

# GETHSEMANI ABBEY

NELSON CO., KENTUCKY, U. S. A.

## ITS FOUNDATION AND PRESENT STATE

NARRATIVE PUBLISHED ON THE OCCASION OF THE

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF THE MONASTERY

Celebrated A. D. 1899



THE RIGHT REVEREND EDMUND M. OBRECHT, O.C.R.,  
Abbot of Gethsemani Abbey.

# GETHSEMANI ABBEY

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*A Narrative of*

*THE LATE ABBOT EUTROPIUS, O.C.R.*

Of the Foundation

OF THE

TRAPPIST MONASTERY

AT GETHSEMANI, KENTUCKY, U. S. A.

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*With an account of its present state*

*BY THE RT. REV. EDMUND M. OBRECHT, O.C.R.*

On the occasion of the

Golden Jubilee of its Foundation

CELEBRATED, A. D. 1899





IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
 THE  
**Most Reverend**  
**Dom M. Edmond Obrecht, O. C. S. O.**

*Abbot of the Abbey of Gethsemani*

—O—

Born at Stotzheim, Alsace, - November 13, 1852  
 Entered at La Grande Trappe, - February 10, 1875  
 Received the holy habit, - - March 7, 1875  
 Simple profession, - - - March 19, 1877  
 Ordained priest, - - - September 19, 1879  
 Solemn profession, - - - May 28, 1882  
 Superior at Gethsemani, - - January 24, 1898  
 Elected and installed Abbot, - October 11, 1898  
 Abbatial Benediction, - - October 28, 1898  
 Received violet zucchetto, - - May 21, 1924  
 Received Cappa Magna, - September 19, 1929  
 Called to his eternal reward, - January 4, 1935



**LET US PRAY**

O GOD, Who, amongst apostolic priests, hast adorned Thy servant Edmond with the pontifical dignity, grant, we beseech Thee, that he may also be associated with them in everlasting fellowship. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

—O—

**FAVORITE MAXIMS OF THE DECEASED:**

Give me grace to do what Thou commandest and then command what Thou pleasest.

(St. Augustine).

All to JESUS through MARY.

May the Will of GOD be done.

—O—

He was a lover of the Rule and of the place.  
 (History of Citeaux).

Let us place our hearts at the foot of the Cross, and accept the death of this loved one, for the sake of Him who died on it.

(St. Francis de Sales).

JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH.

(Indulgence 7 years and 7 quarantines.

Plenary, once a month).

Sweet Heart of JESUS, be my love.

(300 days indulgence).

Sweet Heart of MARY, be my salvation.

(300 days indulgence. Plenary, once a month).

1933

1934

OUR LADY OF GETHSEMANI. (Ky)  
One of the 3 rooms of the library  
containing over 60000 volumes.



May the Divine Infant grant  
you and all those dear to you a most  
Holy Christmas and a Happy New  
Year!

Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani.

Abbot Edmond M. Obrecht, O. C. S. O.

TRAPPIST P. O., KY. XII, 20, 1933

His Last Greeting

Héliographe Imprimeries Réunies de Nancy - Made in France

I have received many cards  
these days, but few have  
given me as much pleasure  
as yours. Your own presence  
here would have been  
very much welcome.  
I hope you have not  
forgotten the road  
to Gethsemani,  
may God bless you  
my dearest old  
friend & Edmond M Obrecht



O GOOD and sweetest JESUS, before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with the greatest fervour of spirit I pray and beseech Thee to vouchsafe to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a most firm purpose of amendment; whilst I contemplate with great sorrow and affection Thy five wounds, and ponder them over in my mind, having before my eyes the words which, long ago, David the prophet spoke in Thy own Person concerning Thee, my JESUS: "They have pierced My Hands and My Feet; they have numbered all My Bones".

(Ps. XXI-17,18).

(Plenary Indulgence, applicable to the souls in Purgatory, if said before a Crucifix, after Holy Communion).

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#### MEMORARE OF SAINT BERNARD

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to Thy protection, implored Thy help, or sought Thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto Thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to Thee I come, before Thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful; O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions; but in Thy clemency hear and answer me. Amen.

(300 days indulgence, each time;  
plenary, once a month).

IMPRIMATUR, - +John A. Floersch, D. D.,  
Bishop of Louisville.

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## INTRODUCTION.

It is with feelings of pleasure that we present to the friends of the Abbey of Gethsemani as a souvenir of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the foundation of the Abbey, the following pages, compiled from the articles appearing in the Messenger of the Sacred Heart, during the year 1898. The first part of the narrative was written by the Rt. Rev. Abbot Eutropius, who led the first colony of Trappists from France to America, and founded the institution at Gethsemani, and the closing pages by a religious who is at present a member of the Community. We present as a frontispiece the picture of the Rt. Rev. Edmund M. Obrecht, D.D., O.C.R., Abbot, who at the time the following pages appeared in the Messenger of the Sacred Heart, was but Superior of the monastery. He was unanimously elected Abbot on the 11th day of October, 1898, and was blessed as Abbot on the 28th of the same month by the Rt. Rev. Wm. George McCloskey, Bishop of Louisville, Kentucky.

We trust this short sketch of Gethsemani, setting forth the sacrifices and joys of the Trappist monk, will at least serve to bring the friends of the Abbey of Gethsemani into closer touch with the Community.

FR. M. THEODOR, O.C.R.,  
Secretary to the Rt. Rev. Abbot.

*Gethsemani*, June 7, 1899.

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# GETHSEMANI ABBEY

## ITS FOUNDATION AND PRESENT STATE.



**I**N the year 1848, the crowded condition of the French Abbey of Melleray necessitated the departure of some of its members. The church, refectory and dormitories were taxed beyond their capacity. There was no room to admit any more postulants. This, in itself, was a matter of deep regret to the Rev. Father D. Maxime, who was forced to refuse the number of zealous applicants who weekly presented themselves for the purpose of dedicating their lives to God, by practising the heroism and self-sacrifice of the devoted and faithful children of St. Bernard. The Reverend Father, unable to rely on any human aid, believed that it was the will of Almighty God that he should found another establishment, where the wants and aspirations of those numerous applicants could be fully realized. Nor was he by any means a stranger to such arduous and difficult undertakings, having already commissioned twenty-five of his brethren to penetrate the defiles of the Dark Continent, and establish a monastic institution on the order of La Trappe, amid the savage and barbarous associations of the African wilds.

Notwithstanding the constant appeals that were made on Melleray, for members to recruit the ranks of those heroic pioneers of the Christian faith, whose numbers were frequently diminished by the hardships and diseases so characteristic of that benighted region, there yet remained a large number who were willing and ready to undertake the establishment of a new retreat, in more distant and favorable climes. It was not, therefore, subjects, but means, that were wanting for this heroic enterprise. Melleray Abbey suffered from the political crisis of that revolutionary period, and, hence, found itself at that moment without any pecuniary resources. Yet, confiding in the providence of God, never found wanting to those who trust therein, the Rev. Father Abbot formed the resolution to make room in his house for those to whose prayers for admittance he could no longer remain deaf, by sending a colony of his religious abroad, to found a new monastery.

For this purpose it was important to choose a suitable place. Several of the bishops of France, learning of this project, invited to their respective dioceses this band of solitaries. But France, always in the turmoil of revolutions, offered no guarantee for the future prospects of religious orders. At the advice of several wise and intelligent friends, among whom was M. de Courson, Superior of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, at Paris, and M. Morel, Superior of the Grand Seminary at Nantes, the Rev. Father Abbot, Dom. Maxime, deemed it prudent to look abroad, in order to secure a place of refuge for the children of St. Benedict, who might be exiled by the revolutionary storms of that unhappy period. He turned his gaze to the interior of North America. The United States struck him as the most suitable country for the execution of his project, and so much the more, since several bishops of the New World ardently desired to have the Trappists in their dioceses, in order to dignify the humble avocations of labor by the work of their hands, and awaken the slumbering faith of their fellow-man by the severity of their vigils, fasts and discipline.

On May 26, 1848, Father M. Paulin and Father Paul set out for the New World, for the purpose of finding there a suitable place for the establishment of their order. The two delegates embarked at Havre on the first of June, and, after a tempestuous voyage of forty days, arrived in the city of New York. Thence they proceeded by slow stages to the city of Louisville, then, as now, the most prosperous city in the State of Kentucky. Mgr. Flaget, of happy and saintly memory, had, ten years previously, transferred his episcopal see from Bardstown to this more promising city on the banks of the Ohio. It was, accordingly, to this venerable prelate, known to all France for his great virtues and saintly character, that Father Paulin and Father Paul presented themselves. This apostle of Kentucky, then eighty-six years of age, but in the full enjoyment of all his faculties, received the two travellers as his children and ambassadors of heaven, for the purpose of establishing what he so much desired, a Trappist Monastery, within the territory of his jurisdiction. With heartfelt joy he received them in his arms, and, with tears of gratitude, expressed to them the happiness he would feel at seeing, before his death, a house of the Trappists erected in his diocese. He did not stop at words, but despite his great age, gave all the encouragement and assistance he possibly could. Mgr. Spalding, his coadjutor, was as anxious for the establishment as the venerable Mgr. Flaget. This saintly bishop, not having, to his deep regret, a single place to offer for

this foundation, authorized his secretary, M. Lavalie, to accompany Father Paulin, that together they might seek, in the whole State of Kentucky, a suitable location for the home of the Trappists.



**THE ABBEY OF GETHSEMANI,**  
NELSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY.

After having visited several places, the two prospectors finally arrived at a place called Loretto, where sisters of the same name conducted a



large boarding school. This institution is about eighteen miles southeast of Bardstown. Here Father Paulin found the Rev. Father Deuparc, Superior and Director of the Community with all its possessions.

M. Deuparc, learning the project of Fathers Paulin and Laviolle, informed them that the sisters had, about nine miles west, a large property of fourteen hundred acres, on which those devout and holy women conducted an orphan asylum. This property, called Gethsemani, he was ready to offer to the Trappists, if it proved suitable for the new foundation. M. Deuparc offered to accompany Father Paulin and M. Laviolle (Father Paul remained at Louisville), should they wish to visit Gethsemani. The proposition was accepted, the place visited and inspected, and proved to be in every way a suitable location for the establishment of a Trappist Monastery.

The situation of this community is really charming. Separated from everything calculated to disturb the silence so dear to Cistercian Religious, it stood on the declivity of a secluded knoll facing the sun. It had for its horizon a wide circumference of towering peaks, crowned with magnificent trees, some of which were from sixty to eighty feet in height. Between these little mountains and the house were large fields, neglected, it is true, but capable of improvement. Abundant sources of limpid and delightful water are found at every hill side, field and valley. This, in itself, is certainly a luxury for the cattle, especially during the great heat, which is here excessive, during the three or four months of Summer. Several of these streams, converging in a large dale, afford sufficient water power to operate a flour mill, threshing machine and saw mill. Adjoining this pond were several rolling fields, which, with a little cultivation, could be made some of the very finest meadow lands.

These advantages were fascinating to Father Paulin. One thing alone seemed to mar the prospect, the want of sufficient buildings, as old age and neglect had begun to tell on the ones already in use. Nevertheless, with some changes and little additions, the regular places could at least be made, temporarily, into chapel, refectory, dormitory, cloister, chapter-room and kitchen. The cabins of the colored people would serve as workshops for the brothers.

Father Paulin concluded to enter into a contract with M. Deuparc, in the hope that, later on, a suitable monastery could be built on the property, which contained every material necessary for its erection. The contract was agreed upon for \$5,000 (20,000 francs), subject, however, to the consent of the Rev. Father Abbot, of Melleray, which approba-

tion Father Paulin stipulated as a condition *sine qua non*. The report was immediately sent to the Abbot of Melleray, who received it at the general chapter. It was read before all the Abbots assembled. With unanimous voice the report was approved, and the foundation and possession of Gethsemani ratified and confirmed.

The Sisters were to occupy the house until the arrival of the Trappists. Affairs being thus arranged, Father Paul returned to Melleray, and Father Paulin remained for the purpose of harvesting the crops, which he bought with the property, and of planting the wheat for the following year. In this labor he was ably assisted by colored servants, generously placed at his disposal by Mgr. Flaget. Father Paul, with a more detailed account of the undertaking, arrived at Melleray on the 12th of February, 1849. The Rev. Father Abbot at first intended to send his religious in bands of eight or ten, and thirty more the following Spring; but, following the advice of Father Paul, he concluded to send all at once, so that they might arrive at their new home before the rigors of the Winter season.

He then chose those who were to comprise the new colony. Among all designated to take part in the perilous, yet glorious undertaking, he found to his satisfaction the greatest self-denial and devotion. All declared that they had no other desire than to accomplish the design of Almighty God, which was manifested to them in the choice of their highest superior. But, as the Rev. Father Abbot did not wish to interfere with the liberties of any of his children, he left all free in determining their choice. To this kind indulgence there was, however, a single exception, in the case of one who was not at liberty to decline the burden of chief, imposed upon him by his kind superior.

After the departure of Father Paulin, whom I succeeded with much reluctance in the capacity of Prior in the Abbey of Melleray, I was far from foreseeing that a duty still more painful was in store for me. Contrary to my expectation, I was designated in the list of emigrants, and not the last in the rank, where I deservedly belonged; but was bidden to direct and lead to the New World the little colony of Trappists. This order was for me the more terrible, inasmuch as it was not and could not be foreseen. Vainly did I object, pray and entreat. I could not effect a recall of the sentence. I had to submit and bear the burden of the charge, notwithstanding my protestations and the inmost conviction of my incapacity for such a mission. Accordingly, I became resigned and offered my sacrifice to the God of Gethsemani, repeating with Him,

“Father, not my will, but Thine, be done.” Prostrate at the feet of Mary, my mother and patroness, I besought her, with St. Joseph, her august spouse, to take under their powerful protection the new foundation, and the long and perilous journey we were about to undertake, for the purpose of demonstrating to the enemies of our religion, the devotion and self-sacrifice with which the Catholic faith inspires and animates the children of St. Bernard.

My band was composed of forty religious, sixteen choir fathers and twenty-four lay-brothers. The time of departure was fixed for the 26th of October, so that when I received the order charging me with the expedition, I had only eight or ten days to make the necessary preparation. There was, however, little delay, for poverty has few preparations to make. Thanks to the activity and zeal of the religious who remained, as well as of those about to depart, all were ready for the appointed day. Two days before, namely, the 24th, the baggage was conveyed to Nantes to be placed on board the steamer from Tours, which should take up the religious at Ancenis, where, by agreement, we were to go on foot. Father Emmanuel, procurator of the New Community, departed eight days before for Havre, to arrange for the passage and to purchase the necessary provisions for the voyage.

The evening before the departure, the Rev. Father Abbot, calling the emigrants into the large hall of the library, gave them his last exhortation, which was most paternal and touching. At the end of the instruction, he gave me the act for the erection of the foundation, together with my title of Prior of the New Community. Each religious was provided with a passport, which the prefect of the lower Loire had granted us gratuitously. The ceremony of leave-taking was arranged for the morning of the next day. For that day, no change was made regarding the rising at night, or the office. The night office being performed, the religious went to bid adieu to all those places, the scenes so dear to them, then ascended to the dormitory, where each one found, at his couch, secular clothes, with a small package containing two blankets, which he was to attach to a regular cincture, and which would serve him for a bed during the journey.

After putting on their secular dress, the fathers placed their cowls over them and the lay-brothers their cloaks, so that they appeared again in community, without rendering their new dress visible. Thus were prime and chapter celebrated as usual. All the community assisted at chapter, when the Reverend Father pronounced a few words regarding

the voyage. The chapter being terminated, all repaired to the church, where the bells in loudest tone called us. The remaining religious took their accustomed places, while those departing, having each under his arm, his bed for the voyage, placed themselves kneeling, in two lines from the presbytery to the middle of the choir. Under the sanctuary lamp, I was at the head between both lines, then the Rev. Father Abbot, having put on the cope, solemnly blessed the wooden cross, under the auspices of which we should go on our mission to the New World, and which should accompany us to Gethsemani.

I had this cross made after the model of that found at Melleray on entering the door of the church, which is looked on with the greatest veneration and for a very good reason ; because this was the very same cross that our brothers carried with them to the holy valley in Switzerland, when the revolution of 1793 drove them from France. It was their companion in Germany, Poland, Russia and England, when the tempestuous revolutions, becoming almost universal, drove them to all these points. It is without ornament and of the plainest kind of work. Its height is one metre and sixty centimetres. Both crosses were placed together. The Reverend Father, on arriving at a certain distance from the presbytery, gave them to me. Kneeling, I received them with respect. While he sprinkled with holy water the one destined for me, I watered it with my tears ; for it is impossible for me to express the feelings of my soul at that most solemn moment.

So great was my emotion that I could scarcely support the cross, whose weight seemed to me as a mountain. But I felt my courage and strength return at the thought that it was far less heavy than the cross of my Saviour, which I had so often weighed down by the weight of my miserable sins.

I renewed at that moment an entire offering of myself to God, and only considered myself in a greater degree a victim of the cross. I felt resigned to carry, in union with my Divine Master, whatever He should be pleased to send me, and what I foresaw would be manifold, in the accomplishment of that mission which he had confided to me. After the benediction, I entrusted to a religious, P. Cyril, a deacon, the two crosses, which he was to carry to the place of separation. Then, every one arising, the chanter solemnly intoned the Canticle, Benedictus and the Itinerary, which were sung by both choirs. After the versicles and prayers, the procession marched out the central door of the church, the religious of the colony being in advance, preceded by the two

wooden crosses. Outside of the ranks, I marched at the side of the Rev. Father Abbot, between the religious who were departing and those remaining at Melleray.

On departing from the church, the chanter intoned the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, which was continued to the place of separation. The passage from the church is into the large court yard, then through the farm yard ; but, on departing from the cloister, one passes the garden of the Blessed Virgin at the east. The rain which fell at that moment, and to which no one paid attention, seemed to add something to the grandeur of the scene, so replete with so much solemnity for the Abbey of Melleray. For my part, I recognized in the rain a symbol of the grace which flowed into our souls to sustain us in the trials reserved for us, and of which this little inclemency of the weather was but a prelude. The procession halted at the edge of a small wood, near a cross, situated about one kilometre from the Abbey. Then took place a most touching scene, which had no other witness than the angels of heaven and the birds of the forest. It was to see children departing, never again to see their most tender father—it was to behold brothers giving for the last time the kiss of peace, which they were wont so often to give at the foot of the holy altar, before receiving in Holy Communion the God of peace—it was to witness those who, for ten, fifteen and twenty years having lived most intimately, were now about to depart, never again to behold one another in this world.

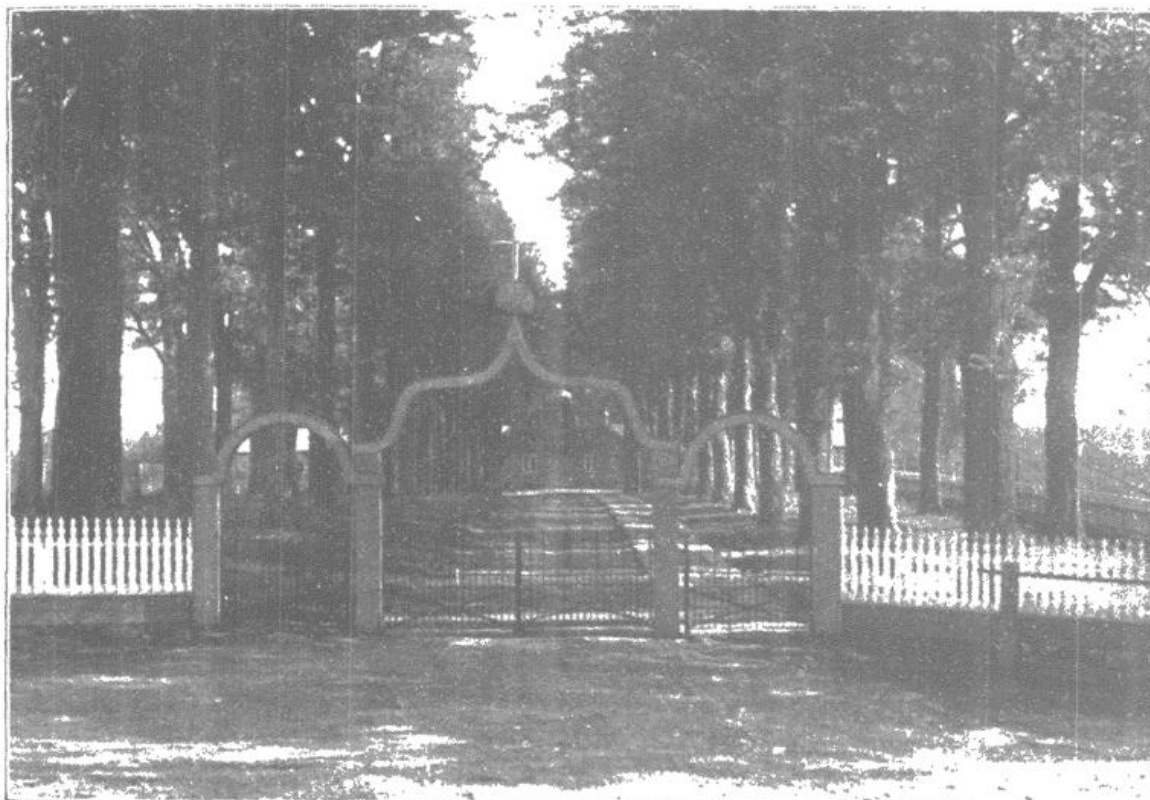
One consoling thought, meanwhile, dominated all hearts and soothed the bitterness of separation—it was the thought of being again reunited and finding a rendezvous in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, while awaiting the happiness to find themselves, in reality, never again separated in the Kingdom of God, promised to those who shall have abandoned everything for His service.

There, by a little wood, at the foot of the cross, whose vision upheld their courage, the religious of the new colony took off their regular habits, which covered the secular ones, to entrust them to their well-beloved brothers and fathers about to take them back to the Abbey, like those returning with sorrowful hearts after having conducted a friend to the tomb, bringing back in silence the mortuary robe that enshrouded the remains of their departed friend.

This unrobing, which metamorphosed the new colony of religious into seculars, produced a magical effect on the minds of all. This costume was so new to the greater part of the good religious, several of whom

had not worn it for nineteen or twenty years, that they could scarcely recognize themselves in it. Before leaving our fathers and brothers, we passed along the ranks, giving to all the kiss of farewell, which was done with that silence, so religiously observed by the Trappists, that it was only broken by the moaning and sobbing of a large number, notwithstanding their abnegation and perfect submission to the will of God.

The Rev. Father Abbot separated the two wooden crosses, giving me the new one. We greeted the community in silence and departed on



AVENUE LEADING TO MONASTERY.

our journey to Ancenis. I ranged my new family in two lines, placing myself at the head, while bearing on my shoulders my precious wooden cross, of which I did not wish to be deprived till arriving at Ancenis, although the distance was eight leagues, and the weight of the cross for such a distance was oppressive. But the thought of the true cross, that which was the instrument of my salvation, and which was reddened with the blood of my Saviour, always fortified my courage and sustained my strength.

Our journey from Melleray to Ancenis was a mystery to all who saw us pass by. And, indeed, what could one think, on seeing forty men

walking in two lines, with the greatest recollection, the greater part with beads in hand and walking stick, and preceded by a priest (for I wore the ecclesiastical dress), who bore on his shoulders a large plain wooden cross ! This sight was a surprise to every one. In the towns and villages, groups were formed, asking with concern (especially the women), who are these ? But none could satisfy these questions. The good country people, who worked in the field, ran to the procession to satisfy their curiosity. Seeing our wooden cross, and the beads in our hands, they fell on their knees and, without knowing who we were, recommended themselves to our prayers. They saw the object of piety ; that was sufficient for the faithful men of Vendée, who have always retained the greatest veneration for everything bearing a religious character. We had placed our packages and some necessaries in a wagon, that preceded us about one hundred steps.

After having marched two leagues, we stopped in a little valley, to take some nourishment. Spreading a cloth upon the grass, we placed upon it some bread and cheese, all the religious placed themselves in a semi-circle, and I said grace over this rustic table. Two brothers were charged to distribute, the one bread and the other cheese ; while one of the religious, sitting on the grass, gave the spiritual reading, appropriate for the occasion. It treated of our Saviour taking supper with His disciples, and afterwards going to the garden of Gethsemani, there to commence His sorrowful passion. We are also on our way to Gethsemani, where much has to be suffered. The two leagues that we had walked fasting gave all a vigorous appetite. The rural breakfast was delicious. No fragments were left to gather up. Fortified by this double viaticum of body and soul, we proceeded on our journey with new ardor, after having thanked God for the first instalment of His liberality, during our voyage.

In passing the little town of Laille, four leagues from Melleray, we entered for a moment the church, to refresh ourselves before the Blessed Sacrament, when each one made to God an offering of the little fatigue he commenced to feel. After a quarter of an hour's visit to the Good Master, whom we were fortunate to meet on the way, we continued our journey for Ancenis, where we arrived at six in the evening, totally exhausted with fatigue. Nor could it be otherwise, since we were not accustomed to such marches. We went directly to the Castle of Ecochire, situated about one kilometre from the village, and on the top of a magnificent hillock, covered with vines and green trees. There we met our Rev.

Father Abbot, who, wishing to accompany us to the steamer, went in advance, taking in his carriage two or three of the most feeble religious, who scarcely could have made the journey on foot.

By a very singular coincidence, the Most Rev. Abbot of Grande Trappe, Vicar-General of the Congregation, who came from the Abbey of Bellefontaine to that of Melleray, to make his religious visit, was then at the castle. Madame d'Ecochire invited us to await at her castle, the arrival of the steamer from Nantes to Ancenis, due in about eight hours. This excellent family, having the greatest interest in the Trappists, prepared for us a rich and copious supper, where nothing was wanting except meat, the use of which is not allowed by our holy rule, even outside the monastery, except in case of sickness. After supper our Rev. Father Abbot conducted us to the Church of Ancenis, where the parish priest invited us to sing the *Salve* of La Trappe. Here I cannot omit some expressions of Madame d'Ecochire, which show the liveliness of her faith and her devotion to religion, while at the same time it reveals the Ven-dean character. Seeing me take my cross, to place myself at the head of my little colony, "Ah, my Father," she said to me with energy and enthusiasm, "what a beautiful mission is yours; were I a man you would have an additional soldier. I would ask a place in your ranks; I would march, following your cross, to go and show your labors and your merits in that Gethsemani of the United States." We went from the castle to the church in the midst of darkness, and under a rain that had continued to pour. The Sunday preceding, the parish priest had announced our coming, and the ceremony that would take place before embarking. His church, brilliantly illuminated, was decorated as on the greatest festival. It was already so full of people that the guards, who awaited us at the central door, could scarcely succeed in conducting us through the nave into the sanctuary. The emotion was great, both among the religious and faithful, when they saw me advancing with my wooden cross, which I bore on my shoulder. People were so anxious to see us, that those farthest away climbed on the chairs, and some even on the shoulders of their neighbors, so that both sides of the church formed a kind of amphitheatre. Having arrived in the sanctuary, the religious placed themselves in a semi-circle at the gospel side. The Most Rev. Vicar-General, the Rev. Father Maxime and myself, all clothed in cowl, placed ourselves on a small elevation at the epistle side. The Vicar-General commenced Complin, which was sung in a grave and solemn tone. After Complin, the chanter intoned the *Salve*, which everyone was anxious to hear, and



which, happily, we sung so as to edify the faithful. The enthusiasm caused among the religious, by the circumstances of the time and place, doubled the volume of voice, and the harmony was perfect. •

The *Salve* was followed by benediction of the most Blessed Sacrament. The ceremony being finished, I put off my cowl and, taking my cross, directed my religious to the port, where the vessel was every moment expected to arrive. Here my anxiety about the voyage began. Up to the present I had no great trouble. On departing from the church, the darkness was so dense, that one could not see a metre ahead, while the rain fell in torrents. This did not hinder a curious crowd from following and pressing on us on every side, and thus creating disorder in the ranks. Several of the religious lost the colony and found themselves mixed with the crowd, without being able to find me. In vain did I raise my voice and hold my cross above my head to unite them. They could neither see nor hear me, on account of the darkness and the noise made by the surging masses.

At length we arrived at the port, where I wished to ascertain, by means of a light, if anyone was missing. I could not succeed in getting away from the crowd. I was obliged to unite them as best I could, in the apartment of a good lady, who, seeing my difficulty, kindly placed it at my disposal. I was happy to find on examination, the entire number of my religious. Unfortunately, the provisions, brought from Melleray, for the trip from Ancenis to Tours, were left at the Castle of Ecochire, and we had no time to return and get them, before the arrival of the vessel. I at once sent to the nearest baker and grocer, for bread and cheese ; but only sufficient for one meal could be had, although we would be twenty-four hours on the Loire.

The boat arrived at a quarter past eight ; but without our baggage, which could not be loaded in time at Nantes, but would arrive next day by another boat of the same company. There I had three religious wait, who were to accompany the baggage to Havre and hasten its transportation, since we were to embark there in the first week in November.

At the arrival of the boat I suffered a disappointment, which would have bereft me of all courage, had I less faith in Divine Providence. The Reverend Father, being at departure unable to furnish much money, had sent a brother to Nantes with a commission to borrow from 7,000 to 8,000 francs, which he was to bring me at Ancenis. I found this brother, indeed, on the boat, but without money. "My dear Father,"

said he, "I have no money to give you. It was impossible for me to obtain any. The person who promised us was unable to obtain the sum on which he counted, and I was unable to find any with the notary." This misreckoning can be understood, if one considers that we were in the beginning of the Republic. Then money became so scarce that the proprietors were obliged to borrow the wages of their servants for the daily expenses of their houses. Here was room for anxiety. What was I to do? I found myself on a long journey with forty religious. I had now made eight leagues; but there were yet 2,500 to be made before arriving at my destination. Scarcely had I sufficient to take us to Havre and pay for the transportation of our baggage. At first somewhat disconcerted, I said on reflection: Here is the first trial. Others will follow. He who sent them to me will, I hope, give me power to bear them! If the good God wishes the success of this undertaking, He will know full well how to find the means of making it successful. Accordingly, I encouraged myself, going on with my work and reserving to myself to make on the way arrangements with the different companies, from which I expected to obtain a reduction in the fare of our journey.

Before embarking we took our last farewell of our Superiors, who accompanied us to the quay, giving us their last benediction. The passengers on the steamer were no less astounded than the country people. They saw a band of men conducting themselves, not in a worldly fashion, wearing the same costume, observing the most profound silence, having for baggage only a little package of blankets, and in their midst a priest, bearing a wooden cross, for which all seemed to have the most profound veneration. I relieved these passengers of their anxiety, telling them who we were and the object of our journey. Their astonishment was changed to admiration, while all eulogized our devotion. Soon we settled down to rest as best we could, some on the benches, some in their blankets spread over the boards of the vessel, and in these new beds, a little different from our regular ones, all tasted a sweet repose, which refreshed the strength exhausted by the fatigue of the previous day. The silence, always rigorous, was faithfully observed during the entire voyage. On every countenance could be read the happiness with which each was inspired by the sacrifices made for the honor and glory of God.

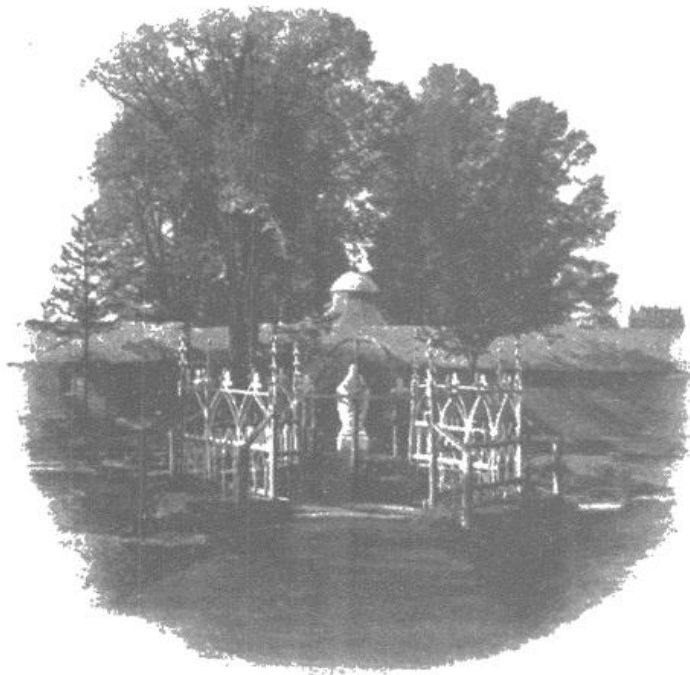
At breakfast, the next morning, all the colony had a good appetite. The provisions, hastily procured at Ancenis, shortly disappeared, nor do I know if they were sufficient. However, no one complained and all

seemed satisfied. At dinner time we approached Saumur. During the short time that the boat was unloading and taking on new passengers, I thought we could obtain some new provisions. I had in my little band some old soldiers, who had been on garrison at Saumur, and knew the place perfectly well. To three of these good men I gave five francs each, with my instructions. No sooner had the boat landed, than my three quartermasters started off, one to the baker, one to the store, and one with a small keg to a wine merchant. In less than seven minutes we had on board forty pounds of bread, a large basket of excellent fruit and a dozen bottles of wine, which we trebled with water taken from the river. All this we got for twelve or thirteen francs, and it was sufficient to sustain us as far as Tours.

My good religious, accustomed to behold nothing else than the walls of the cloister, contemplated with admiration the rich hillocks of the Loire, which are so charming to travellers. They admired especially the houses cut out and dug in the side of the hills and thanked divine providence for affording these good and humble people, such comfortable dwellings, as hardly ever needed repairs. At six o'clock in the evening we arrived at Tours. My great difficulty was still before me. I had to conduct my forty religious, by rail, to Havre, passing through Paris. I was frightened at the thought of the expense of such a journey. The fare of the boat had already made a considerable demand on my slender purse, and my resources were far below my sanguine expectations. In my embarrassment, I invoked the aid of heaven, through the merits of the cross, which led us through the old world, as the bright cloud formerly led the Hebrews through the desert to the land of promise. The Saviour heard my prayer, and inspired me with a resolution, which I immediately put into execution. By an agreement with the captain of the boat, who took a great interest in us during the entire voyage, I left my religious on the vessel, promising to return to them in half an hour. In all haste, I went to the railroad station at Tours and asked an interview with the station master. The employee to whom I addressed myself told me that the station master could not be seen. It was his dinner hour and no one could see him then. This answer somewhat disconcerted me, for I had not a moment to lose. The conveyance was about to depart and the subalterns could grant me no favor. Assuming a grave and serious air, I said to the employee, "Sir, it is by all means necessary that I speak with the station master, before the departure of the train for Paris. I have the most important affair to transact with him." The

solemn tone of these words made him believe that such an affair regarded the business of the company. Without hesitating, he at once led me to the director in chief, whom I found, in reality, at dinner with his wife and little girl. He received me with much politeness, and interrupted his dinner to take me to a small room adjoining the parlor. I was disappointed that he did not permit me to state the object of my visit and make my request, in the presence of his wife. I said to myself, women have generally a good and sympathetic heart. Should she hear me, she might perhaps serve as an advocate.

Being the last to enter the little room, I left the door ajar, and spoke



GARDEN IN FRONT OF MONASTERY.

sufficiently loud to be heard by her. After having excused myself for interrupting his dinner, I made known to him the object of my visit. "Good sir, I am conducting a band of Trappists, one of whom I am myself. Forty of us are on our way to Kentucky, in the United States of America, where for the sake of religion, we intend to establish a Monastery of our Order. You are, doubtless, aware, sir, who the Trappists are. Poor religious agriculturists, who make a living by the sweat of their brow, and who often deprive themselves of the necessaries of life, that they may bestow upon the needy. I come, therefore, in the

name of religion and humanity, to appeal to your heart and ask you to aid us in our undertaking, by reducing our fare. My forty religious are, at present, on board the vessel, which has just arrived from Nantes, and I am going back to bring them to the station, so that we may be in time to depart for Paris on the first train." The station master listened to me with much interest, admired our devotion, and overwhelmed me with eulogies, saying that he should be happy to share in so excellent a work, by helping us as much as he could. He told me that we need only pay third class fare, while we could ride in the second. I thanked him for his kindness, but did not stop at that. I told him, that since he wished to do us a favor, I would ask him to confer it, rather by a reduction in the fare, than in the quality of the apartment; that we were sufficiently inured to hardships, to accommodate ourselves to third class conveyance. I perceived that my request embarrassed and made him reflect. He said to me that, notwithstanding his good will, he could not grant my request, since he was not the sole administrator, and that he could not presume to thus transgress his power and break the regulations. I assured him, that, since he granted what was in his power, he should accept again the expression of my thanks. I then went to seek my religious, who impatiently awaited my return, as I had been absent longer than the time fixed. When I arrived at the quay, I formed them in two lines, each one having his little package under his left arm and a walking stick in his right hand. Taking my wooden cross and placing myself at the head of the band, we marched silently along the great streets of Tours.

It was the hour that ushers in the dying day, when the streets are crowded with people and, certainly, crowds were not wanting in that royal street through which we passed from one end to the other. The doors of shops and stores were filled with curious men and still more curious women. The crowd pressed forward in our path; and as it was at the beginning of the Republic, when people were always on the alert, even the police were puzzled. We were thought to be a band of insurgents. Every one asked, what kind of men are these, who appeared so extraordinary in their deportment and manner? Our silence made a wonderful impression upon them. Every one seemed to entertain for us respect. They spoke in a low tone, as if not wishing to disturb the calm and serenity they remarked in the countenances of our religious.

Meanwhile, they wished, at any cost, to learn who we were. The police, having the right to ask, approached the rear guard and asked the

last of our brothers, "Who are you, gentlemen? Where do you come from? and where are you going?" My good religious, accustomed to silence, not only did not answer, but did not even turn the head to see who addressed them these questions. And these curious interrogators, receiving no reply, not even a glance of the eye, turned toward the multitude, exclaiming: "Ah! gentleman, we have nothing to fear from these men. They are deaf mutes, who can neither talk nor understand." "No, no," said others, more prudent, "they are neither deaf nor mute, but are strangers, who do not answer you, because they do not know



THE EAST WING OF THE MONASTERY.

French." "Not at all," replied a third class, "they are neither deaf mute, nor strangers, but they are men who live together in the same house without ever speaking."

The last approached somewhat nearer the truth, nor did they discover who we really were, till we arrived at the depot. The entrance hall was so packed by the curious spectators, that the employees of the company had much difficulty in making a passage for us. I formed all my religious in a corner, forbidding them to mingle with the crowd. I approached the baggage room to place there my wooden cross. Perceiving right by me one of the first employees, observing with astonishment this new species of baggage, I showed it to him and said: "Sir, behold our flag.

Under its banner we march to the New World, to carry the blessings of Christian civilization to the poor inhabitants of the American forest." This man made me the admirable and animated answer of profound faith. "Sir," he said, "it is the most precious part of your baggage." An answer that filled us with admiration, and proved to us that there are yet, sometimes, pious and lofty sentiments among men who seem to be wholly occupied with temporal affairs. As I was engaged in answering a number of people, who overwhelmed me with questions, an employee, in all haste, came to inform me that the chief of the station wished to see me in his office. I regarded the call as a good omen. I thought that, after I left, his wife had spoken to him, pleading our cause, and that the good God had inspired him with feelings of kindness toward us. I was not deceived, and hastened to answer the invitation. The director was alone in his office. Scarcely had he perceived me, when he said that, having reflected on the request I made, he could not help feeling admiration for our heroic and courageous undertaking. He ventured to take upon himself the responsibility of granting us a larger concession. Accordingly, he asked how many we were, and what we had paid on the boat. Having answered these questions, he said to me, after a few moments of reflection, that each of us should only pay the half of third-class fare. Afterwards, turning to the employee who accompanied me, and who awaited his orders, he said to him in a low voice, "You will take them in the second-class." In doing this he granted me more than I would have ventured to ask.

As soon as possible I returned God thanks from the bottom of my heart, and admired that paternal Providence, that never abandons those who invoke Him, and that changes at will the flinty hearts of men, to make them serve His adorable purpose. I was not deceived in thinking that the excellent lady, who, during her dinner, had heard me express my request to her husband, was an instrument of providence for us and pleaded our cause with the director.

Having obtained this favor, I could well hope to obtain a like one at the stations of Orleans and Paris, whose directors, doubtless, would not wish to be inferior in generosity to him of Tours. I thanked this benefactor of the poor emigrants of La Trappe, as well as I could. I paid him accordingly what he had stipulated. He gave me a ticket written in his own hand, at the foot of which, he mentioned the favor granted to us and indicated the number of passengers. On giving it to me he advised me not to give it up—to present it myself to the chief of the

station at Orleans, and make of him the same demand, without counting on success, but by no means to yield to despair.

I took leave of the director, to rejoin my companions in the waiting room. I found all these good brothers quite tranquil in the corner which I assigned them, attracting the attention of the crowd and awaiting my orders for departure.

Whilst at the office of the station master, a scene was enacted, to the great amusement of those who witnessed it. I had placed my cross on the counter of the baggage room. One of the employees, walking at the opposite side of the hall from the brothers, attracted by the curiosity of the cross, looked upon it with attention, while he himself was an object of the scrutiny of the brothers, whose eyes were riveted on him. He took it in his hands, as if to ascertain its weight, when, behold, one of the lay-brothers, a Breton, imagining, in the simplicity and ardor of his faith, that this man was about to carry off our cross and thus deprive us of the most precious article of all our baggage, and listening only to his zeal, dashed suddenly from the ranks of the brothers, and jumped the counter to tear away the cross from the hands of the employee, who was utterly dumfounded at the thought of being taken for a thief. Every one enjoyed the little incident and its process, except, of course, the employee. The affair being related to me on my return, it was easy for me to make the employee understand why the good brother had thus acted, believing, in the simplicity of his soul, that we were to be deprived of that cross, which was the most dear and precious article which we possessed. Discontent was changed into admiration, the employee seeing in the whole affair only the expression of a lively faith and the most profound attachment of that brother for the instrument of our salvation.

The hour of departure at length arrived. Our little baggage was weighed and numbered. We entered two second-class cars. The greater part of these dear brothers, never having seen a railroad (not even that on which they were then travelling, it being already night), were at first frightened at feeling themselves going so rapidly; they were, however, comforted at the thought that they had placed their voyage under the protection of her whom they loved so much to call their good mother, and who, doubtless, in the course of their long journey, would bestow on them many proofs of her powerful protection.

It was midnight when we arrived at Orleans. At the ticket station I informed the agent, who wanted my ticket, that I was the bearer of a ticket



made out for forty passengers, and told him that I had an order from the station master at Tours, to present the ticket personally to the station master at Orleans. The agent was not satisfied with such an answer, and informed me, in a dry tone, that it was necessary for him to demand the ticket. Not wishing any trouble, I gave him the ticket and, alighting from the cars, told him that since he absolutely demanded the ticket, I would give it to him ; but that I would accompany my ticket to the station master. I explained to him the reason of my action and he seemed satisfied.

We found the station master on the platform, near the waiting room. I explained my business in a few words, and asked him to grant us the same favor received at Tours. I presented my ticket, showing the reduction. He read and reread the ticket with a kind of astonishment and, after a moment's reflection, he asked me to accompany him to his office, where he gave an order to his agent to prepare immediately forty half-fare tickets. At this command the agent, turning in surprise, asked if we were a company of soldiers. I answered yes, saying that I was captain of the company. This was much of a puzzle to him, not being able to understand that a priest commands a military company. As a matter of fact, we were soldiers of another kind, who had for arms only the cross and prayer and who were going to acquire, not the perishable laurels of this world, but those immortal palms of triumph which thrive and flourish in the world beyond the tomb. Notwithstanding his surprise, the agent obeyed his chief, and, when I arranged the finances with the latter, the tickets were ready. I had received the same concession as at Tours, being placed in second-class carriages.

Provided with my tickets, I returned, with my cross as an emblem, to my company. I placed it in the midst of the coach, which was just its height. Four passengers, who found themselves in the presence of this cross, appeared thunder-struck on beholding themselves at the foot of a Calvary, whilst on the cars. So great was their surprise, that during the whole journey they did not utter a word.

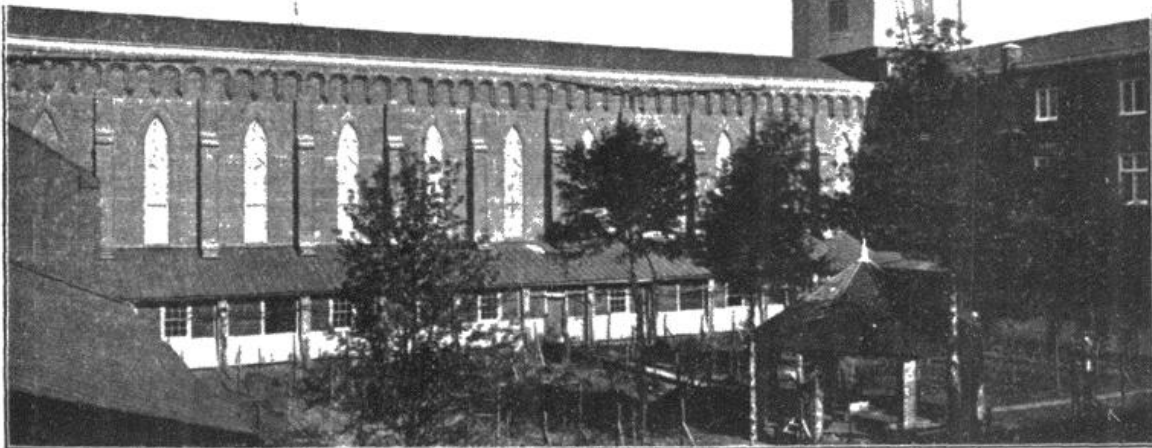
We arrived at Paris at five o'clock, as the day began to dawn. Here we met another problem. What was to be done with my company? Where was I to conduct my forty religious, with baggage, at such an early hour, when no one was yet up? Necessity, the mother of invention, helped to find a means. Here is how I got out of the difficulty.

I asked the train hands at the station to have the kindness to permit my companions, with their baggage, to remain in the waiting-room of

the station for a few hours, promising to come back for them about seven or eight o'clock. The request was granted without any trouble. Then I left my band under the direction of a religious and started to find a lodging for my flock, whilst I would be engaged in making arrangements with the railroad officers, for the trip to Havre.

Not knowing where to turn, the thought struck me to apply at the Holy Ghost Seminary, whose worthy superior had been the previous year at the Abbey of Melleray, where he pronounced an edifying discourse before the entire community. But how was I to find out the Seminary? I knew neither the locality nor the street, nor could I find any one to inform me. I passed along the wall of a flower garden at the station, in the hope that an angel Raphael would relieve my embarrassment, when, behold, I saw by the light of the lamps some one coming towards me. On seeing me he stopped short, as if to inquire if I had need of his service. I advanced towards him. He was a young man about fifteen or sixteen years of age. I asked him if he knew the Seminary of the Holy Ghost. "Yes, sir, I know it very well, and, if you wish, I will conduct you to it." I considered this meeting as providential. After having passed several small streets, each of which was darker than the other, we arrived at the Seminary, where no one was yet up. I waited a half hour before I could obtain entrance. At length the porter heard me and opened the door. I requested to speak with the superior, and he asked, "Is it the Monseigneur you want?" At the word Mon-

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INNER COURT OF MONASTERY.

seigneur, I thought I was in the wrong place; but no, I was really at the Seminary of the Holy Ghost, whose superior, Father Mennet, was appointed Bishop of Madagascar, and who was then making his retreat for consecration, which was to take place in eight days' time.

When Monseigneur Mennet arose, I was introduced to his Lordship, who received me with with great kindness. His affection was redoubled when I told him I was a Trappist religious from Melleray. This holy bishop took me in his arms and showed me the kindness of a father. "Monseigneur," said I to him, "I am the guide and father of a colony of Trappists, all from Melleray. We are going to Kentucky in the United States, to the diocese of Monseigneur Flaget, to labor there as well as we can, for the purpose of bettering the spiritual and temporal condition of the inhabitants of that new vineyard of the Catholic Church. My companions are now at the railroad station. It will be necessary for me to spend the day in Paris, to provide some things necessary for our journey. I do not know what to do to obtain a place for them, I cannot take them to a hotel, because it is difficult to get lodging for so many in the same house, nor will the narrow limits of my purse justify the necessary expenditure, even for one day. If Monseigneur has at his disposal a little yard, where my religious could spend the day, he would render us a great service and acquire a new title to our esteem and gratitude." Monseigneur Mennet had no sooner understood me, then he kindly said to me: "Nothing is easier than to grant your request. I am only too happy to render you this little service. We have a yard entirely free, and it is at your disposal. Go and bring your religious. Meanwhile I will go and have their breakfast prepared. If among the brothers there are any who are tired from the journey, we have beds where they can take rest."

Having expressed my thanks, I went to find the brothers, who were already anxious on account of my absence, for it was more than two hours since I had left them. Immediately joy was visible on every face. Each one seized instantly his package and walking stick. As it was far from the station to the Seminary of the Holy Ghost, I procured a carriage for the four weakest, who went on in advance.

For a moment I hesitated to do at Paris what I did at Tours, viz : to pass the streets in an army corps, with the cross at my head. We were no longer in the province, but at Paris, the city of revolutions. Perhaps we would expose our cross to insults, to carry it through the streets at the head of so strange a battalion. At last I said to myself : "After all,

what shall I fear? It is the cross that has civilized the Old World. It is under the banner of the cross that we go on our missions to the new. Why hide it on our journey? It is necessary that everyone should bear witness to its noble mission and triumph." At these reflections I placed my little band in line along the pavement, placing myself at the head, with my hat in one hand and the cross in the other. Thus we proceeded observing perfect silence. It being the hour when men and women were going to work, the streets were crowded. I was not disappointed in thinking that the Parisians would respect the cross. I wished to know what it was in those hearts that had urged them to such excesses during the storms of the revolution. Among them I discovered a feeling of deep respect for those who wore the religious garb. Everywhere along the route the cross received evidences of the most profound veneration. Every one, indiscriminately, stood in astonishment before this wooden cross and saluted it with respect. The soldiers at the guard house placed themselves in line and made the sign of the cross, while the women knelt and did in like manner. This spectacle, so consoling to a religious heart, moved me so much that I was transported beyond myself. I became so bewildered that I did not recognize the streets I travelled in the morning. But my good angel came to my aid, and, without knowing it, I arrived by different streets at the Seminary of the Holy Ghost. I had my charge rest in a large hall adjoining the chapel. Then I prepared to say Mass, which my little community attended with much fervor, after two nights passed in the worry of travel and without sleep.

Breakfast was served in the refectory, where I conducted my little band, who were now at ease. After breakfast I gave them some directions and started for the railroad station for Havre, where I hoped to obtain the same favor that I had received at Tours and Orleans. On passing by the Seine, I saw a colony of eight hundred Parisians, who were embarking to colonize Algiers. At the sight of those men and women who were going, it was said, to reclaim the desert of Africa, I paid them my tribute of admiration for their daring, but without counting on the success of the undertaking. And, indeed, an officer, lately arrived from Algiers, told me that all those attempts had completely failed—that the only expedition, that of Stavuëli, directed by the Trappists, had succeeded and was in a flourishing condition.

Thus had experience demonstrated that for agriculture something else is needed besides modern appliances. The government had even made a difference in the field of labor, between the children of St. Bernard and the colonists from Paris.

At the railroad station I sought an interview with the director. Being introduced to him, he received me with much courtesy and an equal amount of interest. I made the same request of him that I had made of his two colleagues at Tours and Orleans, to whose generosity I was so much indebted. Nothing else was necessary to my success, as I appealed to a noble, generous heart, which was equal to the others in assisting me on my journey. He granted what I asked without any difficulty, assuring me that he deemed it a happiness to aid in a work so noble and beautiful, for the glory of religion and humanity, and which demanded, on our part, so much heroism and devotion.

As at Tours and Orleans, I had only to pay half third-class fare, with the privilege of riding second-class. I selected the eleven o'clock train at night for departing, as I had need of all the day at Paris. But how about the community at the seminary? I could not leave them there until that late hour without causing inconvenience to my kind host. Something, therefore, was to be done.

I knew at Paris a very excellent and respectable family, Mr. Riant, a notary, whose house adjoined the railroad station for Havre, and who possessed large and beautiful apartments, with a park and magnificent gardens enclosed by a wall. I visited Mr. Riant and proposed to him to bring there my charge at the beginning of the night, to remain with him till the train left for Havre. Mr. Riant, whose noble heart and generous feelings are known to all Paris, and who joyfully seizes every occasion to do good, willingly desired to give me a new proof of his goodness of heart, by placing at my disposal one of the large halls to lodge my people while awaiting the departure of the train. Having finished some of my business in the city, I returned to the seminary at six in the evening. As night had commenced, and fearing that I would lose my religious in the crowded streets, I hired six carriages, which conveyed us all to Mr. Riant's. We had yet more than three hours before train time. I took advantage of this to finish my business in the city. Twice during the day I visited the Seminary of St. Sulpice, without being able to see the venerable Superior, Mr. de Courson, of happy and saintly memory. I wished, by all means, to see him, not only to thank him for a magnificent remembrance, which he had the kindness to send me, but also to consult with him regarding my new mission. Accordingly I presented myself for the third time, about eight o'clock in the evening, at the Seminary of St. Sulpice. This time I was rewarded by finding him in company with Mgr. Change, Bishop of Natchez, in the province of

Mississippi, who had come to France to recruit his small number of clergy, having as yet only six priests for his vast diocese.

Mr. de Courson received me with that kindness which every one knew he possessed, and which rendered his conversation so charming. He imparted to me wise counsels and encouraged me to persevere in the work undertaken, a work which should produce the most happy results for religion and civilization in the New World. Mgr. Change spoke to me of the beautiful country which we were soon to inhabit, and inflamed my soul, telling me of all the good which was to be done there. This holy bishop gave me his blessing, which was for me the assurance of a happy voyage. I took leave of his Lordship and Mr. de Courson and returned to Mr. Riant.

My religious were in profound sleep, some on the couches and others on the carpets in the hall. At eleven o'clock I went to call Mr. Riant, who wished to come down and say good-by to my little community. Having thanked him for the great service he had rendered us, we departed for the Amsterdam station, where the travellers were no less puzzled than at Tours on seeing forty men arrive, drawn up in two lines, headed by a wooden cross and observing profound silence and recollection. Having received and paid for my tickets, we passed into the waiting room. I was very fortunate in finding a place for thirty religious in one corner, and took the rest with me in the same compartment of another.

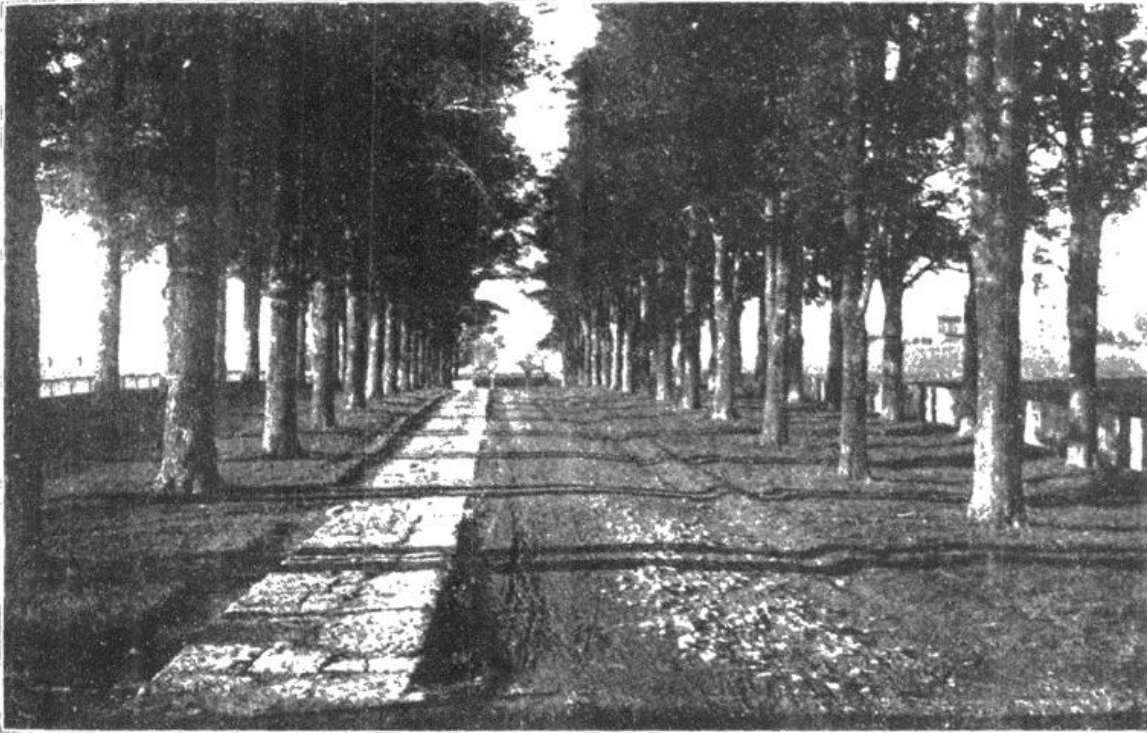
It was six o'clock in the morning when we arrived at Havre. On leaving the train we went directly to the Hospice of Ingouville, where notice had been given of our arrival and where people awaited us. Not knowing the road we should take, we proceeded as best we could along the boulevards, so that we had to make a course of almost two kilometres. At Havre, as at Tours and Paris, I placed my men in two lines, walking at their head with my wooden cross. The astonishment of the beholders was greater than anywhere else. For, besides the novelty of forty men, marching with gravity and the most profound silence, there was the additional circumstance, that the rain fell in torrents, and that we seemed about as insensible to its battering as if we had been under a most delightful sun. The people believed us to be water proof, while we were drenched to the skin. We arrived at the Hospice, like bathers coming from the sea. Notwithstanding the rain, I marched with uncovered head, out of respect for the cross I bore. Accordingly, my hair became the receptacle of small drops of water. At the Hospice we

waited a few moments on the porch, where the Superioress, Madame de France, came to receive us. This venerable lady informed me that, from the time she observed us in such a condition, with our cross always at the head, she was impressed with different feelings of veneration, pity and compassion. She could not help feeling bad. She came and saluted us with a profound bow. She received us with that goodness and charity so characteristic of the daughters of St. Thomas of Villanova. She conducted us into two large halls, each containing twenty beds, and in which were two large stoves, with fire, to warm ourselves and dry our clothes.

My religious were so worn out with fatigue, having passed almost three nights without sleep, that the beds were preferable to aught else, even to the table, notwithstanding the necessity of eating, and the entreaties made by our pious and charitable hostess, urging us to take some refreshments. To tell all the care lavished on us by these saintly women, during the five or six days we remained at the Hospice, before taking the vessel for the United States, would be an impossible task. It is sufficient to behold those houses, governed by Christian virgins, whose devotion amounts to heroism, and whose every action has for its principle and ends the glory of God, if one would form an idea of that charity with which we were received and treated. I remember in a special manner the zeal and energy of that good Mother Bensel, who had for each one of us the care of a mother for her children. A young orphan twelve years of age, whom I had under my protection and was taking with me to America, was the special object of the tenderness of these ladies. Seeing him a sharer in the poverty of my little community, who had scarcely the necessaries of life, they failed not to make him an outfit, in which nothing was overlooked. I believe that he recognized this material kindness, for afterwards he often spoke of these good ladies, and always with accents full of gratitude.

We arrived at Havre on the last Friday of October, and we were to set sail for New Orleans on the following Wednesday, All Souls' Day. As soon as we arrived, I procured food and other things necessary for the voyage, I arranged with the officers of the boat, and everything was in readiness for the first of November. But new trials were in store for me, before quitting France, as also aboard the vessel and beyond the sea. I was charged to conduct to Havre the religious, among whom were three seculars, on whose fidelity I had reason to count, but who, on arriving at their destination, failed in the fulfilment of their engage-

ments, as I shall afterwards explain. Our baggage came after us, I had left three religious to accompany it, charging them to hasten its transportation to Havre, where they were to arrive on Sunday, the 29th or October, three days before the departure of the boat. Our baggage was cumbersome, consisting of spades, ploughs and other instruments of agriculture, in all amounting in weight to twelve or fifteen thousand pounds. It was, therefore, impossible for me to take charge of conducting both persons and material. For this purpose I deputed three re-



AVENUE FROM MONASTERY TO COLLEGE.

ligious to take care of the baggage, which was to arrive at Havre two days after us.

They arrived, indeed, Sunday morning, but without the baggage. These good fathers left it at Tours, relying on the word of a man who, they said, made a written engagement to have it delivered at Havre, on Sunday evening at the latest. I had just come from saying Mass, when I perceived my three brothers in the yard of the Hospice. I was glad at first to see them. But what was my surprise, after having imparted the fraternal kiss, when I learned that they had left our baggage at Tours. Very well; one of two things must be done. Either we must depart without our baggage, which was impossible, or we must break



our engagement with the officer of the boat, and consequently fail to make the voyage, thereby entailing the loss of several thousand francs already paid for our berths.

My position was painful and my embarrassment very great. After having offered this trial to God, there was only one thing left for me to do, viz : to return to meet my baggage, without knowing if I would meet it on the way, or where I could find it. I took the train in the evening for Paris, where I arrived at five o'clock the next morning. At the station I was informed that there was no knowledge of my baggage. From there I went to the station of Batignoles, where I received the same answer. I hastened to the Orleans depot, where the baggage had not been seen. I was in despair. I inquired if there was not at Paris another station where I could have any chance of finding my baggage. I was told of the station of Ivry, where the baggage of the Tours line was deposited. I went there immediately, and what was my joy on arriving, to see my baggage, in the midst of an immense pile that filled the station. But all the difficulty was not yet over. It must be taken out of this place and carried through Paris to the station of Batignoles, at the other side of the city. Without delay, I entered one of the offices of the station, in order to ascertain the expense and find the means of transportation from one station to the other. I was told it would be necessary to return to Batignoles and there engage wagons, which the station of Ivry did not furnish. Then, having found out the weight and amount of baggage, I was informed that the cost would amount to fifty francs. I was disturbed at this figure, which far surpassed my expectations as well as the resources of my purse. I asked at the office if there were no means to obtain a reduction in the charge for my baggage. The employees told me, that, being answerable to the company, they could take no responsibility on themselves, but that I could however, speak to the superior officer, who was in an adjoining office. I repaired at once to this office and made my request. On telling him that I was a Trappist, he appeared totally surprised, and wished to know the life of a Trappist. I gave him a short résumé of our manner of life. I told him that we were men who withdrew from the world to live in solitude; men of all professions, priests, lawyers, doctors, officers, soldiers, laborers, men of all classes of society; because, as I told him, in all conditions of society there are men for whom no sacrifice is too great, when it is a question of saving their souls. This was the only object they proposed to themselves on entering La Trappe, and the means thereto were prayer, man-

ual labor and penance. I spoke to him of our spiritual exercises, of our different employments, and the happiness experienced in the quiet of solitude.

He listened to me with great attention, and when I had finished speaking, he cried out, "Ah, Monsieur, that life is beautiful compared with that of the great part of men in the world, where we see only sensuality, pride and self-love. I assure you if I were not married, I would embrace your kind of life and would accompany you to America." I was much edified at these words. Since then I have had occasion to see this gentleman, Mr. Quevillon, who always took the liveliest interest in me, and made me promise to write and give him an account of our new foundation.

As to the reduction of price in carrying the baggage, he answered that, however he might wish to aid the good work, he could not personally assume the responsibility of granting me the favor. He suggested, however, that I see the station master at the depot of Orleans, which was distant about one kilometre from that of Ivry. I asked him for a note of recommendation to this gentleman, which he kindly granted, together with a circular railroad ticket, which made the journey I had to travel much shorter. I went at once to the office designated, when I found an employee, who did not give me such a good reception. Fortunately he was only an inferior to him whom I wished to see. Scarcely had I entered when he demanded roughly what I wanted. I told him that I had a letter for Mr. H——, to whom I wished to speak. "The station master is not in, give me your letter and I will give it to him." I told him that I wished to speak with the director, and that I would wait for him. Though he assured me that he was absent, and that he would not return even during that day, I took a chair to wait. This did not seem to please him; but I felt he was lying, and that the director was not as far off as he would have me believe.

As a matter of fact, I was scarcely sitting five minutes, when this man, annoyed by my presence, took my letter and said, "The director has forbidden me to admit any one, but since you have so great a desire to speak with him, I am going to take your letter to him, saying you are here." Accordingly he took my letter and went to an adjoining office. The letter contained the most benevolent expressions, and explained the motive of my visit. While the station master was become acquainted with its contents, I implored God to move and dispose him in my favor. My prayer was heard, for in the course of a few minutes the employee

returned with a note, which, instead of fifty francs, taxed me only nine, including even the transfer of baggage to Batignoles. The unfortunate subaltern, to whom I had made known the object of my visit, and who positively assured me that my request would not be granted, was ashamed to tell me what I received from the director, without even having spoken to him. I begged him to thank his superior for me and returned satisfied, having obtained more than I expected. I offered thanks to the good God, who knows how to convert the hearts of men for the execution of his designs. I repaired immediately to Batignoles to procure conveyances. Four waggons were necessary to carry my baggage. Here again another trial awaited me. The station master told me that it was impossible for him to provide me waggons, as they were all engaged for that day. Yet I had not a moment to lose. It was now Monday, and the boat was to sail on Wednesday. Not knowing on which side to turn, I appealed to his heart. "Kind director," I said to him, "see my painful position. I have at Havre forty religious *en route* for the United States. The vessel on which we are to embark leaves the day after to-morrow. The engagements are already concluded with its officers. There is no longer a chance to cancel them. This baggage contains everything necessary for us during our voyage and for our future work. Place yourself in my place, I pray you. I only ask now an application of the natural law. What would you expect that a man should do for you under similar circumstances?"

The director seemed fully sensible of my great embarrassment. "Reverend sir," said he to me, "your position is really distressing. I shall willingly take what measures I can to relieve you therefrom. But even though I could procure you waggons to go for your baggage, it will be impossible for them to arrive at the Ivry station at four o'clock, and after that time they do not permit baggage to leave the station." "Dear director, there will be no difficulty if you will have the kindness to give me a note to the gentleman at the station of Ivry, telling him that I was not able to find conveyances for the four o'clock train, and asking him to deliver my baggage when the waggons should arrive. I shall rely on your request. These gentlemen have already given me too many proofs of their good will, to refuse the departure of my baggage on the arrival of the waggons."

The director hastened to give me the letter which I sought, telling me to go in advance, while he would go to procure the wagons, but that he was uncertain when they would arrive at Ivry. I had no sooner made

the request for my baggage at the station, than the officials told me that I could have it whenever the waggons should arrive. They came at seven o'clock. On their arrival, I tucked up my soutane, went to work with the draymen and, in three-quarters of an hour all four were loaded. A new difficulty arises. It was necessary to go through Paris. How were we to pass through the custom house all these boxes that were not checked? They had the right to stop and examine them, which was a great annoyance, a delay, destruction of everything, as my hours were limited. A thought occurred to me. I called my four teamsters and promised to give them a good tip, if they would render me a service, thinking that such a speech was the best argument to obtain from them what I was going to ask.

I besought them to return to the station of Batignoles, passing outside of the walls and thus avoiding the trouble of the customs. I was careful to draw from my pocket some white pieces which I passed from hand to hand, while addressing them. All at once, he who seemed to be the leader of the others, said, "Sir, it is more than four leagues of a journey which you have marked out." I insisted, reminding them of the embarrassment of the customs. Whatever I said seemed to me to make less impression on them than the sight and sound of my silver pieces. I drew forth another one of them. They no longer remonstrated, while one of them said: "All right, sir. You have the appearance of a good man, we will do what you ask." I thanked them, giving them a tip, and they departed for the station. The money was not long in their pockets. At the first tavern they reached after leaving the station, it was necessary to stop and take a drink. I did not wish to lose sight of them, without being assured of the direction they would take. I strolled around the waggons, impatiently awaiting the return of my drinkers, who believed me to have left. They came out in half an hour, which seemed to me three hours, on account of the annoyance of remaining on the street, as one having evil designs on the lamp lights. My boon companions, enlivened, no doubt, by the juice of the barley, cracked their whips vigorously, taking the route they had promised me to follow.

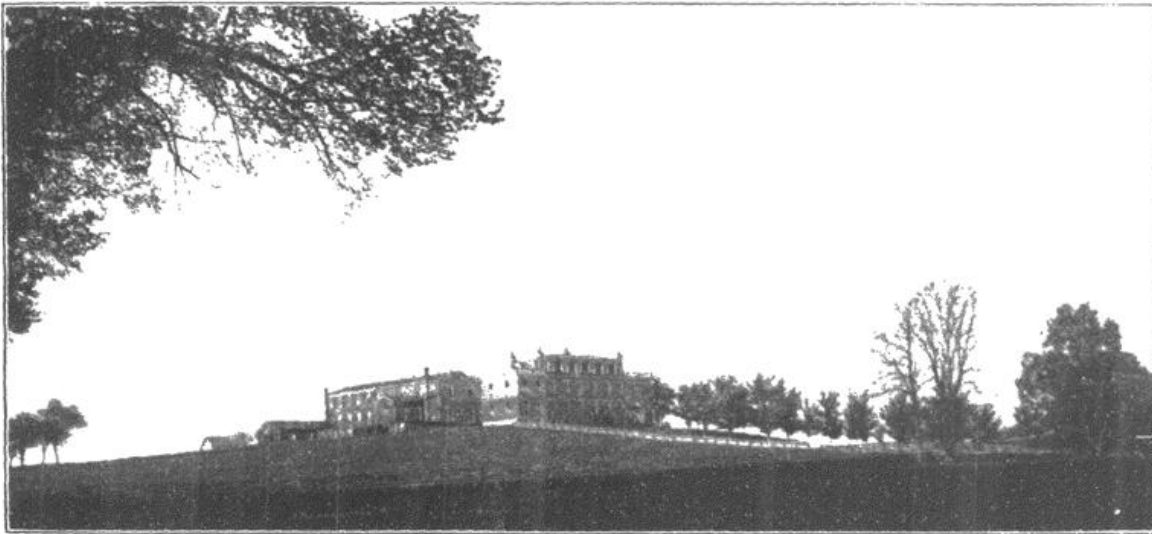
Assured of their sure course, I went to a hotel near the railroad depot for Havre, in order to take a little repose. I was so exhausted with fatigue and worry, that at midnight I was not yet asleep. I arose at five o'clock, and at once went to the station at Batignoles to find my baggage. The teamsters arrived at the station at one o'clock in the morning. My baggage went by the four o'clock train for Havre. This was information

that brought peace to my soul. I was assured of its arrival in Havre before the departure of the boat. It being sufficient for me to take the eleven o'clock train in the evening, which arrives at Havre at six o'clock in the morning, I wished to utilize the day in Paris. We had not a sufficiency of sacred articles for our foundation. My desire was to find some during the day. For this purpose I visited all the large churches, the Madeleine, Notre Dame, St. Roch, and others. After making myself known, I made everywhere the same request and received the same answer. I asked if they had any old chalices of inferior quality, which they were no longer using, but which would be of great benefit to us. All said: "If you had come before the Republic, we had some which we could give for your excellent work; but in the financial crisis which has just passed, we have converted all our silver into money. We are really deprived of the power of granting your request."

These excuses were very reasonable; but did not give me what I looked for. I despaired of finding a chalice. From St. Sulpice, I repaired to St. Thomas of Aquin. I went to the sacristy, where I met the venerable pastor, who had returned from saying Mass. I repeated my request, so far made without success. This holy man answered me that he would be very happy to grant what I had requested; but as regarded sacred vessels, he believed that he had no more than were necessary for the services of his church. In the meantime he asked me to wait a moment, that he was going to see if there were no means of satisfying me. He went into a little sacristy adjoining where I was. He returned in about five minutes, holding in one hand a very beautiful chalice, and in the other a paten. I was far from believing that this chalice was for me, thinking he was going to say to me: "We have only this chalice in reserve." "Take it," said he, in presenting it to me. "I am happy to be able to dispose of this chalice, which belongs to me; accept it for so good a work, and pray to God for me." After having given me the chalice, he searched his pockets, giving me what money he had with him, forty francs. I accepted all with the most lively acknowledgment. I went to prostrate myself before the altar where our Saviour resides in the Tabernacle of His love, reciting a *Te Deum* for this new favor added to so many others.

On leaving the church, the thought occurred to me, to visit an excellent lady, Madame d'Aubigny, a benefactress of La Trappe. I tried to interest her in the work of our new foundation, and so much the more because I knew her to be an intimate friend of the pastor of St. Thomas

of Aquin. I went to her place and found her at home. She received me with much kindness when I told her my undertaking. I recounted to her all my wanderings and pains, the insufficiency of my resources, to reach the New World. "Ah," said she to me, "you have had to undergo rude trials, others are probably reserved for you. This, however, must not discourage you, since the trials are always the marks of God's works. Far from wishing to be a stranger to your work, I regret not being able to aid you as I would wish, for just now I am somewhat straitened in my finances. I have here a package of one hundred francs, and a note of the same value. Which would the better suit your conven-



GENERAL VIEW OF COLLEGE.

ience?" I waited a moment to answer, my thought being that I would take both. However, I was on my guard not to make known the idea. I thanked her for the offer, saying that since she had the kindness to come to my aid, I would accept with gratitude the bills of one hundred francs. When she gave them to me, I continued the history of our journey through France, the recital of which moved her. It is said that while the iron is hot is the time to strike. The tears coming to her eyes, she cried! "O Father, how much suffering! Such trials are capable of crushing the bravest hearts. It is religion alone that can triumph over them. I have given you choice of the bills or the note, now take both, your position is worthy of the greatest interest." On saying so, she gave me the note of one hundred francs, which I placed in my pocket book. I took leave of my benefactress, thanking her with all my power. Seeing that the good God had so blessed my efforts, I could not rest

here. I went to see some of our representatives of the Loire who understood our undertaking. In like manner I visited several venerable ecclesiastics of Paris, amongst whom I desire to mention the venerable Abbé Desgennettes, pastor of the Church of Our Lady of Victory.

Everywhere I was kindly received and obtained more aid than I expected. Having returned in the evening to my hotel, I counted all my receipts, and, without including railroad fare and the chalice, worth over three hundred francs, I had received twelve hundred francs cash, so that, counting all, my return to Paris was worth eighteen hundred francs. My money being French specie, and as I was on my way to America, where it was not in currency, I repaired to the Palais Royal to have it exchanged for American money.

I left for Havre at eleven o'clock and arrived there on Wednesday morning at six. I went at once to the Hospice, where fathers and brothers awaited me with greatest impatience. We were to depart at one o'clock in the afternoon. Accordingly, my return was the source of great joy. I got them all together, to relate the incidents and success of my journey to Paris. I ordered my community to make a novena for all those persons who had come so generously to my assistance. We admired the designs of Providence, which permits for our interests the most unfortunate circumstances to redound to our advantage. This is the reason why we should never become disheartened, nor murmur when trials come, as the smallest events are directed by the supreme will of God with an infinite wisdom.

Our baggage was carried aboard the boat on its arrival at the station. We were waiting the hour for departure when we were informed that the boat would not leave until the following day, November 2. This gave me time to write a long letter to the Abbot of Melleray, in which I narrated the story of our journey. I knew that it would be pleasing to the Right Rev. Abbot to keep him informed of our proceedings, and especially in making him acquainted with the modesty and simplicity of some of our brothers, who, after having travelled more than one hundred leagues of railway, asked me how these railroads were made.

At length, on the second of November, 1848, we set sail on the *Brunswick*, an American vessel of eight hundred tons, the captain of which was named Thomas, of New Orleans. We set sail about two o'clock in the afternoon. By a strange coincidence there was on board a company of eighty Icarians, destined for Texas, a country which the notorious fraud, Cabet, called Icaria. It was represented as a country rich in

every resource which could captivate the fancy of the most ambitious. These deluded people expected to find in that country satisfaction for all their pleasure, a perfect happiness, a golden world, which had no reality outside the deceptive imagination of Mr. Cabet. This celebrated philanthropist had come to conduct to Havre his expedition, composed of men, women and children of all ages. In this new colony there were men who seemed to have natural knowledge and even a certain education, doctors and others of the honorable professions. But far the greater number were, however, of the lower classes. The guide took care to establish over these people a chief, to whom the name of representative was given, and who was charged with judging the differences that might arise among them, an office of which there was great need during the voyage.

When I saw myself with my forty religious obliged to associate with those eighty Icarians for the journey of two thousand leagues, I was pretty well scared, and feared an annoying passage on account of the unavoidable relations that we would have with them on the ship. Two things meanwhile reassured me, viz., the separation of dwelling and the silence of my religious. We had taken a place in the steerage, where we were entirely separated from the other passengers by a partition, so that we were quite by ourselves, being able to have all our religious exercises in common without disturbance from any person. Besides, silence was observed by my community, as in the mother house, except on account of seasickness, which was almost general for the first two or three days. This silence aboard was the more necessary on account of the presence of the Icarians, for there were among my religious some former soldiers, who, from a religious and political point of view, were very far from thinking as the Icarians of Mr. Cabet. Silence cut short every discussion, and, thanks to the fidelity of its observance, and also to some service which we were happy to render them during the voyage, we had no trouble. It was especially as regards the kitchen that we had been of such service to them. We procured at Havre a large open stove, by means of which we were enabled to manage the household affairs, even to the baking of bread. This convenience on board was considered a great luxury, because when one is seasick and has no other nourishment than a few biscuits, his condition is miserable indeed. In procuring the stove I also bought some bake-ovens and four barrels of flour. This provision was fully appreciated by all on board. Besides the Icarians we had on board about sixty Germans, among whom were families of five or



six little children, and even mothers with their babes, three or four months, at the breast. These unfortunates, having nothing else to eat and drink but biscuits and water, became in a short time incapable of nourishing their little ones. I saw these poor little creatures daily fading away, crying from night to morning. I easily surmised the cause of their cries. Their mothers could no longer give them nourishment. I was touched with compassion. I had more soup made than what was generally the case. After it was served in the dishes, before any one touched it, I passed around among the religious a large tin basin, into which each one had the happiness to pour some of his portion, giving it to Jesus Christ, in the person of these poor little infants. It was even sometimes necessary to moderate the zeal of several, who, through an over-generous charity, were deprived of what was necessary for themselves in giving it to these little ones, who were always served first and so plentifully that they could not use what we gave them.

It was curious to watch with what joy these little children, from three to four years old, with their poor mothers, received at the door of our dwelling the portion that one of our brothers was charged to distribute. For my part, I experienced so great a joy in seeing them satisfied that I had in advance the recompense for this, our little alms. Besides, I had given some fresh cakes, thoroughly baked, to the sick and little ones, both of the Germans and the Icarians, for the faith that urges us to act makes no exception of persons. We had with us Protestants, Jews and Christians possibly still more impious. But, no matter, it was sufficient for me to know their wants, to assuage them when I could. Together with the bread and soup, I gave the nursing mothers some bottles of red wine. Poor creatures, they must have realized that it is only the Catholic religion that inspires such charity.

There was among them a poor old man of seventy years, who fell sick after ten or twelve days' voyage. The good old man had an abundance for the voyage, but being confined to his bed he was unable to cook his victuals. Vainly did he beseech his countrymen to render him some aid, but they refused to do so, and thus the poor old man was abandoned. No longer knowing what to do, he offered his watch to one of his countrymen, who was cruel enough to accept it, as a compensation for his trouble in preparing his nourishment. He attended to the old man's wants for two or three days, but, becoming weary of the work, abandoned it, while keeping the watch. The old man, having heard of the favors rendered by us to his countrymen, would have very much de-

sired to acquaint me with his sad condition, but, like the paralytic in the Gospel, he could find none to render him this service. One day being more pleasant than usual, he mustered his remaining strength to come on deck. He placed himself where I could see him. Seeing the poor man trembling and pale as death, I approached him and said, "You seem, my good man, to be very weak and sick." "Ah, sir," he answered in poor French, "I am very sick, I assure you, I am abandoned by every one. No one wishes to prepare my food. I am going to die, I only await to breathe my last to find a watery grave." On saying this, he related to me the story of his watch. I was indignant at this cruelty on the part of his countryman. "My good old man," I said, "have confidence, you will not be forsaken by every one; the Catholic religion that we have the happiness to possess inspires other sentiments than those which you have experienced from your countrymen. Would you wish to come and live with us? I will have brought to your apartment all your provisions. We also live in community, having everything in common, but it is a communism of charity. I shall have the same care of you as of my own during the entire voyage. If we have two mouthfuls, you shall have the better one." It is impossible to describe the old man's joy. He took both my hands, kissing them with respect, while he watered them with his tears. I had him descend immediately to our apartment, where I put him to bed, ordering him some rich soup, with some red wine, mixed with sugar, which strengthened his stomach, exhausted by starvation. I lavished upon him all possible care, and at the end of four or five days, he regained his vigor to such an extent, that he was no longer sick, during the entire voyage. I had his watch returned, which I confided to the care of one of my religious, and which I returned to him, on our arrival at New Orleans, where he was going to join one of his daughters, who had been there for ten years.

The consolations I felt in rendering those little aids to the passengers, recompensed me for the sorrow caused by the loss of one of my religious, who died on the eighth day of the voyage. This good father, aged sixty-eight, had so ardently desired to form part of the foundation, that he begged to be allowed to do so. In vain was it represented to him that he could not stand the fatigue of the journey, that he would assuredly die, but nothing was capable of intimidating him. He counted on a certain experience he had of ocean travel, for, before becoming a Trappist, he had on several occasions made a trip to Bourbon Isle, when he was a director of a school of the Brothers of Christian Charity. Having made

these voyages, without suffering any sea-sickness, he thought he could do in like manner in coming to America. But he forgot that he was no longer in the bloom of youth, and did not possess the vigor of those early days.

Scarcely had we quit the port of Havre, than we had contrary winds and a sea of such fury, that, in less than two hours, there were more than eighty passengers stretched on the deck, more dead than alive. As to myself, I lay down on an armful of chains at the foot of the last mast, when I vomited even to blood, and was so demoralized, that I had no longer a knowledge of my existence. Nearly all my religious were reduced to the same extremity. Without the assistance of two or three, who were somewhat less sick than the others, we would have died of exhaustion, not being able to prepare any nourishment.

Having found myself somewhat better at the end of the third day, I went to see the community, all of whom I found lying in bed. Reaching the good Father Benezet, I asked him, as I did the others, how he felt. "I am well," he answered. I perceived that he articulated with pain. I believed that the weakness was caused from the want of nourishment. I had at once something prepared for him, when the brother who was in charge came to tell me that his patient could scarcely articulate or make known his wants. I fully realized the danger.

There were two medical doctors in the first cabin. I asked them to come and see my patient. After both had made an examination, we discovered that his left side was paralyzed. There was an absence of sensibility, with intestinal inflammation. We could not help seeing that death was imminent. The two doctors declared that nothing could be done, that he was beyond remedy. On the departure of the doctors, I hastened to acquaint him with their decision. "My good Father Benezet, you are at the end of the voyage that you have commenced with us. You are going to make a much longer and far more important one. I mean the voyage of eternity." And he answered, saying: "My dear Rev. Father, I understand you well. That means I am going to die. Does it not?" "Yes, dear Father; it is exactly what I wish to say, neither more nor less." "Ah," answered this good old man, smiling with joy, "you see, then, how the good God loves me! To-day He gives me a proof of His wonderful, great kindness, since He is content with my good will. Ah, I ask you, dear Father, to thank the good God for me, because of this great favor and mark of His love." Behold the expressions of this holy man, on learning the news of his approaching end!

In the world, people take the greatest precaution to hide from the dying the thought of this terrible moment. With a disguised cruelty, they persuade the dying that there is no danger—that he shall assuredly regain his health and life, whilst he is already in the very jaws of death. They do not wish to alarm a disordered conscience, which cannot brook the idea of death, that will bring them before the awful tribunal of the Supreme Judge, and unravel before them the skein of their iniquities.



ABBOT EUTROPIUS.

But, for the good religious who has faithfully fulfilled his obligations and has for himself the witness of a good conscience, the announcement of his coming death is a cause of joy. He receives it with happiness, because he knows that he is going to place himself in possession of the object of his desires.

Such were the sentiments of Father Benezet when I told him that his last moments were near at hand. He was always ready to appear before his Judge. But, as one can never take too much precaution for that

terrible passage from time to eternity, I prepared him all I could for death and the last Sacraments, which he received with sentiments of the most profound tenderness. He loved in a special manner to recommend himself to the Blessed Virgin, our good Mother and patroness, to St. Joseph, patron of a happy death, and to St. Michael, the terror of that enemy of our salvation, who redoubles against us all his efforts when he beholds a soul about to escape from him forever. Father Benezet saw death approaching with a calm and joy that edified all our brothers. He endured, without complaint, the most awful sufferings, and calmly gave his soul to God at three o'clock on the evening of November 12th, the tenth day of our voyage.

It is the custom aboard ship to cast into the sea, as soon as possible, the body of the deceased. I have seen two of them cast overboard two hours after death. I asked the captain to allow us the body of our brother until the following day, which he cheerfully granted, telling me we should have it in readiness at nine o'clock. We had all our processions. We could carry out in our hall all the obligations and ceremonies which are used in our monasteries. We chanted the absolution and everything prescribed by the ritual. All night the psalter was recited over the deceased. Meanwhile, all that night and the following day, the storm was so terrible that the sailors could not descend to take the body on deck until one o'clock in the afternoon.

It is impossible to express the impression which this funeral ceremony made on the hearts of those passengers, the greater part of whom were Protestants or half-hearted Christians. The grave and mournful chant, mingled with the shrieking cordage, chilled into fright the hearts of these men, who, by their language and conduct, seemed to know no other life than the present, and who paled in the presence of whatever reminded them of death.

The most mournful silence, except that caused by the roaring of the tempest, reigned in every part of the ship, and each one, without venturing a word, looked upon his neighbor with a sort of stupor. It was about one o'clock. Four sailors arrived, bringing a large board, on which they tied the deceased, clothed in his religious habit, lifted it on deck, where they fastened to both feet a sack of sand, placed the extremity of the plank on the top of the ship's side, untied the cords that held the body, and, elevating the plank, let the body glide into the sea, where it immediately disappeared in the great deep.

Such was the end of Father Benezet. He was the first victim of the

new foundation, which he had so much at heart, and which, I doubt not, he sustains by his prayers before God, who is the reward of his devotion.

The Icarians of whom I spoke above, afforded us some scenes that broke the monotony of the voyage. It is necessary to bear testimony to the truth. We had nothing to complain of, thanks to the silence of our religious and the little services we were able to offer our fellow passengers. They never pronounced against us a single disagreeable word. But among themselves there were lamentable scenes, which necessarily arise in every society which has not for its foundation the principles of religion, and which relies solely on self-interest.

They brought to our little stove, pastry, apples, potatoes, etc., to bake, and we were pleased to let them do so. But who eats those little dainties? It is not always he or she who brings them. Another of the band, seeing them placed in the oven, lies in wait until the good things are cooked, and then, like a hungry wolf, snatches his object, runs away and devours it. A few moments afterwards another one comes, viz., he or she who placed the article in the oven, and missing it, asks where it is. "One of your friends came for it, and, since you are a society that has everything in common, I thought that your agent came in the name of the community." "Oh," they would answer in a tone of indignation and anger, "we live in a community where it seems each one looks out for himself." A community in which selfishness is supreme. I had never witnessed anything like it! When the aggrieved party chanced to discover the thief, there were violent disputes, which always terminated in some tragic scene. And this was very often renewed during the course of the voyage. Apart from these incidents, they generally indulged in songs of joy and happiness at the prospect of that fortunate Icaria, where everything was presented in the most charming colors, and in which they were to find the treasures of the golden age, but in all of which grand anticipations they would be sadly disappointed. It was in the very port of New Orleans that their eyes were opened, and they saw that they were deceived.

The passage as regards speed was good. Thanks to a lucky storm of ten days, together with an afterwind, which carried us fiercely onward, we were able to pass the Bahama Straits, which shortened our journey twelve hundred miles. We arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi, on the fourth of December, thirty-two days after our departure from Havre. This was considered very good, as the ordinary voyage takes from fifty to sixty days.

During the voyage we did not witness anything extraordinary, if not that of an aurora borealis, which appeared to us about the middle of November. It was so remarkable, that, at ten o'clock at night, it appeared like sunset.

Another thing that afforded the passengers great amusement, was the battle waged between the ocean fish and those of the Mississippi, at the junction of the two currents in the Gulf of Mexico. It was a spectacle truly curious, to see this multitude of fish pursue each other with such fury that they would not avoid even meeting the ship. We were soon sighted by an American pilot, who hastened toward us in order to tow us against the current of the waters. This current is so powerful at the mouth of the great river that it is scarcely possible, even with the best sailing ship and the most favorable wind, to make way against it. The pilots are always there to receive the incoming vessel and conduct her to New Orleans, which is inland about ninety miles from the gulf. These pilot boats are so powerful that they tow three large vessels at the same time, one at each side and the other at the stern.

New scenes and new visions unfold themselves to us. For the first time we saw the land of the New World, which may be called virgin land, so much does it approach the primitive state. On the right and left banks of the river there stand here and there a multitude of cabins, inhabited by negroes, or slaves, who are the only tillers of the soil in the State of Louisiana, and whose entire knowledge of agriculture consists in cultivating sugar-cane and cotton, from the mouth of the river to New Orleans. At some distances from these cabins is the more pretentious house of the planter, two stories high, having a balcony in front and surrounded by a garden planted with oranges. This is the dwelling house of the slave-owner. Around the little cabins there are immense fields of sugar-cane, cultivated by the slaves. This is almost all one sees as far as New Orleans.

We entered the port of New Orleans on the sixteenth of December when we experienced a temperature corresponding to that of May in France. As I have already said, it was at this port that the unfortunate Icarians commenced to open their eyes and realized their most complete deception. This band of eighty colonists were going to join in Texas a colony that had preceded them seven or eight months, and of whom they had received no news, because Cabot controlled all the correspondence that might reveal their sad condition. Scarcely had the *Brunswick* entered the port when the rumor spread through the entire city that she had

on board eighty Communists on their way to Texas. At that very moment the survivors of the first colony were in the city, begging in rags from door to door for the means of subsistence.

These unfortunates undertook to return, being unable to remain in that region, where the greater part of the first colony died in misery and want. When it was learned in the city that a new expedition for Texas had arrived, people ran to the ship to give the emigrants the true account of Icaria, which was represented to them as a land flowing with milk and honey. One can imagine the horror of these unfortunate Icarians on finding at New Orleans those whom they believed to be distant one hundred and thirty leagues, and especially in beholding them only living skeletons of their former selves. Every one surrounded them, asking the news of this and that person, thus: "Is that you? How is my brother? Where is my cousin? What has become of my friend? How is Mr. So and So?" "Your brother," replied those returning from Icaria, "is dead, your cousin fell a victim of hardships on the journey. Mr. So and So is at the hospital." "My friends," they exclaim, "we were deceived. It is a desert country that devours its inhabitants and those who have the misfortune to entrust themselves to it. . . . Cabet is a wretch who has abused our confidence. He deserves . . . ." At these words and heartrending cries, there arise from every side bitter invectives and curses against the author of so cruel a misfortune. This Mr. Cabet, of whom they spoke during the voyage with so much praise, if he had been there, would have been torn to pieces. What can be done? What is to become of them in a strange land, more than two thousand leagues from their native country? All their possessions gone by the expense of the voyage. They met in a compartment and held a council, under the presidency of the representative of the Supreme Chief, Mr. Cabet. I interrupt, for a moment, the thread of my narrative, to make known a decree of one of these councils, held during the voyage, in which assuredly the assistance of the Holy Ghost was not invoked.

The first Sunday that I could say Mass on board, I notified all the passengers, so that each one could satisfy and fulfill his obligation. A great many Holland and German families came, and also some of the Icarian women with their children, but not a single man. These so called friends and spouters of liberty, having perceived the warm devotion of their wives and children, were goaded to frenzy. They held a council the following day, in which it was decreed that no man or woman could go to the monks' place on Sunday, or be present at any of



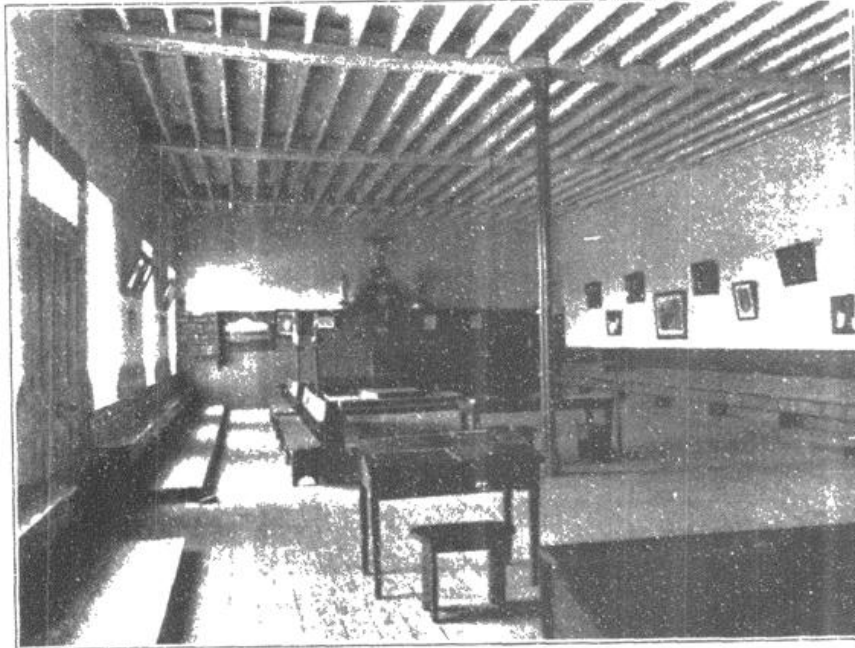
their religious exercises. Many poor Icarian women grieved at such a decree, but they were bound to submit to its dictates. The same council met at New Orleans, to know what was going to become of the unhappy colony. After an hour's deliberation, it was decided that they should not proceed any farther, that they distribute *pro rata* the remaining money of that which was placed in common, and that each one then should look out for his or herself. One of them looking out especially for himself and doubting the expediency of the council, took possession of a small box, which he placed on his shoulder, and in virtue of communism ran away with it. Fortunately for the community, an employee of the customs was on the watch. The man was arrested and recognized for what he was, a thief. Another, who apparently had nothing to take from the contents of the box, wrote a letter of invective and curses against the author of his misery, placed the letter in the post for France, and afterwards, through despair, took a pistol and blew out his brains.

A third came to see me in our compartment, and asked to join us. "Ah, good superior," he said on approaching, "I see well that your community is better governed than ours, if you would receive me I might render you some service." "You are welcome," I said, "we do not refuse those whom the good God sends us if they come with a good will to observe our rules. I do not ask, have you money? for I receive the poor as well as the rich. Nor do I ask what you have been, but what you wish to be. The past is nothing when your actual dispositions are good and you are inclined towards God."

As I had seen the greater part of these people, having wives and children, I wished to learn the social condition of our postulant, accordingly, I asked him if he were not married, if he were free from every engagement. At this question he remained silent for a time. I repeated my question. "You are married, are you not, my good friend? Tell me frankly the truth." Pressed for an answer, he replied, with a simplicity I cannot express, "Ah, Monsieur, I have only a wife," as much as to say, that makes no difference. "Oh, sir, you have only a wife; but that is already enough, it is even too much to be admitted to our community. We are men of order. We would not wish to create disunion in affairs, to separate what God has united, man and wife. We do not receive married men. I cannot therefore accede to your request."

He was dumfounded, not knowing what to do. As he had a good

figure and a countenance that would prepossess you in his favor, I said to him: "You appear to be a good man. How did it happen that you took part in such a wild undertaking?" "Ah, sir," he said, "I did not do it. My



THE CHAPTER ROOM.

unfortunate wife is the cause of it." "My friend," I replied, "you repeat the history of Adam—The woman deceived me. Is it not so?" Then he recounted his affairs, and it seemed to me he told the truth. "I was a saddler," he said, "by trade, head of a workshop. I had as many as seventy-eight workmen under my charge, and although trade was not very flourishing in France, as you well know, I nevertheless made some money. Having no children, my wife and I retired from business. My unfortunate wife allowed herself to be seduced by the doctrine of Cabot. One day she told me that we could do much better to dispose of what we had and place it in common with these people. That it would be far more agreeable to live in society. That, as we had no children, we would have some then, to make us taste the joys of paternity and maternity. I opposed by all the means I could, this proposition, for I did not like communism, especially that which we have experienced on board the ship, and which is only a vile egoism. My wife did not yield, but returned to the charge. I always rejected her propositions. Seeing at last that I did not wish to yield to her desires, she fell into such despair that she attempted three times to drown herself. I was obliged to run and stop her on the very brink of a precipice, and without my influence she would have killed herself. I loved my unfortunate wife. I finished by yielding. We sold all we had and placed it in common with those unfortunate people, who did not know us.

To-day we see, but too late, that we have been deceived and all our money is lost. I do not know what to do. I am a man in despair." Such was the tale of this unfortunate, whom I really pitied ; but whose troubles I could not assuage. What became of him afterwards I do not know. I was told that some of these unfortunates returned to France, and that the others were scattered through the United States.

The day after our arrival in port we were witnesses to a scene that makes us better understand the sentiment that actuated the disciples of Cabet. One of these unfortunates, during the voyage did nothing else but fight with another, and made him swear that one or the other should be cast into the water. This miserable creature was the identical one who was taken at his word. He fell into the water, not the victim of his enemy, but hurled by divine vengeance, which arises against him on that same day in a manner the most evident.

In the evening about eight o'clock, I was on deck at the door of our apartments, where all the community had gone to sleep. All at once I heard heartrending cries. It was a woman. I ran, believing there was an accident. She could only say to me the words : " Ah, Monsieur, a man has just fallen in the water." I raised a cry myself to call the sailors, who were all asleep. The second mate appeared immediately, with some sailors. Looking through the portholes, they dimly saw the unfortunate man battling with the current that bore him away. Seeing that they could not have time to lower a small boat, they cried to the crew of an American ship situated further down in the direction of the current. The unfortunate was a good swimmer, but could not hold out long. The American sailors, having heard the cries of the *Brunswick*, went on deck, and seeing the disciple of Cabet, endeavored to throw him a rope, telling him to catch it. But as they spoke to him in a tongue he did not understand, and was engaged with many other movements besides laying hold of a rope, he was quickly giving way, when an American sailor, with a devotion worthy of the highest praise, jumped into the water to place the rope in his hands. He was lifted on board and two men brought him to our ship. We were very anxious to learn who this unfortunate man was. I soon recognized the miserable creature to be the very one who had conducted himself as a brute the entire day. God had chastised him in His mercy. He was saved, as by a miracle, all witnesses to the accident saying that out of one hundred such cases ninety-nine would have perished. This unfortunate, seeing me on deck, came and exclaimed as if in transport : " Oh, good superior, impossible,

impossible to tell you what I experienced in that supreme moment." It was not then the time to ask him, for he was so much excited that he did not know what he said. Having had him put to bed, I endeavored to light the fire in our oven to warm some wine, mixed with sugar and water, which I carried to him. This drink warmed him and restored him to his senses.

Wishing to learn what he experienced at that moment he called supreme, I asked him to tell me frankly his feelings under the circumstances. I expected some sentiments of returning to God at so solemn a moment, when many sinners are converted. I was greatly mistaken. "Very well," said he to me, "seeing that I was most assuredly going to perish, being very well able to swim, I began to swim from one hand to the other. I grasped my knife, I had it already open to cut my stomach and finish my life sooner, when I felt the rope the American sailor threw me." Thus did that man, or rather brute, address me, for he deserves to be placed beneath the beast, that from its natural instincts seeks to preserve the life that God gave it. This answer, which denoted the absence of every religious sentiment, disconcerted me more than I can tell. The little service I had just rendered him, gave me in a measure the right to reprimand him, which I did unsparingly, on so bad a disposition in a moment when the spark of faith is always seen.

I was moved, my words came with an eloquent energy. I spoke to him very forcibly, but I perceived that I was losing my time in addressing a being who had not even a spark of faith. I left him to go to bed, my heart being crushed with sorrow to have to witness such brutality.

A new cause of pain awaited the unfortunate Icarians. The custom house was told that the disciples of Cabot had contraband articles, which they proposed to conceal, to baffle the surveillance of the custom house. Luckily I had knowledge of this before the removal of our baggage, and hence, before its removal, I had a scrupulous examination made of the vessel. I took with me an interpreter, through whom I made a declaration of our articles and the object of our emigrating. These gentlemen admired the devotion of our mission, and gave us a free entry. In taking the baggage out of the hold they merely examined one or two pieces, for the purpose of quieting the fears of the Icarians, who did not fare so well. When it came to their turn, their boxes were examined, even to the bottom. It was indeed, distressing to see dresses, hats, shawls and other precious objects, along with the frivolities of the Icarian women, thrown around the deck, and become objects of the most minute examination.

If I had been favored by the custom house at New Orleans, I was not yet free from trial. I had one very trying one to bear on account of finances. I had very little money, confiding in the providence of God, who never abandoned me. A good and virtuous lady of the Province of Vendée, having been acquainted with my position, sent me a note of fifteen hundred francs, which reached me at Havre the moment of our departure. This note was drawn on New York, and it was necessary for me to negotiate it at New Orleans. This was a matter of pain. I found a sufficient number of buyers, but the signature not being sufficiently known, no one wished to assume the responsibility. I was for two days tramping the pavements of the city, not knowing what to do with my note. Some one spoke to me of the Austrian consul as a man ready to oblige every one. I placed myself in communication with him and found him as he was described. On learning my troubles, he immediately hastened to relieve me. He went to the exchange to find for me a purchaser, who, on his recommendation, took my note. This worthy gentleman asked me a number of questions concerning the order of La Trappe and our new enterprise. He was charmed with what I told him, and gave evidence of the most lively interest. I had already experienced the same marks of sympathy in Mgr. Blanc, Bishop of New Orleans, and his Vicar-General, Rev. Father Rousselon, both of whom seemed entirely devoted to us. This worthy Bishop had the goodness to place at our disposal his episcopal house to lodge our community, while awaiting the departure of the boat for Louisville. But, as the captain of the *Brunswick* had allowed me to leave them on board as long as I wished, I thanked his lordship for his offer of hospitality.

When all business was finished, I engaged passage on the *Martha Washington*, which was about to leave for Pittsburg, Pa. On this vessel as on the *Brunswick* I took the steerage passage for Louisville. This cost only three dollars each, while the cabin would be ten dollars. Our baggage being heavy and numerous, the boat descended the river to take us aboard from the *Brunswick*. To add to our misfortune, the moment our transport arrived, another vessel came between it and the *Brunswick*, so that it was necessary to transfer all our baggage across the newly arrived vessel, which caused much labor, and the danger of losing our baggage, which was liable to fall in the water. But the sailors of both vessels went to work with energy, aided by our religious, who were not wanting in assistance. Thanks to the activity of the one and the zeal of the other, the transportation was effected without having to

deplore any disagreeable accident. I had only to regret one thing, the loss of two thousand vine plants, which I shipped at Havre, but which I could not find on the vessel; a pack of leather was likewise missing.

When our baggage was transferred to the steamboat, each one took his little bed of straw, and went to the steerage to prepare for the night. As it was now dark, there was no time to settle down comfortably, hence everything was in the most complete disorder. There were fully one hundred and fifty passengers who had no other bed than the boards. When these people saw our mattresses, they were envious of us, and



THE VESTIBULE OF THE CHURCH.

when we extended them on the boards, men and women threw themselves on them. It was impossible for us to dislodge them or get possession of our beds. I was extremely disappointed at such disorder. Taking with me two Irish brothers, who were to act as my interpreters, I made my complaint to the captain. He told me he was very sorry; but as it was then far advanced in the night it was impossible for him to establish order. He asked me to be patient for that night, assuring me that things would be better arranged the next day. That very night he invited me to supper, gave me a cabin and two beds. I accepted it for a secular priest who accompanied us as a boarder, and for the sickest of

my religious. He even allowed me to have my religious come on the deck of the first class, where each one wrapped himself with his coverlet and lay down to pass the night under the beautiful sky. Fortunately the nights in Louisiana, even in Winter, are neither cold nor dangerous. The following day was occupied in establishing order in the steerage. Distinct and separate places were assigned to us, where we slept on our mattresses, four by four. We had, however, the disadvantage of having in the berths above us, entire families with their little children. Add to this the vermin, of which there were swarms, and with which we had a large and generous communication. Such was our condition on the Mississippi and Ohio, during our ten days' voyage to Louisville.

We gained the respect of the captain and second officer, who, to assuage our lot, allowed us, during the day, to go on the upper deck, a favor which the other steerage passengers could not obtain. Two or three of our religious remained below as sentinels of our goods, and the rest went on the upper deck, where they breathed a purer air.

I shall say nothing of those American boats, whose gigantic proportions surpassed the imagination. They were generally heated with wood, and had such a force of steam, that one was afraid of it. Our steamer had five ranges, placed horizontally, on which were placed the boilers. They were heated with logs, about four feet long and about twelve or fifteen inches thick. Each one of these furnaces consumed a cord of wood every hour. It is found in convenient quantities on the banks of the Mississippi, already prepared. The boat generally stops twice a day to take on this fuel. The passengers of good-will join the boat's hands in loading the wood, and thus shorten the delay. My religious found pleasure in giving help, and the captain was charmed with their zeal and activity. He was so pleased with our conduct on board, that he wrote a most flattering article about us, which was inserted in all the papers of Louisville. This was the means of making our arrival in the United States known to all America.

Whilst the boat was taking on wood, the passengers could descend for fifteen or twenty minutes and visit the magnificent woods that border both banks of the river. I said to one of the priests who accompanied us, "Come, let us penetrate these woods a little and see the great American forest." We did not go far when we perceived a low, wooden cottage, from which smoke ascended. "It is, without doubt, inhabited," I said to him, "as the smoke comes from it." "Yes," he replied, "but we expose ourselves to pay very dear for our curiosity. This country ap-

pears deserted. If there are any savages who inhabit this cabin, they may take us for the beasts or fowl of the forest and kill us." "Oh, they will see very well that we are a fowl of another kind. In any case, let us advance with precaution." Not seeing the entrance to the cabin, we made a search to find it. At last I was successful. It was a very small door, on each side of which were eight or ten skins of wild animals. On beholding it, I suddenly stopped, and experienced a feeling of fear. I said to the father, "Do you see those skins of wild beasts? These people evidently live by hunting and are possibly not more civilized than the animals whose skins they have removed. What do you think, if in a couple of days, our skins were to hang beside those, we could not be at a wedding feast."

At these words, the good father was seized with fear and wanted to run off; but since I wished to know who dwelt in the little cottage, I kept him back. We advanced, closely watching right and left, to see if anything should come to surprise us. On approaching the door, I observed at the end of the cabin an immense fire, burning in a rough chimney place. I noticed to the right of the fire a black woman, and on the other side, two little negroes in a trough, *i. e.*, in the hole of a hollow tree, amusing themselves like two little kittens. On seeing us they appeared thunder struck. I said to the religious, who tremblingly marched by my side, "If that is all there is in the house, we have nothing to fear. Let us go in and see these poor creatures." The negress and these two little children interested me very much. I approached and extended my hand to one of the little ones. I wished to make on his forehead the sign of the cross. The little one was about three years of age. Seeing me extend my hand, he made a savage gesture at me. Throwing himself on his back, without crying, he opposed me with his two hands, as with a pair of claws—showed me two rows of teeth as white as snow. Then he commenced to grunt like an animal, raising savage howls and lifting his hands towards me, as if to strike. I repeated several times my attempts to caress him; but each time only to receive a like reception, with the same energetic resistance and the same cries.

Then, turning towards my companion, I said, "I believe we are really among savages. See this child; the kind of gestures it makes. It is the manner of beasts in defending themselves." While I was engaged with the little ones, my companion was occupied with the mother. Turning to this unfortunate, always trembling with fear, he compelled her to make the sign of the cross. At each of these signs she would jump with



fright. Not knowing why he did that, I said to him, "Why do you make these signs of the cross?" He answered with simplicity: "I would wish her to understand that we are Catholics." I said, "What can this poor woman know about religion, living as she is, like a beast in the forest? For goodness sake stop those signs of the cross. You see you are only making her afraid. She believes you intend some injury to her, and if the men arrive now, she will be capable of having us swallowed up, telling them that we were about to injure her." Then turning around to view the contents of the cabin, I saw, quite close to the door, two other black children, but somewhat larger than the others. At another side of the cabin there was a poor bed, thrown on rough boards and covered with rags. On the opposite side were family vessels, consisting of small pieces of pumpkin and little scooped gourds, which were used for drinking cups. I never saw anything so pitiful. At that moment the steamboat rang. It was necessary to run as fast as possible to catch it. I was grieved at the thought of these unfortunate beings, living in those forests like beasts, without a knowledge of God, who created them, without even knowing whether they have souls, created to His image and capable of loving Him. It was then that I realized the benefit of Catholic civilization, which teaches us what we owe to God, to our neighbor and to ourselves.

We continued our voyage, admiring, along the river, these magnificent forests, where the trees fall from old age and by their ruin enrich others still more beautiful. I contemplated with happiness those smiling, picturesque hillocks, of which the brilliant imagination of Châteaubriand has made so beautiful a description and which is yet far from the reality. I consider myself incapable of speaking of it. I would only disfigure the painting.

At the end of ten days we arrived at the dam of Portelan, about two miles from Louisville. At that place there is a dam in a small canal, which is sometimes taken to avoid a dangerous passage, at the rear of Portelan. Having arrived at the mouth of the canal at ten o'clock in the morning, it was necessary for us to wait, to allow another steamboat from Louisville to depart. Seeing that this would take a long time, Father Celloser and myself landed and went to Louisville, to prepare for the arrival of the community and the care of the luggage.

We went directly to Mgr. Flaget, the venerable Bishop of Kentucky, who, during the last ten years, made his residence in Louisville. This saintly prelate received us with a tenderness altogether paternal, and

with an effusion of heart which would be difficult to describe. His joy was so great that, on telling him I had conducted forty religious, who were waiting at Portelan, he shed tears of joy. "Blessed," said he, "be those who come in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the Saviour who sent them to me, to complete my happiness. Yes, well beloved children, you shall be blessed because you shall glorify the Saviour, in making Him known, loved and served, by your example among those with whom you are destined to come in contact." The saintly bishop told me to go and bring my religious to him. He regretted much that he had not beds to give to each one, but that he had two large halls which served as a school and that he could place them at my disposal. The boat did not arrive till evening. Being bound for Pittsburg, it only stopped to land our colony and baggage. The darkness of the night was so thick, that one could scarcely see two steps. In a moment we were surrounded by the street-walkers and loungers, who sought nothing else than pillage. I feared that some of our articles, which were thrown pell-mell on the dock, would disappear. To obviate the danger, I gathered some dry wood along the river bank. I placed all the religious in a circle and made a large fire in their midst. They made a good guard, while I went to the city to find some drays to bring our baggage to the warehouse.

We lost none of our baggage. I had left some of our brothers watching it on the dock, while some others remained at the warehouse, and a third followed at each trip the dray that hauled it. Everything went off most successfully. Our baggage was in place at two o'clock. The warehouse was locked and we repaired to the bishop's, exhausted with fatigue and hunger, as we had scarcely taken anything the entire day. I was provided with cider and bread. Every one had the best kind of appetite. Immediately after eating, each spread his coverlet on the floor and was soon in profound sleep.

We had yet fifty miles to travel before arriving at Gethsemani. It was necessary to find the means of transportation. It was impossible to make the journey on foot, as we were almost exhausted and the road was very bad. The next day, accompanied by the good Father Lavialle, who acted as my interpreter, I succeeded in procuring some drays; I found three negroes who were willing to carry us, but under conditions somewhat hard on my purse. They demanded \$60.00, *i. e.*, three hundred francs, to carry us to Gethsemani. This did not include our baggage. However hard the conditions, it was necessary to accept them.

On the third day they brought to the bishop's three poor waggons, in which we huddled as well as we could, and started out in the midst of a rain, which continued the entire day. I left two of our religious at Louisville to watch our baggage and have it brought to Gethsemani on the following day.

We left Louisville on the twentieth of December, and were to arrive that evening at Bardstown. Here we were to call on the Jesuit Fathers, who conducted the College of St. Joseph, and to whom we had a letter of introduction from Mgr. Flaget. We should arrive by daylight at Bardstown, which was twelve miles from Gethsemani; but the unfavorable weather delayed us very much, and we were yet nine miles from the town, when a dark and dreary night set in. We did not stop to take any nourishment by the wayside, but refreshed ourselves as best we could, in the waggons, with bread, cheese and fruit. The good God supplied the drink. The rain did not cease to fall abundantly the entire day, so that, alighting from the waggons, we resembled water rats that came out of the river. To complete our misfortune, about eight o'clock in the evening one of our waggons broke down. It was useless for any further service. The strongest and most vigorous in the other two waggons alighted and gave place to the most feeble in the broken one. One-third of the colony made the rest of the journey on foot to Bardstown.

We arrived at eleven o'clock. The streets were so full of water and mud that we were knee-deep therein. We went directly to St. Joseph's College. Our guides, weary and hungry, left us at its walls and went to a hotel. Our difficulty was to find the entrance, for one could not see a yard ahead. Taking with me two Irish religious, we made a circuit of the house to find the entrance. We found a large negro sleeping in a shed. We asked him a few questions, but he was too drunk to impart any information. We kept on seeking and groping until we succeeded in finding the door. We knocked again and again, but no answer. Not knowing what to do, we called aloud together the word "Trappist." In this we were successful. As soon as the good fathers heard that word they opened the windows. I told them who we were, where we were going, and that I had a letter of introduction to them from Mgr. Flaget, asking them to give us lodging for the night. In an instant three or four of the fathers arose, with as many brothers, and the doors were opened for us. A good fire was made in the hall, and the brothers prepared for us something to eat. At the end of half an hour we were led into

the refectory, where we took at the same time our breakfast, dinner and supper. On leaving the refectory each one took his little coverlet and made his bed on the floor. The good fathers were distressed at not being able to furnish us with beds, as all they had were occupied by students.

The following day, having heard Holy Mass and received Holy Communion, our conductors arrived, with a new waggon, borrowed by them at Bardstown. After thanking our hosts for their kind hospitality, we installed ourselves in the waggons and pursued our way to Gethsemani.

About two o'clock in the afternoon, we arrived at the entrance of a large forest, after passing the little village of New Haven on the Nashville Railroad. We were informed that this was the beginning of



our property. It is difficult to express the feelings that this announcement produced in our souls. I had the waggons stop. Falling on our knees we recited a "Pater and Ave" to salute the good guardian angels of Geth-

semani; and we kissed the earth so soon to be watered by our sweat and even by our tears. We re-entered our waggons and continued our journey through the woods for three-quarters of an hour. Our hearts swelled with emotion. With what feelings of joy and admiration, did we not contemplate these magnificent woods. We were astonished in finding ourselves so rich, after having made the vow of poverty. But while we were rich in wood, we were poor in buildings, as we shall soon see. We passed a small stream. We climbed a hill on which are situated wooden cottages, declining with age. We were told that these

THE SANCTUARY AND MONK'S CHOIR.

were the places destined for our dwellings. I was glad at the thought that we were going to find at last the crib of our Divine Saviour at Bethlehem. Such, too, were the thoughts of all our religious. They were in transports of joy in beholding these ten or twelve cottages, thrown here and there on the sloping hillside, facing the sun. These composed the entire monastery of Gethsemani.

There were still here some of the Ladies of Loretto and some few of their orphans, who remained to install us, and make us acquainted with the limits of our property. While awaiting the departure of these sisters, we settled down as best we could, in a part of these buildings, leaving them the better places during the seven or eight days they remained with us. What was very precious to us, we found at hand plenty of materials for farming purposes. Animals, farm tools, all remained in their place, for we bought them with the property. Thus, from the commencement, we found ourselves sufficiently well supplied.

The great difficulty we had was to bake our bread, for we had not an oven. The Americans are accustomed to bake small cakes in the range immediately before breakfast and serve them while they are hot. This kind of baking by no means suited us, and we longed to be able to bake after the manner of the French. We could have done so with the range we used on the *Brunswick*, but it was at Louisville, so that, during the two months we were without it, we were compelled to cook after the American fashion. Later, we built an excellent bake oven, where we baked as at the mother house.

We arrived at Gethsemani on the twenty-first of December at two p. m., feast of St. Thomas, Apostle. The cold was excessive, and all we could do the first days was to gather firewood in the forest to warm ourselves. We also collected or shucked a field of corn that had remained. In the mornings and evenings we shelled the corn in the workshop, while one of the brothers, in a loud voice, read a spiritual book. Such were our occupations during these first days.

We improvised a dormitory, refectory, chapter-room, etc., etc., choosing for this purpose the most suitable places. The old cabins were torn down to make room for a kitchen, adjoining the refectory. But the kitchen was so exposed to the weather that, when it rained, all our dishes were not sufficient to collect the water. On such days it was necessary to look for lighter and thinner soup. The little chapel used by the Sisters of Loretto served us for a church, but, as a great number of people flocked to our offices, attracted by the novelty of the religious cere-

monies, which, notwithstanding our poverty, we conducted with great solemnity, our chapel was much too small. We were obliged to enlarge it one-half, which we did, with the debris of the old cabins. As there was but one altar, which was insufficient for our eight priests, we made two smaller ones in the gallery which was over the door leading to the church.

It is impossible to describe the impression produced on these sylvan inhabitants on seeing our religious ceremonies and hearing for the first time the solemn and majestic chant of La Trappe. At the approach of grand feasts, the rumor spread far that on that day the Trappists of Gethsemani would have beautiful ceremonies, a thing which generally brought vast assemblies.

In Summer the people came from Bardstown and neighboring villages to see us and satisfy themselves of that which had been said in the journals concerning those extraordinary solitaries of Gethsemani. Having become witnesses of our work, our silence, our chant, in a word, of our manner of life, we appeared to them in reality as extraordinary men. Our abstinence, especially, amazed these people, not accustomed to live without meat, and who considered this nourishment so necessary to the life of man, that they returned, saying that we were of a different nature from them, or that we would all die the first year, in the event of our continuing to deprive ourselves of meat.

The good Bishop himself shared in this prejudice, and wished to dispense us from this obligation of our rule. But experience proved that in America, as well as in Europe, one can abstain from meat; for in the space of two years, only two religious died, and this was in consequence of this hardship of the voyage and not on account of the absence of food considered necessary.

One of the salutary effects that our presence created was the elevation of the negro-slave in his own estimation. The labors of agriculture are reserved solely to the slave, these unfortunates having no other companions in this work than the beasts of burden. Comparing themselves to the brute, they lived like it. During the day they are slaves, at night they are free. Very well, what do they do at night to compensate themselves for the labor of the day? They take the horses of the farm, unite in a place already designated, and pass the night in dancing, singing, and often in orgies.

These unfortunate slaves were astonished to see priests in the morning at the altar, and sometimes later at the plough, tracing the furrows, like

themselves, driving the horses, the oxen ; cutting down trees, rooting up the stumps of the forest ; in a word, like themselves, devoted to all kinds of agricultural work. In thus seeing men who were venerated in their country, work like themselves, they are honored before their own eyes, and the humble occupation of labor is elevated. They realized at last that manual labor does not degrade, nor work enslave the tiller of the soil.

Thus, from the commencement, we gained the good will of all our neighbors. We also rendered them as much service as possible, in making for them several articles which they could not do themselves. They, in turn, were fully disposed to render us all the aid in their power, of which we had need. There is not, even amongst the Protestant ministers themselves, a single one who did not show us some mark of good will. They have even among their co-religionists eulogized us in their preaching, viewing us, it is true, from a purely natural standpoint ; but this is frequently the means employed by God to bring men to conversion. "These are the good citizens," they would say, "who have just come from Europe. They are French, who bring us excellent methods of farming. They are going to effect much good in our country. It is not necessary to disturb them ; but on the contrary to hold them in high esteem." Such was the language of these usually intolerant men.

During the first year we could do but little in the way of agriculture, as our means were very limited. Besides, the fields were filled with briars, which caused us an incredible labor to destroy. It was necessary to pass over, with the hoe, the same field three or four times, in order to kill these villainous roots, as the dogtooth, which always sprouted anew. We had only one ordinary crop of corn and wheat, but the potatoes were very good and abundant. Wishing to plant the vine, we bought two or three thousand plants from the Dominican Fathers, who cultivated it with success at St. Rose, eighteen miles from Gethsemani. A lay brother built us an excellent bakehouse, which was considered a marvel in the country. The Americans were not accustomed to see anything like it, so you see that in a short time Gethsemani put on a new aspect. Unfortunately, I could not take a very active part in these improvements, as, for the eight months I remained at Gethsemani before returning to France, I was suffering with a complication of diseases, mortal in their nature. I was so exhausted with the fatigue of the voyage that, eight days after our arrival, I was attacked with an inflammation of the breast. The disease made such rapid progress that all the

community thought I was in danger of death. Two physicians were called, who, after following the course of the disease for three or four days, said there was no remedy for it. "Give him the last sacraments," said they to the superior, "there is nothing to hope. He will most assuredly die."

I was so worn out and the community so fixed in the idea of my death, that the deathrobe which each of us wears to the tomb, was in



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readiness at the foot of my bed. I saw my condition, nor did I deceive myself. I rejoiced in the thought that I had fulfilled my mission, which was to conduct the new colony to its destination, and that the direction of the house was waiting for another. I prepared myself for death to the best of my power, awaiting, with resignation and confidence in the mercy of God, the awful moment which the greatest saints see approach with fear and trembling. Now I was disturbed at the calm and tran-



quillity in which I found myself in the presence of death. Was it well founded confidence or insensibility? I do not know. I always saw it approach without fear, I might say with joy.

No longer hoping in material remedies, my community had recourse to spiritual. They prayed and had prayers said. They had the greatest confidence in the prayers of the saintly Bishop of Louisville, who had frequently obtained the cure of the sick. The sub-prior wrote to inform him of my condition and ask his prayers for me before God. This good Bishop, who, on our journey from Louisville, gave me evidence of an affection entirely paternal, wished most earnestly to comply with the desire of the community. He immediately commenced a novena of Masses for my intention, to obtain from God the restoration of my health. This good and venerable man said the Masses in his room, being himself unable to go to the Cathedral to celebrate the Mysteries. These were, I believe, the last Masses he could say, for immediately after the novena he became so feeble that he could no longer stand at the altar. Not satisfied to pray for me, he had others do likewise. He recommended me to all the religious communities of Louisville, especially to that of the good pastor, for whom he had a special predilection.

Nothing more was needed to do violence to heaven. The voice of the Bishop, whom people were pleased to call the Saint of Kentucky, was fully sufficient to obtain the grace sought. I was not long in feeling the effects of this powerful prayer. In the middle of November a change for the better was so suddenly effected that those who beheld it wished to see in it a kind of miracle. The Protestant doctor himself was especially struck by it. That very morning he stood at the foot of my bed, and, observing me closely, said to my brethren, who surrounded me: "It is all over. He has only five minutes to live." Saying these words, he suddenly withdrew. Scarcely had he mounted his horse than I regained consciousness. I raised my eyes to heaven to thank God for a favor which, I felt, had already been granted me. I have said favor, for, though it might well be one for a good religious to die, for me it was a favor to live. Probably I was far from being prepared for that terrible passage. I had not yet paid my debt to the justice of God, and a new series of trials were yet in store for me. Improvement became more and more sensible, and convalescence did not wait long to assert itself. The sickness reduced me to such a state of weakness that for more than a month I was unable to move a step. When it was necessary to make my bed, I was carried as an infant to the chair, and from the chair

to the bed. At length I became sufficiently strong to go out. I did some foolish things that might have cost me my life. I desired to engage in work too soon, and relapsed in such a manner as to afford new anxiety to the doctors and the community. During all the time of my convalescence, which continued till the month of July, I had suffered with such an obstinate diarrhœa that all the known remedies were ineffectual to cure it. I still suffered with this troublesome indisposition when I took the resolution to return to Europe.

The object of this voyage was less the regaining of health than to get finances wherewith to liquidate our indebtedness. We had yet on the property a debt of two thousand dollars (ten thousand francs), and were not only without money, but almost without vestments, those we brought from France being worn out, and it was almost impossible to procure others in the country. Moreover it was very necessary to find the means to build a church and monastery. What served for that purpose was entirely insufficient for monastic observances. Father Paulin, my sub-prior, who directed everything during my sickness, wished to go to work at once, and, consequently, made a bargain with a brick-owner for two hundred thousand bricks, which were to be made the following spring (1849). But as soon as I was restored and could govern myself, I revoked the contract, giving the brickman a small consideration. It was evidently too soon to begin, especially with our limited means ; nor did we know that, in accordance with our holy rule, we could live in a climate of whose nature we had not sufficient knowledge.

The Summer of 1849 passed in the ordinary employments of the season. Everyone enjoyed good health, except Father John Chrysostom, who fell sick in the month of June and died on the sixth of August. He was the first who paid tribute to the climate of the New World. As to me, I was languishing all Summer. What did me most benefit was a little exercise on horseback, which I took in the morning in the woods, in company with a lay brother, whom Father Sub-Prior sent with me, as a precaution against accident.

Towards the middle of the month of June, seeing the wants of the community, seeing too my infirm state pass to that of chronic, it seemed good to make a trip to Europe, both to recuperate my health and seek the necessary aid to sustain my community. After explaining the situation to the general chapter that was to meet the following September, I imparted my project to the community. Its condemnation was unani-

mous, as I could scarcely stand, and I wished to go alone, for the purpose of avoiding expenses. The entire project was considered rash—and not without some reason. As soon as the doctor heard of my resolution he used all the means in his power to prevent its execution. But my mind was made up, and everything he could say to me was useless. Then he declared it was my own affair, that I would not get as far as Cincinnati; that I could not escape the cholera, to which I was predisposed, and which was at that time very prevalent. The future showed that he was wrong in his calculations.

My departure was fixed for the fourth of July, the anniversary of the independence of the United States. My weakness, however, was such that I required the assistance of two brothers to get me into the little carriage which was to convey me to Bardstown, where I could get the public conveyance to Louisville. Three religious accompanied me to Bardstown, where it was necessary for me to procure the power of attorney. This was necessary for me in France, in order to regulate our family affairs.

It was, accordingly, in the midst of national rejoicings, that I took the stage for Louisville, which I reached the evening of the same day, exhausted with fatigue. I was the guest of the good Bishop Mgr. Flaget, to whom I hastened to express my gratitude for his great charity in praying for me during my sickness. I found the saintly Bishop on his bed, which I might say he no longer left. Not being able any longer to recite the breviary, he was telling his beads. I threw myself at the feet of this venerable prelate, asking his blessing. He raised me up, and taking me in his arms, embraced me with the tenderness of a father. I informed him of the motive of my journey. He was anxious, like all those at Gethsemani, about the dangers to which I would be exposed. After he understood its necessity, he did not discourage me. He said to me in his usual faith: "Go, my child, since the needs of your community demand it. The good God will preserve you and you will return safe and sound." He kept me with him fifteen days, in order that I might rest and gain strength. During these two weeks, I could see for myself how well he deserved the reputation of sanctity. He was no longer able to celebrate Mass or say the breviary, which was for him a great affliction. He substituted the rosary for the breviary, saying his beads continually. When the weather was fine, he was carried in an armchair to the balcony, from which there was a view of the yard and cathedral. Mass was said for him in the room, which he did not leave for a long

time. He united in spirit with all the priests whom he saw going to offer the Holy Sacrifice. One morning, in going out of my room, I went, as was my custom, to ask his benediction. As I was about to leave him, he asked me where I was going. I replied that I was going to offer Holy Mass. "Ah, how happy you are in being able to offer to



A CORRIDOR.

my God, my Jesus, who is then quite close to me. It is only the wall that separates us. Deprived of this happiness, I wish at least to unite with you. Please let me know the precise time you begin." Saying this, he arose and extended his arms towards the sanctuary, where reposed the object of his heart's affection.

As I had nothing to do except to grow strong, I passed the days with

him to keep him company. He was generally alone. The other priests were attending to the work of the ministry. Occasionally he would ask me to read some spiritual book, which he heard with the greatest attention. At its conclusion, he would not fail to make some good reflections which would render him patient and resigned in his suffering. He felt, he said, as if he were encircled with a girdle of pain. Placing his hand on his forehead, he asked if blood did not ooze from it. I doubt not that our Saviour, to complete the purification of this faithful dispenser of His grace, made him, in a measure, a participator in the sorrowful crowning of thorns. Knowing that he had received from Rome some precious relics, I asked him to give me a few, which he cheerfully granted. Among these, I was fortunate in finding a relic of my patron, St. Eutropius, bishop, Saint in France and martyr of the fourth century. Knowing the veneration that the people of France had for St. Eutropius, I asked him to sign me some pictures, which I could carry with me, for the purpose of distributing to my acquaintances. Notwithstanding the difficulty he had to write even his name, he yielded with a good grace to my desire, and signed a large number of them for me.

We are happy to possess at Gethsemani a small picture of the Blessed Virgin, bearing the Infant Jesus in her arms, signed by this holy bishop, who, besides his signature, inscribed at the bottom of the picture, several texts of Scripture and the Fathers, on the happiness of solitude, poverty and religious mortification. We guard it as a precious relic and as an evidence of the interest that this good bishop had taken in us. At the head of the picture he wrote: "To our very dear religious of Notre Dame of Gethsemani, March, 1849." Like all the saints, this venerable prelate would make use of everything to bring him to God. A plant, a leaf, a flower, would suggest some pious reflection. There were in the yard some trees planted before the balcony. One day a pretty bird perched on one of the branches and began singing. The old man, charmed with the melody, invited the little songster to continue: "Sing, my little darling, sing on. It is for me the good God has sent you. Sing, and sing well. Fulfil the mission that God has given you, by your sweet melody. Glorify Him for me, who can no longer do anything for Him."

One day that he was more uneasy than usual, he received the visit of his niece, Miss Eulalia Flaget, who, for some time past, had left the congregation of the Loretines, of which she was a member, and who then lived at Portelan. Knowing my poverty, and the long voyage I was

about to undertake, she gave me, through a servant of her venerable uncle, several useful articles, such as linens, flannels, handkerchiefs, etc., and from her own private purse, ten dollars. Afterwards, she joined the ladies of the Sacred Heart at New York. At length, after three weeks sojourn with Mgr. Flaget, whom I was to see no more in this world, I set out on my journey to New York, notwithstanding the representations made to me, of falling a victim of the cholera, while passing the places where it raged with so much fury. But, full of confidence in God, and finding myself much improved, nothing could prevent me.

Accordingly, I took the steamer for Cincinnati, about the end of July. I arrived in that city on Sunday morning about five o'clock. I went to the bishop's house, where I was well received. His Grace, the Archbishop, was sorely afflicted, seeing his flock cruelly decimated with the cholera. The night before there were two hundred victims in the city and suburbs. It was, therefore, a matter of prudence, to remain as briefly as possible in the city, where, moreover, I had nothing to do. I said Mass in the cathedral, and after dinner prepared to depart. During dinner, the Archbishop said to me, "My father, you have come in a good time. I have here three Irish religious Ursulines and one young lady of eighteen years, a niece of one of the religious, whom I am sending to Ireland. I was sad in seeing them go without a priest, who could give them spiritual aid in case of necessity, and see now, how Divine Providence sends you at the moment of their departure, which is arranged for this evening. This coincidence can also be very useful to yourself, for you do not know English, and Madame McCarthy, aunt of the young lady of whom I have spoken, knows French very well. She can, therefore, be of very great assistance to you during the voyage."

I was, as may be imagined, charmed with this happy circumstance, and I blessed the good God, who came so visibly to my aid from the commencement of my journey. At two o'clock in the afternoon the Archbishop gave me ten dollars towards the expense of my journey, and I left for New York in company with the three religious and the young lady. Madame McCarthy was a very distinguished Irish lady, general superioress of the Ursulines in Ireland, and came to this country to found a house of her order at Cincinnati. The house being established, she was returning to Ireland with her niece, who accompanied her everywhere.

Our journey was made through Sandusky, Buffalo and Albany. I was pretty well as far as the last city, but from there to New York I was

very sick. I attributed this indisposition to an imprudence I committed in drinking ice water on the steamboat that conveyed us to New York. This boat was remarkable for its richness and dimensions. It was the finest and largest I ever saw. We arrived in New York very early in the morning. Here I met an individual of questionable appearance. I was on the side of the boat opposite that of the city, looking, with valise in hand, at the beautiful Hudson. This individual approached me and spoke a few words in English that I did not understand. Seeing that I was a stranger, he looked at my valise, then looking around as if to assure himself that no one saw us, he looked at me again in a kind of excitement, and measured as it were the distance from the boat to the water. I was frightened at these suspicious movements and hurried to the other side, where I was in view of some people standing on the quay. When my man saw me depart, he seemed much disappointed and called me to him several times. I need hardly say, that I did not accept the invitation. I left the steamboat, and went a short way into the city. My companion came after me, and spoke to me on a street corner, inviting me into a tavern. I immediately joined a group of five or six people who were going to the boat. It was only then, that this man, of whose intentions I was ignorant, ceased to follow me. Having arrived at New York, I went to Brooklyn to a good family named Bayer, whom I only knew by reputation. I was there received and treated with all manner of respect. Thanks to the good care of Mrs. Bayer and her kind mother, I lost entirely my indisposition during the two or three days I remained with this excellent family. Mr. Bayer, a Belgian by birth, and knowing French as well as English, was not inferior in anything to his worthy wife and virtuous mother-in-law. He went himself to New York to engage my passage for Europe. I took shipping on the *Roscius*, an American vessel bound for Liverpool. Mr. Bayer accompanied me to the ship, supplying me with a case of excellent Bordeaux and two bottles of old cognac.

By a chance, wholly providential, the three Ursulines of Cincinnati engaged passage for Europe on the same ship. The *Roscius* left New York on the 28th of July, 1849. The passengers of the first class were only thirteen or fourteen in number. At the beginning of the voyage I became seasick, as usual; but it was only a matter of a few days. During the entire voyage, which was fifty-two days, the weather was charming. The captain, a man of forty-five or fifty years of age, was a gentleman in everything the word implies, and showed me the greatest kind-

ness. About the middle of the voyage I was sick a few days, and he attended me as a mother would a child. Thanks to these attentions, I began at once to grow better. To give me strength, he made me a present of a bottle of cognac, twenty years old, and many other luxuries which only the wealthy can afford. Nor was I the only sick one. There were others who were in a far more serious condition than I. Among them was a young Irish doctor, twenty-eight years old, who had just made a tour of the United States, and was returning to his native land. About the middle of the journey this young man, who was a Catholic and had a brother a priest, was stricken with cholera. The case was very alarming, and it seemed that death was not far off. He asked to have his confession heard immediately. Madame McCarthy, who gave him all her attention, came to tell me of the desire of this sick man and the fear he had of dying before confession.

But what was to be done? I was the only priest on board, and did not know English. The sick man did not know French or Latin, the only two languages in which I could hear him. I placed the difficulty before Madame McCarthy, who immediately solved it. "My Father, the sick man has already foreseen this difficulty, and has proposed a very unusual means. He asks that I, myself, hear his confession and translate it into French for you. But, Father, that is too much. I could not submit to it. I, a sister, to hear the confession of a young man, twenty-eight years of age! a doctor by profession, and who has just finished a tour of the United States, where license is taken for liberty! The task is beyond me." "Madame," I said, "it is possible, although this ministry may be very painful to you. But, since the sick man asks it, I believe you ought to render him the service, on which may depend the salvation of his soul." I had great difficulty in getting her to decide, when a thought suggested itself to me that removed all difficulty. "Madame, there is a means of performing this burdensome duty. You are going to be my interpreter without knowing the sins of the penitent." "And how, Father?" "Here it is. You will remain near the sick man, having between you and him a curtain in such a manner that you cannot see him. I shall be placed in a position where he can see me. You will give him in English the questions I ask in French, and he will give me the sign *yes* or *no*, according as he may deem proper. By means of his fingers, he can give me an idea of the number without you being able to know whether he is guilty of the sin or not. Explain to him immediately this means, which will leave him more at ease."

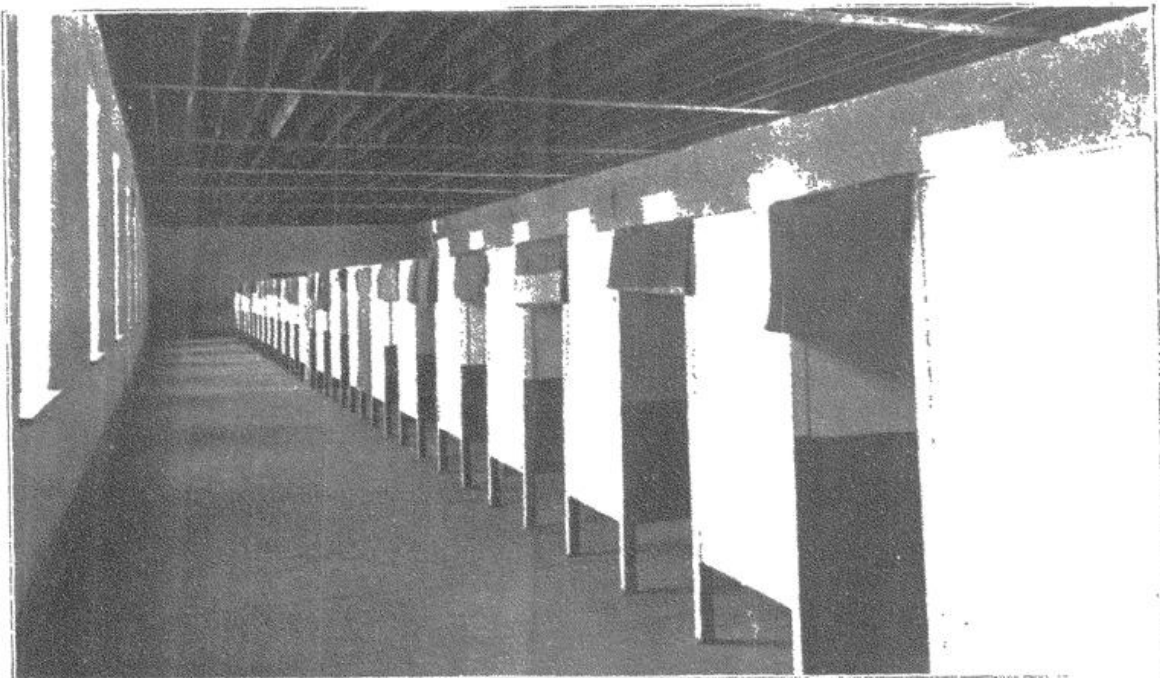


To this proposition my good religious consented without trouble. We both went to the sick man. I made my preparation while she explained to him our mode of procedure. We placed ourselves in the position agreed upon. But our penitent, fearing that he would not make a good confession in that way, removed the curtain and, looking at the sister, commenced his confession. From the first words, the good religious could not contain her emotion, and trembling in every member, exclaimed, "Oh Father, what a ministry I have performed to-day!" I encouraged her, and she heard the entire confession of the sick man, who made it with the same simplicity and sincerity as if he were alone with his confessor.

As on the twentieth of December of this year, the Abbey of Gethsemani will have the happiness to celebrate its Golden Jubilee, the numerous readers of the *Messenger* will pardon us if we continue Abbot Eutropius' history, from the arrival of the Trappists in Kentucky down to the present day. In the preceding pages we have followed the good Father Eutropius and his courageous band of religious, from the monastery of Melleray, Diocese of Nantes, France, to Gethsemani, Kentucky. Many undoubtedly sympathized with these brave monks in the various and difficult situations in which they found themselves during their journey, after leaving their solitude and being again thrown amid the bustle and noise of the world, to which they had been strangers for years, and of which they thought they had taken an everlasting farewell. The Most Rev. M. J. Spalding, in his life of Bishop Flaget, says of their arrival in Kentucky: "Another of the joyful occurrences, well calculated to cheer him (Bishop Flaget), and prepare him to descend to the tomb without uneasiness, and in perfect composure of spirit, was the arrival of a colony of about forty Trappists, from the Abbey of Melleray, France. The Bishop had always been partial to this rigid order, for, more than forty years before, he had made formal application to be received as a member.

The Trappists arrived in Louisville late in December, 1848, and they immediately proceeded to take possession of their new home at Gethsemani, fourteen miles beyond Bardstown. This place, having about sixteen hundred acres of land attached, had been for many years used as an academy by a branch of the Loretines. The buildings were of wood, but they were deemed suitable for the temporary use of the monks; and the farm with the establishment had been accordingly purchased some months previously, by two members of the order, sent out to America for the purpose of finding a suitable location.

The monks arrived at Gethsemani on Wednesday, December 20, 1848, and immediately resumed their former austere and laborious manner of life. Christmas of that year was the first festival they celebrated at Gethsemani, and, as may be expected, drew a large crowd of people from the surrounding country to the place. Every one was anxious to see the white-robed children of St. Bernard, of whom Most Rev. M. J. Spalding says: "These monks belong to the more strict observance of the Cistercian Institute, one of the most austere religious orders in the Church. They devote their lives to manual labor, to perpetual silence, to fasting, and to prayer. Seven hours of each day are



A TRAPPIST DORMITORY.

spent in the church, and as many are given to manual labor. They never taste flesh, fish, eggs, or butter, except when obliged by sickness.

"Their penitential austerities would seem almost incredible in this age of boasted progress and enlightenment, as well as of boundless sensual indulgence. Their vigorous lives astonish the worldling, who can appreciate nothing which does not contribute to material progress and enjoyment; they are a matter of admiration for all true Christians, who, enlightened by Christian faith, are able to estimate the awful malice of sin and the absolute necessity of penance. He who Himself led a poor and hard life, and who said to His disciples: 'If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me,' must look

down with a smile of complacency on those pious recluses, who, to expiate their own and others' sins, devote themselves, for His love, to this life of severe privations.

“ Yet in the midst of their hard labors and penitential austerities, these good monks are remarkably cheerful and happy. The peace of God, surpassing all understanding, beams constantly from their countenances. They have hitherto been blessed with general good health, notwithstanding the tribute every foreigner has to pay to our unequal climate. They enjoy more peace of mind, and more heartfelt happiness than many, who, reposing in the midst of luxury, deride their lives as mere folly and fanaticism.

“ The monks are chiefly agriculturists, and by introducing the culture of the grape, and other useful improvements, they will no doubt contribute much to—what is most valued in our enlightened age of money-making—the material prosperity of the country.

“ We may well imagine, with what joy our holy bishop saw thus renewed, amidst the forests of his diocese, the wonders which had been witnessed in the primitive period of the Church, in the austere lives of the solitaries who peopled the deserts of Nubia, Syria and Thebais.”

As we stated above, there were several log cabins on the place, and although these were mostly disconnected, the monks soon converted them into a chapel, choir, chapter-room, dormitory, etc. To say that under the circumstances their lives were rendered doubly severe and mortified, does not half express it. But nothing discouraged them; they went to work with a will. Father M. Eutropius was everywhere, giving orders here, giving advice there, but everywhere encouraging the brethren by his own example, not to lose one moment of the precious time, but to work faithfully for the love and glory of God. Again let us quote Archbishop Spalding when speaking of the Trappists in Gethsemani: “ They work at various handicraft trades and as tillers of the soil. Men who are not encumbered by wives and children, or by the obligation to work for the support of others, may be received as novices, provided they accept the rule, and are willing to abide by the established customs of the monastery.”

Many did come with the intention of joining the Order, but finding the life of a Trappist too severe, the greater number left again. On this account many entreaties were made to the prior, Father Eutropius, to obtain some mitigations, because of the altered circumstances in this country, etc., but he would never consent. His invariable answer was :

“We follow the rule of St. Benedict, and if so many thousands have observed this rule in past ages, why not we?” And to tell the truth, his monks were as firm as he in discountenancing all dispensations. They had promised to observe the rule of St. Benedict with the additional customs of the Cistercian Order, and they would observe it till death.

Shortly after their arrival the monks opened a school for the gratuitous education of boys. Not only Catholic boys, but also boys of other denominations, were admitted, and the school soon numbered sixty pupils, who were taught reading, writing, arithmetic and English grammar. The monks also gave religious instruction on Sundays to a large congregation composed of people living a few miles from the monastery. Archbishop Spalding says: “Their offices and religious ceremonies are conducted with much decorum; their exterior, denoting as it does the very spirit of mortification, does not hide from the looker-on the lively joy that inflames their countenances; and altogether, edification has been the result of their appearance in Kentucky, as well for Protestants as for Catholics. Among the former there have been instances of those ‘who came to scoff and remained to pray.’”

In 1849, Father Eutropius went to Rome to recommend the new colony to the fatherly protection of His Holiness, Pope Pius IX. He was most kindly received by the Sovereign Pontiff, who was pleased to place in his hands a Rescript, bearing date of July 21, 1850, by which the new monastery, before ranked only as a priory, was raised to the dignity of an abbey with all the usual privileges.

In the same year a new colony arrived from France, consisting of thirteen members, of whom three were priests. On the thirtieth day of April, 1851, the late Most Rev. M. J. Spalding, then Bishop of Louisville, arrived at the monastery, and, after solemn Vespers and Benediction, the community went to the Chapter, where his Lordship, in the name of His Holiness, published the Rescript, and at the same time announced that the election of an abbot would take place on the following day.

Consequently, on the first of May, after a solemn High Mass, celebrated by the Very Rev. F. Chambige, the Bishop occupying his throne, the capitulars, or members of the Chapter, repaired to the Chapter Room, where the election took place, according to the decrees of the Holy Council of Trent, the Rt. Rev. Bishop presiding.

As was expected, the Rev. F. Maria Eutropius was almost unanimously chosen abbot. The community then returned to the church,

where the *Te Deum* was solemnly chanted. The Most Rev. Dom Maria Thomas, Abbot-General of the whole Cistercian Order at the time, approved of the election, and the documents of approval having been received from Rome, the day for imparting the abbatial benediction was appointed.

On October 26, the twentieth Sunday after Pentecost, the new abbot was solemnly blessed by the Bishop of Louisville, the Right Rev. M. J. Spalding, in the old Cathedral of St. Joseph at Bardstown, Ky., there being present on the occasion forty-six of his religious, besides many priests and a great number of the laity. The Bishop himself preached an eloquent and impressive sermon on the occasion. This was the first abbatial election and blessing in the United States. Among the priests present were Fathers J. B. Emig, S.J., President, and A. VanHulst, S.J.; F. Nussbaum, S.J.; J. Baltus, S.J., and N. Congiato, S.J., Professors of St. Joseph's College, Bardstown.

But now it was necessary that either the buildings should be enlarged or others more suitable for a monastery put up in their place; for "the monks are cramped for room in respect to both church accommodation and family living. They are in need of funds to build a suitable church and a monastery expansive enough for their needs. They have been obliged hitherto to content themselves with a number of log cabins that had formerly sufficed for the lesser wants of the former owners of the place, the Sisters of Loretto. Their church was too contracted to admit the attendance of others than the members of the community. On extraordinary occasions, in order to afford the people of the neighborhood opportunity to hear Mass, they were under the necessity of erecting an altar in the open air. When it is considered that these humble followers of the God-Man are filled with but zeal and charity, the first for God's glory, and the last for the welfare of their fellow-men, it may be easily imagined with what anxiety they wait for the necessary means of realizing their hopes—the funds requisite for the building of a church and monastery. If unceasing industry, heartfelt piety toward God and habitual charity toward God's creatures meet with just reward, even in this world, it may be expected that their church and monastery will soon rise in the wilderness of Gethsemani, beacon lights to guide erring sinners on the way to salvation."

Abbot Eutropius left his solitude once more, and, with the sanction of his superiors, went to solicit alms to enable him to erect these buildings. He was accompanied by Father M. Paulinus, who had sufficiently

mastered the English language to be of great service to him. It was with the greatest reluctance that Abbot Eutropius bade farewell to his spiritual children and undertook his laborious and disagreeable task of raising the necessary funds; but he knew that it was not for himself he was doing it, but for the greater honor and glory of God and the spiritual and temporal welfare of future generations. He always took for his motto the words of his holy father and law-giver, St. Benedict, U.I.O.G.D. —“that in all things God may be glorified.” Before setting out he appointed Father Maria Benedict administrator of the monastery during



GOD'S ACRE.

his absence. Abbot Eutropius collected in New York and other States of the Union, then went to Canada, and lastly to France.

During this time the monks at home did not remain idle, but, besides cultivating the farm, they also commenced to burn brick for the new buildings. In the year 1852, Mr. W. Keely was chosen to make all the plans and specifications for the buildings and to superintend the erection of the new monastery church. Messrs. W. Riggs, Alex. Crutchfield, Weikel and Bunnell burned the two millions of bricks used in the building. Mr. George Pottinger, a neighbor, although a Protestant, became a firm friend of the monks from the very beginning, and generously gave all the rock needed in the construction of church and monastery.

Although Abbot M. Eutropius possessed a robust constitution, yet the manifold and incessant labors he had to undergo, together with the penitential life he led, were the cause that his health began to fail, and being a man of a very tender conscience, he thought that he could no longer be at the head of the community and discharge his duties in a satisfactory manner. He therefore returned to France, and after consulting his Superiors, he resigned his office into the hands of the Most Rev. Abbot-General, in 1859. At the same time he asked and obtained permission to return to his former monastery, there to prepare for a happy death. He remained in Melleray, giving the brightest example of obedience, humility and all other virtues which should adorn a religious, until 1868. In that year it pleased God to call him forth again from his solitude, and to place him once more at the head of a community. He was summoned to Rome and appointed the first regular Superior of the Monastery of Saints Vincent and Anastasius, better known as the Three Fountains. The Monastery of the Three Fountains had been given to St. Bernard and his children, and the Cistercians had it for several hundred years. It then passed into the hands of other Orders, but, on account of the unhealthiness of the place, nobody could live there, and it was almost abandoned, when Pope Pius IX. of holy memory, asked the reformed Cistercians or Trappists to take charge of it. And thus it was that Abbot Eutropius became the first regular Trappist Superior of that home, of which Blessed Eugene III. was abbot, before he was raised to the Chair of St. Peter. Abbot M. Eutropius remained Superior of the Three Fountains from 1868 until 1874, when he ended his laborious and mortified life by a saintly death on September 17, of that year.

Abbot Maria Eutropius was born the twenty-second day of May, 1804, at Vairé, Vendée, France. He was the son of James Proust and his wife, Mary, *nee* Barbeau. After going through his college course with distinction, he entered the seminary, and in due time was raised to the priesthood. Desirous of a life of still greater perfection, he entered the monastery at Melleray, in January, 1845. Surely, the best way to begin the new year. On the sixth of the same month, he received the holy habit. He chose the Trappist Order on account of its being in a special manner dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. The Cistercians were the first to recite every day in choir the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, besides the canonical office, a custom which is practised yet, and to dedicate all their monasteries in her honor. Abbot Eutropius, from his very

youth, cherished a great devotion to the Mother of God, and therefore it was only natural that he should prefer to be enrolled among her children and in one of her houses. With all the fervor of a soul striving after perfection, did he enter upon his novitiate, and then laid the foundation of that humility, obedience and regularity which distinguished him throughout life. No doubt he had his great trials and temptations, for the life of a Trappist is anything but an easy one. But in all his difficulties he would have recourse to her, whom he had chosen as his Mother, Advocate and Protectress, and by her assistance he was enabled to persevere, and had the happiness to pronounce his vows on the eleventh day of January, 1846.

Two years later, we see him at the head of a colony of monks, carrying a heavy cross, on his way to the far West. He is under obedience, and his superiors thought him to be the most suitable person to establish a new house of the Order in the wilderness of Kentucky. This very fact tells us more plainly than words, what sort of a man he was. During the three years which he had spent in the monastery, his superiors had acquired a full knowledge of his character and abilities. The great Archbishop, M. J. Spalding, said of him: "Father Maria Eutropius proved himself a man of determination, no less than of prudence and courage." Although a strict disciplinarian, who would severely punish the least transgression of the Rule, he was, nevertheless, a kind father to all, and had a special care of the old and infirm. He would spare nothing to give relief to the latter, or anything which could bring them ease or pleasure, mindful of the words of St. Benedict: "The Abbot then must take extreme care, that the sick have nothing to suffer on the part of the cellarers and attendants, mindful that the sins of his disciples will be visited upon himself." He therefore paid a visit to the infirmary immediately after chapter every morning, speaking words of consolation and cheer to the sick, and minutely inquiring into all their wants. This beautiful custom is kept up to this day.

This was the reason why all loved him dearly, and still speak of him in glowing terms. There are several members in the house yet who have been under him, among them a brother, who joined the Order in France in 1847, when seventeen years old. He accompanied Father Eutropius to Kentucky, and is thus one of the founders of Gethsemani. This brother still enjoys good health, although he has passed fifty-one of the sixty-eight years of his life in the monastery, the best proof that one does not shorten his life by entering an austere Order.



Abbot Maria Eutropius' life, from the day he set out from his monastery in France to establish a house in the United States, until 1859, had been a very busy one ; he had put up the monastery, the material building ; he had planted, but now he wished for another to take his place and water the plant, in order that God might give the increase. It is true, the holy Rule was observed, but owing to his frequent and unavoidable absence from the house, Father M. Eutropius could not, with the best of will, see to the spiritual advancement of the community as he should have liked to do. At this time there was a man at Gethsemani whom God had chosen to perform this great work, and this was Father Maria Benedict.

Father Maria Benedict was born on June 8, 1820, at Moutoir, Lower Loire, France. His parents were Peter Berger and Mary Berger, *nie* Bobet. In baptism he had received the names Peter and Mary. When arrived at the proper age, he was sent to college, and after graduating with the highest honors, he took a complete course in theology. In his humility, he thought himself unworthy to become a priest, and was appointed a professor. But seeing the vanity of everything the world could offer him, he resolved to serve God as a simple religious in the austere Order of La Trappe. On April 27, 1848, he entered the monastery at Melleray, France, and took the holy habit on September 3, of the same year. He was among the number chosen to accompany Father Eutropius to Kentucky, and thus became one of the founders of Gethsemani. Father Benedict was admitted to his vows on April 2, 1851. He had acted in the capacity of administrator of the house during the absence of Father M. Eutropius, and had also held the office of prior for several years. On the day on which Abbot M. Eutropius resigned, Father M. Benedict was appointed superior of the monastery. This was on January 30, 1860, and he began without delay to exercise his powers of superior. Being a very exact and scrupulous observer of the Rule, he watched over its observance with an eagle eye, and strove to root up the smallest weed that would show itself in this Garden of God. The seemingly most insignificant regulation was of the greatest importance to him.

When any postulant would present himself for admission, he would strictly follow the words of the holy Rule, namely : " If any one comes to the monastery with the purpose of changing his life, let him not easily find admission, but let the words of St. John be remembered, ' Try the spirits, whether they are of God.' In case he continues knocking at the

gate, and stands four or five days all the difficulties and trials that he is subjected to, and remains firm in his resolution, let him be allowed to enter. . . . If he gives proof that he intends to remain steadfast, at the end of two months the Rule is read to him, and he is then addressed in the following words : ' Behold the law under which you desire to combat ; if you think you are able to observe it, come in, if not, you are still free, retire.' "

Of the great number who came to join the Order, many withdrew again, becoming frightened at the prospect before them. Yet when the Superior saw a good will and disposition in any one and that blind obedience which St. Benedict requires of his children, he would show himself a most kind and loving father, and would help the weak soul to overcome the difficulties and temptations which presented themselves.

Such was the man who was now at the head of the community, and who was destined by Divine Providence to lead his spiritual children to a high degree of perfection.

During the same year of 1859, the Right Rev. Dom Maria Benno, Abbot of Mount Mellary, near Cappoquin, County Waterford, Ireland, came to America, having been appointed Visitor of the Trappist monasteries in the United States. After finishing the regular visitation of Gethsemani, he presided at the election of a new abbot for this house. And although Father M. Benedict had given proofs of his unbending severity with regard to the observance of rule, yet he was elected abbot. This is a further proof of the religious spirit which reigned in the monastery and of the zeal, of which each member was possessed, to be worthy and faithful children of St. Benedict and St. Bernard. The election having received the confirmation of the Most Rev. Abbot-General, the installation took place on April 19, 1861, and on May 9, of the same year, Father M. Benedict received the abbatial blessing in St. Catharine's Church, New Haven, Ky., the Right Rev. M. J. Spalding being the officiating prelate on the occasion. He also delivered one of his masterly and instructive discourses. Among the many distinguished clergymen present were the late Rev. D. A. Deparcq, Superior of the Sisters of Nazareth, Very Rev. F. Chambige, Rev. F. Wuyte and Rev. Francis De Meulder. There was also an immense concourse of people, the church not giving accommodation to one-half.

The new abbot continued to labor for the temporal and spiritual welfare of those entrusted to him, and taught all, by word, but still more by example, what a monk ought to be. He was regularity itself and would

never, unless prevented by sickness, absent himself from any of the spiritual exercises of the community. He found his greatest delight in being among his religious, and therefore would leave the house only on urgent and necessary business, returning again as soon as possible. He was a man of clear head, strong will and steady hand, and therefore proved himself equal to the most trying emergency. Such was the Abbot Maria Benedict, and the house flourished under him and was known far and wide for strict observance of the Rule.

On the first of May, 1864, Abbot M. Benedict consecrated the altar, and solemnly blessed the church, set apart for the laity at Gethsemani.

In 1866, he was present at the Plenary Council of Baltimore, and also at that of 1884-85, and in the Fall of the same year saw his long cherished hopes fulfilled, for, on November 15, the beautiful church at Gethsemani was solemnly consecrated to the worship of the Most High under the invocation of our Lady. It was a memorable day in the history of Gethsemani, and its anniversary is celebrated with great pomp. The firm and life-long friend and admirer of the Trappists, the late Most Rev. M. J. Spalding, came all the way from Baltimore to deliver the sermon on the occasion.

The late Most Rev. J. B. Purcell, Archbishop of Cincinnati, consecrated the church and High Altar, and sang the solemn Pontifical Mass; the late Right Rev. P. J. Lavielle, Bishop of Louisville, consecrated the altars of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph; the late Right Rev. J. Timon, C.M., Bishop of Buffalo, consecrated the altars of Saints Bernard, Stephen, Abbot Eutropius and Robert, and the late Right Rev. M. Bruno, Abbot of Mt. Mellary, Ireland, consecrated the altar of St. Benedict. There was a large number of distinguished clergymen present, among others, Very Rev. B. J. Spalding, V.G., of Louisville; Very Rev. F. Coosemans, S.J., Provincial, St. Louis; Very Rev. T. O'Carrol, O.P., Provincial of the Dominicans; Very Rev. F. Celestine, O.S.B., Prior of St. Joseph's, Covington, Ky.; Very Rev. D. J. Meagher, O. P., of St. Louis Bertrand's, Louisville; Very Rev. F. Egan, O.P., Prior of St. Rose's, Kentucky; Rev. L. Bax, of St. John's, Louisville; Fathers Luke, Anselm and Leander, O.S.F., of Louisville.

In 1887, Abbot Benedict's health began to fail, and he had an attack of apoplexy. But this did not hinder him from keeping a watchful eye on everybody and everything, and from governing the house with his accustomed energy and prudence. When no longer able to walk about, he had one of the brothers construct a wheel-chair, in which he had him-

self conveyed from place to place to superintend the monks at their various occupations. But growing gradually weaker, and seeing that there was no hope of recovery, he resigned his office on September 2, 1889, and retired to a small cell, free from all anxieties and responsibilities, to prepare for a happy death. He lived long enough to assist at the election of his successor in office, and then, full of resignation to the holy will of God, gave up his soul into the hands of his Creator on August 13, 1890, whilst the brethren were singing vespers in the choir. Thus Abbot M. Benedict, who was noted for his great and ardent devotion to the Mother of God, had the happiness to die on the very day on which, according to tradition, his holy Patroness passed out of this life. Let us hope, since many in the Order look upon him as a saint, that he also enjoyed the privilege of celebrating the feast of her Assumption in Heaven.

On the very day on which Abbot M. Benedict resigned, September 2, 1889, the Rev. F. Maria Edward was appointed Superior; and having given sufficient proof of his administrative ability and monastic virtue, both as a simple religious and when exercising the various offices with which he had been entrusted, he was unanimously elected third abbot of Gethsemani on May 9, 1890. The Rt. Rev. Dom Maria Eugene, of Melleray, France, who was here on his regular visitation, presided at the election.

The election received the confirmation of the Most Rev. Abbot General on the twenty-seventh of the same month, and the installation took place on the Feast of the Nativity of the Bl. Virgin, September 8. On the Feast of St. Michael, September 29, 1890, F. Maria Edward received the abbatial benediction from the hands of the Ordinary of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Wm. G. McCloskey, in the Abbey Church. The Rt. Rev. Finton Mundwiler, O.S.B., Abbot of St. Meinrad, Ind., together with a great number of the secular and regular clergy, assisted. The church and grounds adjacent were densely crowded with people.

The new abbot was born in 1833, at La Mure Grénoble, France, and was the son of Joseph Chaix Bourban and his wife, Ann Mary, *née* Romond. After going through his collegiate course, he spent several years in travelling. On July 26, 1861, he entered the monastery at Gethsemani, where he received the habit October 6. On November 1, he took his vows and commenced his theological studies.

The first abbot, M. Eutropius, had erected the buildings which are admired by every visitor. The second abbot, M. Benedict, built up

the spiritual edifice, if I may be allowed to express myself thus, and the aim of the third abbot, Maria Edward, was to bring the school to a high standard. As we have already stated, the monks had opened a school shortly after their arrival in Gethsemani. This school prospered, and in the course of time the buildings were too small to accommodate all those who applied for admittance. In 1891, Abbot M. Edward saw the necessity of providing more room for the many students. He therefore enlarged the buildings and had them heated by steam. He also had an ice-house erected. The college buildings are situated about one-quarter of a mile from the monastery, on high ground, and are surrounded by beautiful wooded hills and pleasant valleys. The location is delightful, healthy and easy of access. On account of its seclusion and remoteness from the distractions and dangers of school life in cities and towns, it affords all the advantages which parents could wish for their sons. The large farm, gardens and dairy of the monastery furnish an abundance of choicest fruits, vegetables, etc. The institution was chartered in 1868, by an act of the Legislature of Kentucky, and incorporated in 1896.

Failing health, however, compelled Abbot M. Edward to seek relief in France, where he accordingly went in 1895, with the permission of the Most Rev. Abbot General. Before leaving, he appointed the Father Prior, M. Benedict, administrator during his absence. But instead of regaining his health, he found that even the best physicians of Europe could not benefit him. He, therefore, concluded to return to his beloved Gethsemani, and to die surrounded by his brethren. When he reached Paris on his way home, his strength completely deserted him, and he saw that it would be altogether impossible for him to reach Gethsemani alive. He therefore, sent his resignation to the Most Rev. Abbot General, and was appointed chaplain and confessor of the Trappistine Monastery of Our Lady des Gardes, near Chenillé, France.

The writer of this sketch has a letter from him dated December 18, 1897, in which he says referring to his infirmity: "I know its gravity, and I am prepared for all. In spite of the treatment of one of our most celebrated doctors in Paris, I have no hope whatever to see Gethsemani again. So, dear Father, if I would solicit your good prayers, it would not be for my cure, but that God would give me a happy death. In return, I pray and will pray, up to my last hour, that God may bless you all and grant to the Community a Superior according to His heart."

The Most Rev. Abbot General, after receiving the resignation of

Abbot M. Edward, and seeing the impossibility of his ever returning to Gethsemani, appointed on January 24 last, the Rev. Maria Edmund Obrecht, Superior of Gethsemani. He is from the Monastery of the Three Fountains near Rome. As we have seen, in 1868, the first Superior of Gethsemani was appointed Superior of the Three Fountains, and thirty years later, in 1898, a religious of that house is made Superior of Gethsemani.

The Very Rev. Father M. Edmund is known to many of the readers of the *Messenger*, having spent four years in New York City, in obedience to the Holy Father Leo XIII., to solicit alms for the historic monastery of Saints Vincent and Anastasius, better known as the Three Fountains, near Rome. Born in Alsace in 1853, after going through his course of studies with distinction in the Seminary of Strasburg, he, like so many other patriotic youths, took up arms in defence of his country during the Franco-Prussian war. A few years later he followed the example of the present Most Rev. Abbot General of the Order, Dom M. Sebastian Wyart, and exchanged the uniform of a soldier for the habit of St. Bernard, and laid down the armor of earthly kings to don the armor of the Lord of Hosts. He applied for admission and was received into the Monastery of La Grande-Trappe, France, on February 10, 1875. He was admitted to his simple vows on the feast of St. Joseph, March 19, 1877. In the following year he was sent to the Monastery of the Three Fountains near Rome. In 1879 Dom Francis Regis, the Procurator-General of the Order, died, and F. M. Edmund was appointed Vice-Procurator-General, with his residence in the city of Rome. Since then he has held high offices in the Order, having acted as Visitor on several occasions, and administrator of monasteries. In all these various positions he gave entire satisfaction to Superiors. In recognition of his many and great services to the Order he was appointed to the responsible office he now holds.

As he is still in the prime of life, forty-five years of age, and following in the footsteps of his predecessor, a model of religious observance, we may confidently trust that, under his enlightened guidance, the whole community may advance in the path of perfection to the end they proposed to themselves in entering religion.

Before concluding, we beg pardon for taxing the patience of the reader a little while longer by giving him a short description of our various buildings.

The approach to the monastery is through an avenue of stately elms,

the saplings of which were brought from France fifty years ago, and formed part of the luggage which caused good F. M. Eutropius so much trouble and annoyance.

There are eighty-six trees in all, and they are planted in four rows. They are the rendezvous for innumerable birds, who fill the air with their music from early morning until long after sunset during the greater part of the year. It seems that these songsters know that they are safe here, and that the quiet monks will not molest them. And thus they return, year after year, to join their voices with those of the monks in praising God. They remind one of the song of Azarias and his companions in the fiery furnace, as we read in the Book of Daniel, Chapter III.: "O all ye fowls of the air, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all for ever. O all ye sons of men, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all for ever. O all ye priests of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all for ever. O ye servants of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all for ever. O all ye religious, bless the Lord, the God of gods: praise Him and give thanks; because His mercy endureth for ever and ever."

The avenue is four hundred and forty-five feet in length and eighty-six feet in width, and leads to the lodge. Over the gate of this lodge in a niche, there is a life-size statue of the Blessed Virgin, with the Infant, indicating that the visitor is about to enter a house dedicated to the Queen of heaven and earth. Below this niche the words, "*Pax Intran-  
tibus*, Peace to all who enter," in large raised letters, greet the visitor and bid him welcome. At the lodge there are rooms for the brother janitor or porter, and his assistants, as St. Benedict prescribes in his holy Rule, "in order that those who come to the monastery may find him first; and let him be always ready to return an answer. The moment any one knocks at the gate, or he hears a poor man's voice, let him answer *Deo gratias* or *Benedicat*, and with mildness, inspired by the fear of God and mingled with ardent charity, he shall give him answer without delay," Chapter LXVI. Thus the porter has to be at the gate at all times, day and night. Besides the porter's cell, there are several reception rooms at the lodge, where ladies can be received who may have business to transact. We now come to another gate, beyond which no women can set foot, and therefore the following notice is posted in a conspicuous place and in large letters: "Women are forbidden under pain of excommunication to enter these gates." Between the lodge and guest-house or hotel, there is a large

flower garden with orange trees, palms, plants and shrubs in profusion. In the centre of this garden, there is an arbor with a life-size statue of the Immaculate Conception, and near by a grotto of Lourdes. Above the third story of the hotel, over the principal entrance, there is a niche with a very large statue of St. Joseph holding the Infant Jesus on his arm. Around the niche we read the invocation, *Sancte Joseph ora pro nobis*. Eight wide stone steps bring us to the entrance, and the guest-master ushers us into a spacious but plainly furnished parlor. You immediately see that you are in a monastery ; no carpet covers the floor, a few wooden chairs and a table are all the furniture. But the most scrupulous cleanliness reigns everywhere. On the wall there are a crucifix and an oil painting, a *chef d'œuvre* representing the holy penitent, St. Mary Magdalene. It is said to be a Van Dyke, and therefore of great value. It was presented to the monastery by Mrs. A. Barron, of Baltimore, Md. No more suitable place could have been found for it than this reception-room. It at once inspires devotion, and one cannot look upon the grief, sorrow and repentance, yet at the same time hope and love, depicted in that countenance, without being moved. Thus it fills one with good resolutions and the determination to avoid and detest sin. It is said that it has been the means of bringing many to a change of life.

On the first floor, besides the reception room, are also the Superior's and Prior's rooms, several rooms for postulants, where they make their retreat before they are admitted into the community ; also the office, dining-room and kitchen.

On the second and third floors we find the guests' rooms, plainly, yet comfortably furnished, bath-rooms, etc. Each room is dedicated to some saint, whose name is inscribed above the door. These rooms are seldom without occupants, on account of the number of priests and laymen who come to Gethsemani to pass some days in prayer and retirement. By special dispensation, the monks are allowed to serve their guests with flesh meat.

The other wings of the building are occupied by the religious. To reach the various rooms, we pass through the cloisters, in which perpetual silence is observed, not even the first superior of the house speaking there. Along the walls of these cloisters we see framed mottoes, sentences taken from the holy Rule, scenes from the Passion of our Lord, a statue of our Lady of the Sacred Heart, busts of the saintly Bishop Flaget, and of Pope Leo XIII.

From the cloister we come to the Chapter-room, where the holy Rule



is explained every morning by the Superior. It is in this room also that the "Culpa" or public accusation of faults is made and due penance imposed. At one end of it is a raised platform or dais, with the seats of the Superior, Abbot, Prior and Sub-prior. At the other end are the confessionals, and surmounting these, the very cross which was blessed fifty years ago in Melleray, France, and carried by Father Eutropius at the head of his monks. In this room the monks spend most of their time not devoted to manual labor or community exercises of piety in reading, or studying. Leaving the Chapter-room, a few steps brings us to the last resting place of the Trappist. A small iron cross with a plain inscription, v. g. Rt. Rev. Dom M. Benedict, died August 13, 1890. R. I. P., marks the grave. Here the Trappist is at home. To this solemn spot does he direct his steps every day, to meditate on the vanity of the world and all that it can offer, and to pray for the beloved brethren who have been called to their reward. Here he can point out, almost to a certainty, the very spot where his own grave will be dug, and where his body will rest from its toil and mortification, until the angel's trumpet shall call him forth on the day of judgment.

Above the Chapter-room we find the common dormitory of the monks. The beds are separated by partitions, forming cells six feet four inches long, five feet nine inches wide, and six feet high. The bed is a straw mattress placed on a few boards. The refectory is on the first floor, east, and is a room seventy-three feet long and twenty-nine feet wide. Each monk has a pitcher and cup of earthenware, a spoon and a knife of wood, and a plain fork and napkin. The dishes are of tin. There is a pulpit in the refectory, which the reader occupies during the meals. Next to the refectory is the community kitchen and on the same floor the bakery, and work-rooms. The second floor of this wing contains the library, tailor shop and infirmary, with the pharmacy and Chapel of Our Lady of Dolors. Mass is celebrated every morning here at four o'clock for the sick.

All the buildings are on a magnificent scale, and including the church, monastery proper and guesthouse or hotel, form one immense square. The church is a beautiful Gothic structure, one hundred and ninety feet long and ninety feet wide in the transept, and has fourteen altars. It is so arranged as to form two chapels, one for the community and one for the laity. The community chapel possesses a beautiful sanctuary, which is surrounded by five chapels. Between these chapels and the sanctuary there is a passage or aisle, in which the Stations of the Cross are erected. All

the monks make it part of their private devotions to go around the Stations every day. Some perform this several times a day. In fact, it is one of the most cherished devotions of the community. Even as early as half-past three o'clock in the morning some of the infirm Brothers, who are dispensed from choir duty, may be seen following our dear Lord from Pilate's tribunal to the tomb. All the altars in the church, with the exception of two, are of stone. We stated above that the monks worked at various trades. But there are also artists of no mean ability among them, as we can see in the church. The Abbot's crozier, especially, made by one of the community, is a masterpiece of carving, and is greatly admired.

Among the brethren we find bakers, shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, etc., also photographers, sculptors, pharmacists, lawyers, printers, bookbinders, etc. Thus it may easily be seen that all, or nearly all, the necessary work is done by the monks themselves.

The north and south wings of the building are each one hundred and sixty-six feet long; the east wing has a length of two hundred and twenty-five feet. These wings are three stories high, are strongly and substantially built, and promise to stand for ages.

A steam saw mill was erected in 1854; shortly after a flour mill was added, to which the neighboring farmers repair with their grist for grinding. This mill, which has become one of the main supports of the monastery, was totally destroyed by fire on the 26th of August, 1871, and was a great financial loss. It was immediately rebuilt, but in 1885, it was again burned to the ground. Without delay the monks erected a third, which is still standing. There are quite a number of out-buildings, such as barns, stables, carpenter-shop, wheelwright-shop, blacksmith-shop, tin shops, etc., too numerous to mention. Such is Gethsemani in the year of its Golden Jubilee, 1898.

So far we have spoken mainly of what may be called the material side of a Trappist monastery, its exterior, but, like the king's daughter, all the real beauty of a strict religious order is from within, and so our sketch would be incomplete without some details of the daily life of the community. We will be pardoned for thus raising the veil from what we would have hidden, according to our vocation, from the eyes of the world, but there are so many erroneous notions about our mode of life, so many absurd statements about our practices of piety and penance, that, if they were true, one would almost doubt the wisdom of the Holy

See in approving our rule. Thus we are told that in passing we greet each other with the salutation, "*Memento Mori*, Remember that thou must die," and that each day we spend a certain time in digging our future graves. Now neither of these customs has place among us, especially not the first, since on meeting one another we do not speak, but simply salute by bowing, which salutation is even omitted during the "Great Silence," that is from about six o'clock in the evening till six o'clock the following morning.

Our Rule as Trappists or Reformed Cistercians is simply the Rule of St. Benedict, carried out in its original strictness. By it silence is kept as far as possible at all times, and there is no recreation hour as in most other religious orders. This, however, does not imply that we cannot speak to the Superior on matters of conscience or business, or, with his permission, to others of the Community, when charity or necessity require such intercourse. Again the idea prevails that our fasts and abstinences are perpetual. This is true of abstinence from meat, fish and eggs, but there is each day a frugal though sufficient dinner of vegetables and cereals about noon, with a lunch or supper of two dishes in the evening. From Easter till September 14, on other than fast days, and on Sundays throughout the year, there is an optional lunch in addition in the morning. While our hour of rising (about two A. M.) is somewhat early, it must be remembered that we retire at seven or eight P. M., and thus get some six or seven hours' sleep. The time spent in manual labor by the choir religious never extends beyond six hours, though of course from the very nature of their vocation they are longer for the lay brothers.

As set down in print all this may seem indeed hard, and in practice there is little in this program to flatter flesh and blood, but as actually lived, with the graces God in His goodness sends to aid us, with its constant round of occupations, alternating between prayer and labor, it is a most happy life, and withal, as experience has shown, one that may be led by a person not possessed of the commonly supposed requisite, an iron constitution.

Our community now numbers, including novices and oblates, seventy-five members, and not a few others are waiting for an answer to their application for admission. May the work inaugurated by the good Abbot Eutropius continue to flourish. May God send us subjects full of the spirit of St. Benedict and St. Bernard, ready to tread the royal road of the cross in the persuasion that the yoke of the Lord is sweet and

His burden light. This is the intention which the Trappist Fathers venture to recommend to the prayers of the patient reader who has followed to its close the story of Gethsemani Abbey.

