin who received him politely but who only prevaricated. Vincent had to return having accomplished nothing and to meet the anger of the people who, not knowing what had passed looked on him as the accomplice of the Queen and Mazarin. He was roughly treated by the mob. A guard was set in front of the house of Saint Lazarus, his corn was stolen and more than one of his farms destroyed. In spite of all this ill-treatment he never ceased to relieve the miseries of the poor; During the prolonged miseries of the War of the Fronde he played the same part that he had done in Lorraine. His task was the harder as the resources of those who helped him were strained to the uttermost. Starved with cold during a very severe winter, ill-fed also, he laboured to relieve the misery in Picardy and Champagne where inroads of Spaniards had laid waste the land.

XI.

Vincent was now a very old man but his charities never failed. Reference has already been made to the vast number of beggars in France. Besides the genuine poor there were thousands of professional impostors who never did a stroke of honest work and never intended. These people formed a regular community, having their own degrees and titles and habits. The Confraternities of the Ladies of Charity had already done much for the deserving poor. But there were forty thousands mendicants in Paris and many of them were terrible to deal with, fierce, thieving, blasphemous and bold.

Inspired by Vincent's energy they determined to deal with this matter. The courage with which the ladies attacked this problem is extraordinary and shows the extent to which their founder had inspired them. The French court of that time, of which these women formed a brilliant part, was one of the most splendid ever known. Speaking of them as a class these ladies were perhaps inclined to be pleasure loving and worldly. It is strange that in contemporary records this side of social life has been almost overlooked and so little justice done to the good hearts and practical energy of the Ladies of Charity.

The ladies collected a large sum of money and brought it to Vincent, who applied to the King and obtained the grant of a place known as the Salpetriere; this consisted of large buildings standing in big courtyards. The idea was to have a kind of workhouse where the genuine poor should be lodged and clothed and submit to certain regulations. The ladies in their zeal, were for using force but Vincent saw that this would not do so he persuaded them to begin with a hundred or two and let the work gradually increase. The difficulty was that many preferred any squalor with liberty to comparative comfort without it. At the same time the king passed an edict forbidding beggary and that every beggar should earn his own living or enter the Salpetriere.

"What we need is to go quietly, act in harmony and pray earnestly. We must not think that all is lost if everyone is not anxious to co-operate in our plans," said Vincent when the workers were discouraged.

It is said that during the first five years of the hospital's

existence some sixty thousand were lodged there. The government of the place was vested in twenty six gentlemen of experience and probity.

XII.

LAST DAYS.

In his extreme old age Vincent suffered terribly from swelling and open wounds in his legs. But until it was impossible for him to walk he refused a carriage. One of his last charities was especially appropriate.

A citizen gave him a sum of money to be used as he thought fit on condition that he would never tell the name of the donor. After reflection Vincent decided on a home for aged poor to be called the Hospital of the Name of Jesus and Mary'. It was under the care of the Sisters of Charity. There was a man's wing and a woman's wing, and a chapel. Good food and light employment were given and the priests of the Mission gave instruction. Vincent was often with them devising fresh rules to beautify their life.

Vincent's long life was now drawing to a close. His infirmities increased. His legs, injured by the irons of the galley slaves were now painful with swelling and open wounds and quite powerless. He was carried from his room to the chapel and back again. His mind remained clear and collected: he was always patient and good-humoured. He dictated letters to correspondents in every part of Europe almost to the time of his death and these epistles are as vigorous and clear in direction as those of his middle age or youth.

He became very weak early in 1660, having been much saddened by the death of Madame le Gras and of Father Portail, one of his first mission priests. Violent pain was added to his weakness but the only relief he allowed himself was to have a cord fastened to a beam in the ceiling that he might turn round in bed.

A few weeks before he died he appointed Father Almeras as his successor and a sister of Charity named Marguerite Chetif to succeed Madame le Gras as head of the Daughters of Charity. This great saint and devoted lover of the poor died suddenly and without pain on September 27th., 1660, his last word being 'confido', I confide.

649A# K

Deaf & Dumb printing, Montreal.

181



