

BORN OF PERSECUTION - TOTTEVILLE 1904 1990-13

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France, the land in which our Congregation began, was a land of contradictions, especially in the 19th Century. It was a land which had renounced God and crowned Reason as Goddess, but which continued to be a land productive of saints and religious congregations. It was a land which had exiled its clergy and sent its Carmelites to the guillotine at Compeigne, but which was the recipient of Our Lady's favors at Lourdes, Pontmain, LaSalette. It was a land of monarchists and liberals. In these contradictions lay the seed which was to germinate and provide the solution to problems facing our Congregation in 1904; a safe location for the French novitiate; an asylum for the General Administration; and a source of personnel for the American missions. This paper will, therefore, present a quick review of the politics and the educational policies of the French government which were to affect our Sisters in France, and trace the development of the foundation which, born of this persecution, was to provide part of the answers to our problems.

French politics in the 19th Century see-sawed between the monarchists and all types of liberals. Many people, horrified by the atrocities of the revolution, longed for the restoration of the monarchy and the Church. Others regarded these two as the enemies of man, and wished to set up an atheistic republican form of government. This opposition to the Church is not surprising when we realize that, under the ancien regime, the Church had enjoyed a favored position as the First Estate. According to

Tschan, this estate was comprised of approximately 125,000 members of the Roman Catholic clergy; Catholicism was compulsory as the state religion; and tithes paid to the Church amounted to 1/18 of the annual yield of the soil of France, an income of about 250,000,000 francs a year.¹ Given the wealth of the Church, there was bound to be some corruption. This was magnified by the revolutionaries and other enemies of the Church. It was little wonder that the General Assembly did away with this favored status and confiscated Church property. Henceforth, clergy would be elected by citizens and paid by the state. The clergy were ordered to take an oath to accept these arrangements. Needless to say, most refused.²

The monarchists, with whom in the eyes of the people the Church was generally associated, maintained relations with the Church, although, as many historians note, this was often a flimsy and very pragmatic relationship. According to Petrie:

The House of Hapsburg gained great advantage from an alliance with the Papacy, but it had, and has no hesitation in renouncing the alliance if by so doing it could further its political ends.³

This was also the attitude of the dictators who rose to power in this era. Napoleon I, when First Consul, realized the advantages of a concrete religion as a preservative of order.⁴ According to Tschan, "Religion, he thought, was a good thing for the average man; it would soothe and comfort him, and make him less likely to become discontented with his rulers and their policies."⁵ He also saw the benefits to be reaped from the foreign missionaries. Wells tells us that it was Napoleon's wish to reestablish the

use of foreign missions because the religious, while protected by the sanctity of their dress, could survey the lands they visited in Asia, Africa, and America, and report on political and commercial opportunities.⁶ To this effect, Napoleon ordered that the head of the missionary establishment should reside in Paris rather than in Rome. In order to ensure the cooperation of the Church, Napoleon drew up with Pope Pius VII the famous Concordat of 1801, which, according to Corrigan, was to be the model of more than thirty such agreements during the 19th Century.⁷ Roman Catholicism, deposed by the Revolution, was re-established. Bishops and Archbishops would still be appointed by Napoleon, but this was subject to confirmation by the Pope. Lands confiscated by the Revolution would not be restored, but non-juring as well as orthodox clergy were all to be subject to normal ecclesiastical discipline. Although the Concordat placed the Catholic Church subordinate to the state, it succeeded in making the clerical organization the most powerful supporter of the government.⁸ Burns relates that the Catholic Church

"... was placed in a position of decided advantage and was thereby able to increase its power in succeeding years; not until 1905, when the Concordat of 1801 was finally broken, was Catholicism again reduced to equality with other faiths."⁹

All of this only served to strengthen the identification of the Church with the monarchists in the eyes of the liberals.

However, not all Catholics were monarchists. It must be remembered that this was a century of romanticism, of realism, and of impressionism, of great writers and artists, who would

also be part of the political fabric of their times. Victor Hugo was a democratic liberal, Alexander Dumas was a Jacobean, Honore de Balzac was really lower middle class, but aspired to membership in the nobility and adopted the "de" in his name.¹⁰ Hayes tells us that Bourgeois church-goers managed to be both religious and liberal. To them, religion was a purely private matter for each individual, and hardly applicable to public and business affairs.¹¹ Then as now religious teachers ranged from end to end of the spectrum. All were accepted by some section of the bourgeoisie. Clergymen who combined the gospel of individual thrift, free competition, and parliamentary government with the gospel of eternal salvation, were considered worthy to be entrusted with the conduct of public schools and even to be salaried by the state.

Among the liberals differences of opinion soon sprang up. The Social Catholics, including men such as Frederick Ozanam, opposed the economic aspects of liberalism, its materialism and selfishness, its neglect of the poor and condemnation of private charities.¹² The activities of the liberal Catholics intensified and strengthened the democratic criticism of the narrowly middle class character of political liberals. In turn, the Catholic Legitimists opposed the whole doctrine of political liberalism. Our Holy Father, Pope Gregory XVI (1830-1846) wrote numerous encyclicals against liberalism. Pope Pius IX had at first been a believer in liberalism, but, after the invasion of Rome in 1848, he condemned it.

As the pendulum swung between restoration of monarchy and

government by different liberal groups, revolution and anarchy were spawned. During one of these, the February Revolution, 1948, Holy Cross found itself in great danger. In Rev. Edward Heston's translation of the Life of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, we read that bands of trouble-makers ranged through the city of Le Mans. Among these were members of the People's Societies, certain bourgeois ideologists, dissatisfied workers demanding salary and security benefits, those who felt the time was ripe to renew the anti-religion movement, and those who saw a chance for a fresh attack on Catholic education.¹³ A threatening letter from a member of the Revolutionary Club of Le Mans was received, announcing the imminent blowing-up of Sainte Croix, but Father Moreau's calm and the recent history of good deeds by the family of Holy Cross prevailed with the saner members of the Club. Later, on February 27, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors was forced to flee with the Sisters to a farm adjoining the Solitude. The next day all was calm and they were able to return. That evening, a mob again advanced on Sainte Croix, only to be dispersed by the firm and courteous attitude of Father Moreau, who opened the doors and invited the demonstrators to come in and see for themselves.

Despite such harassment, as the century progressed, so did religious life in France. Heberman notes an unexpected situation during the second half of the 19th Century. Congregations were multiplying, and statistics showed a remarkable increase in the membership of certain important institutes. For example, membership in the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny went from 2067 to over

4000; the Daughters of Wisdom grew from 3600 to 4650¹⁴; and the Little Brothers of Mary increased from 3600 to 4850. Heberman also tells us,

"Taine has proved that vocations to the religious life increased remarkably in the France of the nineteenth century, when they were entirely spontaneous, as compared with the France of the eighteenth century, when many families for worldly reasons placed their daughters in convents."¹⁵

Still, anti-clericalism grew apace in France. This can be traced partly to the rise of Freemasonry, the implacable enemy of the Church, as well as to the fear of the liberals that Catholics as a whole were aligned with the monarchists. Education became more and more the target of those who sought to impose a god-less regime. Religion had been creeping back into the schools, so, as early as 1833, the Guizot Act was passed.¹⁶ This act left the Church free to conduct elementary schools, but strengthened state control over secondary and higher education. With the restoration of the Napoleons under Prince Louis Napoleon, Falloux, a nobleman and originally a Legitimist, rallied to the Republic, and became Minister of Education. His Falloux Act of 1850 removed the restrictions which the Guizot Act had imposed on the conduct of the schools by clergymen and extended popular education.¹⁷ It revived clerical supervision of the public schools of France and increased the influence of the Church in French education.¹⁸ Hayes notes that there was a marked increase in the number of elementary and secondary schools conducted by Catholic teaching orders - Jesuits, Assumptionists, Christian Brothers, etc.¹⁹

The pendulum soon swung back. Jules Ferry, a member of the

Republican Left, which seemed to be moderate, was elected chairman of his party. A freethinker and a Freemason, he was confirmed as Minister of Public Instruction in Grevy's cabinet, and later elevated to the premiership.²⁰ In response to the demands of liberals and moderates alike, that every French child should be literate, and also to satisfy the demands of the radicals that education should be the province of secular rather than religious influences,²¹ Ferry secured the enactment of statutes which still bear his name. In 1881 fees in public primary schools were abolished. The schools would be supported and directed by the state, and only laymen acceptable to the state were allowed to teach in them. Religious instruction was banned. This meant that, although parents had freedom of choice, if they wanted religious schools, they would have to support them out of their own pockets. The second law, 1882, made school attendance compulsory between the ages of 6 to 13. In 1886 a third law was passed which strengthened national administrative control. This bill ordered the ejection from the schools of teachers belonging to religious bodies - women as vacancies²² occurred, men, within five years. Fourthly, in 1889, the national treasury was made solely responsible for the salaries of all members of the teaching and administrative forces in public education. We all know the power of the purse strings. To stifle opposition to his educational reforms, Ferry and his allies revived²³ obsolescent statutes against religious congregations.

According to Chapman, on March 17, 1880, a vote of confidence was passed by a large majority that the government would take the

appropriate action under existing laws. All non-authorized congregations had three months to obtain authorization. While some, on the instruction of Leo XIII agreed to make the declaration of loyalty to the Republic, to accept its laws, and to work in a constitutional manner to obtain the repeal of the Laic Laws, others such as the Jesuits refused, and their dissolution was²⁴ ordered. The intervention of the Pope naturally served to splinter the Catholics who were in favor of the monarchists.

During the ministry of Waldeck-Rousseau, the Association Act of 1901 was passed. It provided that every religious order or congregation which wished to continue its work in France, whether in "free" schools, hospitals, missions, or otherwise, had to obtain specific authorization from the government and submit to continuous governmental organization. Brogan tells us that it was Waldeck-Rousseau's intention to settle once and for all the question of²⁵ the position of religious orders. However, Waldeck-Rousseau resigned the premiership. He was succeeded by Emile Combes, a Freemason and a radical. Not only was Combes a doctor of medicine by training, but he was also a doctor of divinity. As Prime Minister he was concerned only with the war on the Catholic Church,²⁶ according to Brogan. On September 4, 1904, he pledged himself and his government to work for a complete separation of Church and²⁷ State.

Tschan relates that, at this time, there were more than 5,000 religious groups operating in France. Although their main work was in education, caring for the sick, and missions, many were also

engaged in commercial enterprises, as, for example, the Carthusians who were famous for the liqueur. These came into competition with other commercial groups, and the jealousy which the situation engendered helped to win political support for the implementation of the Associations Act. Combes vigorously pursued its enforcement so that soon almost all religious orders, except those engaged in hospital work or in the training of foreign missionaries, were denied governmental authorization and formally dissolved. He had hoped for a gain of 40,000,000 pounds from the liquidation of the congregations. It had been designated for lay charities, but, according to Brogan, the money never reached them.²⁸ Under Combes direction a supplementary provision was enacted in 1904, stating that within ten years every member of a religious association, whether authorized or not, would be denied the right of teaching²⁹ in any school, private or public. This meant a still greater burden on the Church, for lay replacements had to be trained, as well as salaries and other financial obligations met. The result was a steady growth in state schools, a decline in religious schools, and an ever-increasing exodus of both priests and nuns from France.

During this time our Congregation continued to flourish, but the General Administration was well aware of the political situation in France. As early as 1880, as Mother Foundress was making her regular visitation of our houses in America, she had just reached New Orleans when a cablegram arrived with word that because of the political events, she must return to the Mother-house immediately.³⁰ In July, 1901, Mother Mary of the Archangels,

the then Superior General, shared with her Council her misgivings relative to the unhappy events which already seemed to menace the congregations in general, and ours in particular, as a result of the laws which the government was so vigorously imposing. The public persisted in believing that we were legally authorized, but it was decided to submit the question to Monsieur Rubillard, Deputy of Sarthe, who had been responsible in 1881 and 1882, for submitting our statutes to the Ministry. ³¹ Mother Mary of the Arch-angels was not taking any chances. On June 3, 1903, she wrote to Cardinal Gotti, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, exposing to him the conditions relative to religious congregations in France, and warning him that, perhaps shortly, we would find ourselves in the necessity of provisionally transferring our novitiate and our General Administration to New York. Because of the delays which ordinarily occurred when dealing with the civil authorities, she feared that, should the Congregation be forced to flee France, it would not be able to obtain the permissions required by the Constitutions on time. She also asked Cardinal Gotti to say a good word for the Marianites to the Archbishop of New York. She could also foresee the necessity of borrowing money on their arrival in New York, and accordingly requested the necessary permissions. ³² In submitting this request to the Sacred Congregation on September 24, 1903, Cardinal Gotti stated that the Archbishop was in no way opposed to the coming of the Marianites, but that he felt they should choose a quiet place which would be suitable to the purpose of the new house. However, he asked the Sacred Congregation not to grant the release of funds until such

time as it would be known what the expenses involved would be. At that time, the request should be re-submitted.³³

At the Council Meeting of March 4, 1904, Sr. Mary of the Arch-angels again reminded the Council of the quite possible contingency of having to leave France, and of the indispensability of having a place to receive the members who now resided there. She shared with them the fact that, during her latest visit to New York, she had been obliged to set up a civil corporation in order to possess legally. The members of this society had provisional titles only.³⁴

At this time another reason for having a novitiate in New York became apparent. This was the need for recruitment in order to staff our works abroad. An illustration of this was the case involving Sr. Mary of St. Paulin. She was employed in Franklin, in a boys' school and was to retire from teaching. This obliged the Provincial Council to replace her by Sr. Mary of St. Cornelié, a novice. The General Council deplored the necessity of having to have recourse to such irregular measures to supply the lack created by a poverty of subjects. It was to be feared that such irregularities would deprive us of the favors and blessings of God. The foundation of a novitiate in New York would make it possible to come to the aid of our Sisters in Louisiana when circumstances prevented them from staffing their establishments.³⁵

Another incident occurred during the preparations for the upcoming foundation. It had been decided to name Sr. Mary of St. Francis Xavier to be superior of the house. When he heard of this, the pastor of Algiers, Louisiana, where Sister was currently on

mission, was so incensed that he informed the Provincial Superior that, if Sister were thus re-assigned, she could take all the other Marianites out of the parish school. In deference to his wishes, the Council chose instead Sr. Mary of St. Julian as the new superior, as she was reasonably proficient in English. The Province of Louisiana was also asked to send teachers for music and English. In their reply, the Provincial Council regretted not being able to satisfy the requests, but agreed to send Sr. Mary of St. Cecelia, a novice, who could continue the trials of the novitiate and also help out as mistress of music and English. After having assured themselves that Sr. Mary of St. Cecelia was firmly determined to persevere in her vocation, and willing to leave her native state to render service in Tottenville, Mother Provincial had her accompanied to New York by Sr. Mary of St. Peter, whose health was precarious in the warm climate of Louisiana. In the month of June Mother Mary of the Archangels shared her regrets that she was unable to send two Sisters back to Louisiana, as French Hospital had need of ten more for their new building. However, if they were one day to leave France, they would be able to give Louisiana the help they were now forced to refuse them. Thus we see another very pertinent reason for transferring to New York.

In the meantime our schools in France were being closed one after another as the directresses retired. Sr. Suzanne Foret gives us an account of the state of affairs. According to her "... despite numerous academic commendations, the school of Butte closed its doors in 1888, while that of Forges-les-Bains had been closed in

1885. Lieges closed its doors in 1893." This same year the boarding and day school annexed to the Motherhouse was discontinued.³⁷ In the Annals of the Congregation there is an account of the abrupt way in which the State acted. On July 11, 1904, the Community was notified of the closing. On the 12th it was announced to the public by the newspapers of Le Mans. The French version of the Annals has the official text of the closure order. It states that despite authorization, all congregations devoted solely to teaching, and those authorized for other fields but which were in fact exclusively dedicated to teaching as of January 1, 1903, were suppressed. Authorized congregations could retain this benefit only for non-teaching works. Exceptions would be made for hospitalized children who could not attend public schools. This action was based on the decrees of March 17, 1808, May 23, 1825, July 1, 1901, December 4, 1902, as well as that of July 7, 1904.³⁸ Thus we can trace the thread of persecution through the 19th Century.

On the following day, July 13, His Excellency, Bishop de Bonfils visited the Community to offer what comfort he could. Numerous friends also came to express their regrets and sympathy. School closed with the distribution of prizes on July 31st, but without the usual ceremonies, for it was enough to witness the heart-rending farewells of the children to their teachers without prolonging the ordeal.

We are told that the same type of scene was enacted at Cormery. Desolation swept over the little town. Young mothers bewailed their loss, not knowing to whom to entrust the religious education of their children. When the Sisters left they were accompanied to

the train by the weeping townspeople. A former mayor complimented them with these words, "I regret seeing you thus driven out of our town, but you can leave with the satisfaction of knowing that you have done much good during your years among us." ³⁹ The following year the last of our schools in France, that of Chanceaux, was closed and the Sisters returned to the Motherhouse.

Mother Mary of the Archangels again wrote to the Sacred Congregation on August 4, 1904. She believed it necessary to inform this body that, near the end of the school year, she had received official notification not to re-open classes the following October. She, therefore, felt obliged to send her teaching Sisters to America where, probably, the General Administration would soon be forced to follow. With the permission of the Sacred Congregation, granted September, 1903, the novitiate of France would be provisionally ⁴⁰ transferred to America.

During this time, the Archbishop of New York and Father Byrnes of Staten Island had been busily engaged seeking a site for the new American foundation. On June 17, 1904 Archbishop Farley, through the intermediary of Father Byrnes, contacted the Superior at St. Vincent de Paul's with an offer to buy property in Tottenville as an advantageous and favorable occasion to procure a shelter for the Sisters whom persecution would soon oblige to leave France. After suitable consultation, the offer was accepted and the contract ⁴¹ signed by Mr. L. H. Amy in the name of the Congregation. We took possession on August 2nd. Two Sisters came to live there while awaiting our exiles from France.

The new property was situated on Main Street in Tottenville at

the extreme end of Staten Island. Tottenville enjoyed a beautiful and healthful location, being exposed on one side to the Atlantic Ocean, on the other, to Raritan Bay and the Arthur Kill. In the early days of its settlement, it had been a summer resort for the wealthy of New York. The property itself was very picturesque. The convent, a ten-room house in perfect condition, had a wide veranda and a gabled roof. There were also a coachhouse and a stable. Best of all, it was within walking distance of the local parish church, Our Lady, Help of Christians. Mother General had reported to her Council in July, 1904, that the building would not be large enough in the event that the whole community of the Motherhouse had to leave, but it was decided to begin by the novitiate.⁴²

Now came the difficult task of choosing the exiles. Some of the professed Sisters were not willing to go abroad. Even among the novices there was hesitation. One, Sr. Mary of St. Sophie, informed Mother General that she did not wish to leave France except in the case where the whole community would be obliged to do so. Later on, Melle. Louise Charretier was admitted to the postulate only on the express condition that she would follow us to America if circumstances forced our departure.⁴³

Finally the painful decisions were made. The chosen twelve left the Motherhouse at midnight on September 12, and embarked at Le Havre at 2:00 p.m. the following day aboard the steamer, "La Tourraine". Of these twelve, three were destined for New Orleans, three for the New York missions, and six for Tottenville. The steamer offered little comfort. For want of space they were all

crowded into one cabin. Instead of bunks, they had hammocks which touched each other. This necessitated placing the ladders for the upper rows at the foot of each hammock, which contributed in no small measure to the difficulty of descent from the swinging bed. The ocean also was very uncooperative during the entire crossing, and several of the Sisters were very ill, so much so that one of them wrote in her diary that, for the time being, they lost all desire of ever returning to France. We can imagine their relief when the shores of America appeared on the horizon. On Saturday, September 10, they went ashore, and, after the usual long customs delays, they arrived at 7:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul's where they were impatiently awaited.

Fortified by a good rest, and their number augmented by four postulants who had awaited them at St. Vincent de Paul's, the travelers destined for Staten Island set out the next day. Sr. Mary of St. Julian, who had been in the United States already, had been appointed Superior of the group. Sr. Mary of St. Julitte was to be Mistress of Novices. Srs. Mary of St. Charles, Michel, and Eleonore were to help in the running of the house, as was Sr. Mary of St. Epiphane who was transferred from the orphanage. Srs. Mary of St. Colombe and Arsene were already novices. The four postulants were Miss Alexandrine Pron, Miss Marie McGarry, Miss Amelia Pourche, and Miss Marie Charles-Louis, who was a native of Tours, France. Of the rest, Srs. Mary of St. Fulbert, Berthe, and Gabrielle were destined for New Orleans. Sr. Mary of St. Timothy, who was to replace Sr. Mary of St. Julian as Assistant, as well as Srs. Mary of St. Germaine and Clothilde, who were to be teachers,

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remained at St. Vincent de Paul's.

Before leaving this little group, a word about our two brave novices who had elected to cross the stormy ocean would not be amiss. According to their mistress, both seemed to be well-disposed, obedient, and always ready to serve. Sr. Mary of St. Arsene, the elder by ten months, was born Marie Le Brehus, on February 28, 1880, at Nantes, Loire Inferieure, France. She entered our community in March 1904, and received the Holy Habit on August 25, 1904, one week before sailing for New York. Here at St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage, she made the vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and that of Foreign Missions in the hands of Father Wucher, Provincial of the Fathers of Mercy, delegated for this purpose by Msgr. Farley, Archbishop of New York. From then on, until weakened by old age, she spent her life in the service of the orphans and the poor. The second novice, Sr. Mary of St. Colombe, Zelie Marie Adelaide Derbre, was also born in 1880, but not until December 19. As did her companion, Sr. Mary of St. Colombe entered on March 1 and took the Habit on August 25, 1904. She made temporary vows on July 28, 1905, and Perpetual Profession, September 2, with Sr. Mary Arsene. She was first assigned to work with the orphans, and later, to parochial school. After the closing of Our Lady of Mercy on West 4th Street, New York, Sister was assigned to Tarrytown, New York, where she served as portress and surveillant for many years. Both are interred at Our Lady of Princeton, New Jersey.

With the help of Sr. Mary of St. Mathew and our Sisters in our other New York missions, and despite the inevitable hardships, the little band settled down in their new home. The attitude of the

local townspeople, most of whom were Protestants and, although friendly, naturally curious about the newcomers, was a source of amusement. It would seem that some had expected the Sisters to paint the Convent black and to build a ten-foot wall around the property. They were amazed to see the Sisters hanging out the weekly wash and performing other mundane chores.⁴⁵

At the beginning the Sisters assisted at Mass in Our Lady, Help of Christians Church, a few minutes walk from the Convent. They felt sorely the absence of the Divine Lord in their new home, and so they set to work with a will to prepare a suitable dwelling-place for Him. By October 10th the chapel was ready. Monsignor Lavelle, Vicar General and Curate of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, assisted by Father Byrnes and numerous other priests, including the Fathers of Mercy, solemnly blessed the new chapel. The General Council had ordained that the new foundation should be designated Institute of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross, but they had also decreed that the chapel should be erected under the name of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows. This was done. The following day Father Byrnes celebrated Mass in the convent. Not only were the Sisters to have the Blessed Sacrament reserved and Mass once or twice a week, but they were also, through the good offices of Father Byrnes, to have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on First Fridays as well as Benediction on Sundays and on all days specified by our Rules. Again this good pastor was to bring them another joy, the erection of the Way of the Cross on October 16th.

In choosing the property in Tottenville, Father Byrnes had not been completely without self-interest. It is the duty of

every pastor to provide for the religious education of his flock, especially the children. No sooner were the Sisters settled in than Father Byrnes came to request that they open a parochial school. It was back to work for the Sisters, cleaning out the coachhouse and the stable. The former was easy enough; but, as the writer of the Annals puts it, "...but the stable!" The French Annals are more specific than the English. Suffice to say that a thick buildup covered floor and walls. All had to be scraped, scrubbed, and aired, alterations and reparations made, and second-hand equipment purchased. This was done at the expense of Father Byrnes. On October 10 the school was blessed at the same time as the chapel. On the following day thirty students presented themselves. They were placed under the care of a Sister and a postulant, Sr. Mary of the Guardian Angels and Melle Marie McGarry. The school seems to have succeeded exceptionally well. The chronicles report sacraments received, conversions among the children, societies such as the Children of Mary introduced. One year later, on October 9, 1905, Rev. J. Smith, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of New York, made his annual visit. After examining the children and inspecting the premises, he declared himself enchanted with the cleanliness, the discipline, the methods of teaching, the intelligence, and the politeness of the children. In a letter of congratulations included in his report to Father Byrnes, he declared that he had expected to see a parochial school, but what he had found was more an academy.

No sooner was the community installed than sorrow came in the sickness of one of the postulants. Marie Charles-Louis fell ill

and had to be taken to St. Vincent's Hospital on Staten Island, where she received the most devoted care.⁴⁷ This was balanced by the joy of receiving three new Sisters on October 8th. They were Srs. Mary of St. Peter, Angel Guardian, and Cecelia, the novice from New Orleans. On November 2, Sr. Mary of St. Michael was transferred from Tottenville to nurse the sick at French Hospital. On December 29, Sr. Mary of St. Cecelia pronounced her annual vows after Communion in the presence of Father Byrnes. There had been a certain amount of controversy about Sister's profession. Ordinarily, the General Council would review the results of the canonical examination before admitting to profession. The Archbishop of New York had relegated this examination to Msgr. Edwards. The latter did not feel that it was necessary. We can imagine the anxiety of the novice while the matter was being debated. However, the General Council decided to accept the canonical examination which Sister had undergone in New Orleans before her Taking of the Habit, and which had been conducted by Rev. Father Burgat, delegated by the Bishop of New Orleans. To make affairs legal, Sister submitted to an examination administered by Father Byrnes, the pastor, just before profession.

The same unhappy mix-up occurred for the four postulants. The Archbishop's delegate, again Msgr. Edwards, postponed the canonical examination to the day of their ceremony, just before the proceedings. This time, the General Council was prepared. Although it was contrary to the prescriptions of the Rules and Constitutions, Reverend Mother realized the difficulties which could ensue, and decided to act. Basing her decision on her

knowledge of the aspirants whom she had met many times in New York, she submitted their names to a vote which proved favorable. 48
On January 6, 1905, Sr. Mary of St. Mechtilde, our Second Assistant General, arrived unannounced. She was happy to assist to assist at the Taking of the Habit ceremony, which was presided over by Msgr. Edwards, Vicar General, in the parish church of Our Lady, Help of Christians. Assisting the Vicar General were Fathers Wucher, Guicheteau, Jouet, and others of the Fathers of Mercy, as well as several members of the local clergy including the pastor, Father Byrnes. The new novices received the following names:

Mademoiselle Pron - Sr. Marie de Ste. Elizabeth
Mademoiselle Charles-Louis - Sr. Marie de St. Stanislas
Mademoiselle McGarry - Sr. Marie de Ste. Rita
Mademoiselle Pourche - Sr. Marie de Ste Victoria

The joy of the day was tainted with sorrow by the announcement that the Superior, Sr. Mary of St. Julian, a devoted and loving mother, was to be transferred to the superiorship of French Hospital. She was replaced by Sr. Mary of St. Peter. Sr. Mary of St. Eleonore was also called to nursing at French Hospital. She was missed for, by her devotion and gaiety, she had won all hearts. From 1906 on, because of lack of space in Tottenville, retreats and other community ceremonies would be held at St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage.

The problems of a place of refuge for the General Administration, and also for a means of revenue, had not yet been solved. The Sisters based their hopes for possible resources on the necessity of enlarging the existing premises in order to receive

boarders, for whom they had already received many requests. The General Council was cautious about starting to build, feeling that the prescriptions of the Constitutions in regard to new foundations might be being violated.⁴⁹ There was also the question of the procurement of funds, how manage to eat, to live, to meet other expenses. The Council was anxious to see the success of the foundation, but, as they pointed out, the school already begun did not have paying day scholars. Also, even if they had the funds, it was not the time to start building. The Sisters proposed enlarging the existing house in order to open, for the re-entry of classes for 1905-1906, an academy for the instruction of young girls. The Council finally consented to the erection of an annex joined to the left side of the existing structure. It also authorized the purchase of a piece of land situated at the right of the facade of the original building which was going on sale the following month. The Council also felt that, if circumstances required that those Sisters remaining in France should be forced to rejoin those who had left, a much larger building would be needed. It was better to put up one large establishment than to keep adding on. Money⁵⁰ seemed to be the crux of the matter.

Again the local Community attacked the problem with their usual zeal. A letter from M. Amy was communicated to the General Council on February 21, 1906.⁵¹ It asked when the Congregation intended to begin work on the annex in Tottenville, plans for which had already been submitted to Mother General. M. Amy stated that our Sisters had enough money so that a loan would not have to

be too large. This money accrued from donations from several persons, especially the generous M. Amy, as well as the resources of the ingenious industry of the Sisters and their little economies, which gradually built up to a considerable sum. The Council, happy with this communication, thanked M. Amy cordially for his generosity which greatly facilitated the enterprise in question. The letter made the General Council believe that, without fear, they could authorize the execution of the plans. Mother General felt obliged to thank M. Amy as a benefactor who would be remembered from age to age in our Congregation. Little did she realize how this would come to pass. In the meantime, the new academy would be named St. Louis in his honor. With the completion of a twelve room annex, the academy was ready, and, on January 6, 1907, it opened its doors to three boarders and three day scholars.

By September the enrollment had risen to 29, 8 of whom were boarders. The need for more space again cropped up. We find the Superior casting her eyes on the parochial school. At the beginning, the pastor had asked the help of the Sisters in serving the free school until he could find a suitable location for another. This provisional situation had endured for three years. The Pastor was on vacation and the date of his return was uncertain. The Superior was getting tired of his promises and wished to close the free school in order to have a recreation area for her paying day students and boarders when the weather prevented them from going outdoors. The Council, however, thought that such a closure would

be imprudent as it would annoy the pastor and bring us into ill-repute with those in authority in New York. Also, according to our Constitutions, we are supposed to serve the poor. It would be advisable to keep the school going until the pastor could live up to his promise.⁵² The two schools continued side by side until, in September, 1910, the pastor was able to fulfill his obligation. A new school was erected adjacent to the Church. It opened with an enrollment of 44, under the care of our Sisters Mary of St. Victoria and Mary of St. Beatrice.

Let us return to France where the situation was still very unsettled. Sr. Suzanne Foret emphasizes that the liberty to teach was not suppressed by the law of 1904.⁵³ The government hoped to strike a death-blow to Catholic teaching by forbidding religious to teach, laymen were still free to do so. Despite the prohibition, many Sisters devised ways of staying in the schools. Some separated temporarily from their communities, but remained under vows. Others adopted lay clothing and names, and served in the schools during the week, returning to their convents on weekends. The government, by constant inspections, tried to root out these religious. This condition prevailed until General DeGaulle repealed the anti-religious laws in 1947. This we have seen in our own Congregation, as in our school at Precigne. It was at great personal cost that our students and teachers laid aside their habits on Monday morning, but a joy to resume them on Friday afternoon.

Our ninth General Chapter was to have taken place in 1907, but, as the religious persecution was still raging in France, the Council asked the Sacred Congregation to have it postponed. In his

reply, Cardinal Gotti gave permission to prolong the term of office of all members by two years.

Gradually the emotions aroused by the political changes of the Revolution subsided. The general public recognized the charitable works of the religious and the manner in which the Sisters responded to catastrophes as, for example, during the Franco-Prussian War. Napoleon had surrendered and the road to Paris lay open. General Chanzy made a last stand at Le Mans on January 10, 1871. Military hospitals were opened in all our houses for the wounded of both armies. Holy Cross was one vast hospital. Our house at Forge-les-Bains lodged and cared for 50 to 60 of our own men at the beginning. By the end of the month there were almost five hundred patients, all seriously wounded or very ill. Several Sisters succumbed to fatigue and disease.⁵⁴ It was the same for the other communities. Seriously thinking people could not fail to be affected by what they saw.

In 1914, Bishop de La Porte of Le Mans, speaking of the expulsion of religious orders from France, said, "This peril can be averted; with God's grace we shall continue to live our religious life in peace, being solely occupied with our sanctification."⁵⁵ The price that France was to pay was the First World War. Again the religious rallied. At the request of the Prefect of Le Mans, the Motherhouse set aside twenty-six beds for the wounded. Necessary infirmarians were also supplied. Through the generosity of an American, Mrs. J. Fitzgerald, a military hospital was opened in the Chateau de Passy, near Veron, in the Department of Yonne.

Since the project was under the direction of two members of the Board of French Hospital, New York, the Marianites were asked to staff the hospital. February 14, 1915, saw the departure from America of the S.S. Niagara with three Sisters aboard. They were Sisters Mary of St. Michael, Narcisse, and Eleonore. They were on their way to Passy where, within less than a month, they would have 120 patients. Here they remained, caring for the wounded, until the war was over and, in February, 1919, M. Henri Walters presented the Chateau to the French government as a military tuberculosis hospital.⁵⁶

Such devotion on the part of many religious, added to the suffering which the war had inflicted, greatly tempered the attitude of the people. Other factors contributed to the swing in public opinion. Dansette tells us:

After the victory of 1918 two developments influenced the position of Catholics in France. The first was the new place in the national community taken by the clergy and the other was the reduced importance of religious problems in the political life of the country."⁵⁷

A circular issued by the Under Secretary of State for the Interior Malvy on September 2, 1914, had suspended the law of 1904, relating to the closure of schools and colleges run by religious orders. Denys Cochin accepted a government post, the first time since 1879 that anyone really qualified to represent Catholic interest had been in the Cabinet. Cardinal Amette was made a member of the National Welfare Committee. As Sr. Suzanne Foret also notes, "the anti-clerical spirit diminished a little, religious life was more intense than ever and foundations multiplied."⁵⁸

Across the ocean the novitiate continued to exist side by side with St. Louis Academy. Vocations were not many, but they came. Miss Olga LeBlanc, Sr. Mary of St. Ambrose, from New Orleans, entered on July 23, 1905, and made profession in 1907. Miss Anna O'Reilly, Sr. Mary of St. Celestin, was accepted in August, 1906. Sr. Mary of St. Raymond, one of the first boarders at the Academy, entered in September, 1911. Miss Margaret Quigley, later well known as Mother Victor, made profession on August 23, 1919. And so the list goes on. Death claimed the first, and apparently the only, Sister to die in Tottenville on October 1, 1911. She was Sr. Mary of St. Euphrosine, whose remains lie in St. Joseph Cemetery, Rossville, Staten Island.

The Academy continued to expand. More space was necessary. Numerous requests were made to the Motherhouse. Money was again a prime factor, and many proposals were submitted for raising it. Father Wucher, of the Fathers of Mercy, and a long-time friend of the Community, offered to will us \$5,000 at his death, if we would give him \$250 a year for life. This did not seem such a good deal, as only the Lord knew how long he would live. A Mrs. Agnes Smith left us her life insurance of \$500. Mrs. Delonde, mother of Sr. Mary of St. Helen, guaranteed us \$1,500 and a life insurance of \$500 after her death. A Mrs. O'Donnel raise \$800 in a fete. So many rallied, but still the General Council put off the decision until the end of the war.⁵⁹ In November, 1918, a property on Amboy Road, in Richmond Valley, was considered for purchase, but the Council again put off action until permission would be obtained

from Rome. It reminded the New York Corporation of our Constitutions which forbade purchase of property without resources to cover costs and personnel to fulfill employments. The plans which had already been drawn up had to be abandoned.⁶⁰

On October 4, 1918, the personnel at the Academy received a terrible shock. About 8:00 p.m. a tremendous explosion reverberated through the house. For at least an hour successive detonations were heard. Had war been declared? No, it was the Morgan Ammunition Company in New Jersey which had suffered a disaster. Every effort was made to restore calm, evening prayer was said, and all retired for the night. About two o'clock in the morning an explosion, worse than any of the others, shook the house. Window panes were shattered and it seemed as though the walls were in imminent danger of collapse. The Sisters did their best to quiet the students who thought they were being bombed. Fortunately it was a weekend, and most of the boarders had left for the end-of-month holiday. By four o'clock, all were dressed and downstairs. The parish priest came at five o'clock to give Holy Communion and to remove the Blessed Sacrament. As the intermittent explosions continued, statues rocked on their pedestals, pictures swayed on the walls, plaster rained down. It was decided to take refuge in the middle of the road.

Sr. Mary of St. Epiphane prepared breakfast and called all back to the diningroom. No sooner were they seated at table than an explosion shook the house from top to bottom. Breakfast was forgotten as all dived for the safety of the street. On the advice of the police who warned that the worst was yet to come, Sr. Mary

of St. Peter decided to take advantage of the last train to be allowed out of Tottenville to send Sisters and children to St. Vincent de Paul Orphanage in the city. She and another Sister remained to guard against vandalism. The house was badly damaged, at least fifty large windows were shattered, the explosions continued until about six o'clock. The Community had been safeguarded by a merciful God, and the havoc caused by thousands of tons of dynamite was covered by a fair indemnity.⁶¹

Soon afterwards, on November 11, 1918, news of the armistice was flashed around the world. With the cessation of hostilities and the improved conditions in France, it was possible to make arrangements for the return of the novitiate to the Motherhouse. The long exile was over. With the departure of the novitiate the school settled down to its regular routine and the ever-increasing demand for expansion.

Permission was granted to proceed with the projects. Sr. Mary of St. Peter, Superior of the Academy and treasurer of the New York Corporation, assumed responsibility for a loan at 6% in order to buy land, the purchase of which was approved by the Archbishop of New York. On November 15, 1919, Mother General made a contract with Mr. James A. Hughes, real estate agent, for property belonging to his wife. It consisted of 32½ acres in Huguenot, about six minutes from the station and close to a Catholic church, a mission of Our Lady, Help of Christians parish. The project actually reached the stage where plans were drawn up for a school dedicated to St. Joan of Arc, but, again, difficulties forced us

to abandon the site. It was sold to provide funds for the education of the novices in 1923.⁶²

The joy of the armistice was overshadowed for the Marianites of Tottenville. The funds for the new academy had been confided to M. Amy and his bank. Unfortunately, M. Amy disappeared along with the money entrusted to him. On April 14, 1919, Sr. Mary of St. Julian communicated to the Council the contents of a letter from M. Jouvaud, President of the French Benevolent Society in New York. He was responsible, with the aid of a lawyer, to represent us and safeguard our interests in the failure of M. H. Amy et Banquiers. The family would assume part of the enormous debt which, after queries made in this matter, came to millions of dollars. The creditors would receive barely 25% at an undetermined future date.⁶³

Even this could not stop God's work. A property in Pleasant Plains was purchased and construction begun on June 14, 1928. The cornerstone was blessed on October 27, 1928, by Msgr. Charles Cassidy in the presence of Borough President Lynch. Despite trouble among the workmen, the use of inferior materials which had to be replaced, and the change of contractors in mid-stream, the building was eventually completed. It was solemnly blessed by His Excellency, John J. Dunn, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, on August 24, 1930. Classes were opened in the new St. Louis Academy, the Institute of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross in Tottenville was abandoned, and the building finally demolished in 1934. The U.S. Post Office now occupies the site.

In the meantime, the novitiate in France never really closed its doors. In the minutes of the General Council there are constant references to reports from both Tottenville and Le Mans novitiates. We know that Miss Virginia Blaudain entered at the Motherhouse in September, 1905, Miss Berthe Fievet in October, 1906, Miss Louise Charretier in November, 1906, Miss Jeanne Chaxel in August, 1907, and so on. According to Father Heston, "In fact, thanks to Divine Providence, the French Novitiate was never closed."⁶⁴ The American novices returned to Le Mans with the entry of Miss Hannah O'Dowd, Sr. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, in 1921.

Thus the foundation which was to meet our three major problems of 1904 ceased to exist. The novitiate of France no longer needed protection, the General Administration was able to function safely from the Motherhouse in Le Mans, with the ending of the war the high seas were no longer perilous, and our personnel needs could be supplied from two novitiates, the one in New Orleans and the one in France. Thus ended an era.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Frances J. Tschan, et al. Western Civilization Since 1500 (New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1947), p.940.
- 2 Ibid., p. 953.
- 3 W. W. Flinders Petrie, et al. The Book of History - A History of All Nations (New York: The Grolier Society, n.d.), Vol. XI, p. 4393.
- 4 Ibid., p. 4705.
- 5 Tschan, op. cit., p.979.
- 6 H. G. Wells, The Outline of History (New York: Macmillan Company, 1921), p. 901.
- 7 Raymond Corrigan, The Church and The Nineteenth Century (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1938), p. 97.
- 8 Petrie, op. cit., 4705.
- 9 Edward McNall Burns, Western Civilizations (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1941), p. 607.
- 10 Carlton J. H. Hayes, "A Century of Predominantly Industrial Society 1830-1935" A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe, Vol. II (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1936), p. 156.
- 11 Ibid., p. 144.
- 12 Ibid., p. 145.
- 13 Edward L. Heston, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors and the Early Origins of the Marianites of Holy Cross 1818-1900 (Milwaukee: Catholic Life Publications - Bruce Press, 1959), p. 96
- 14 Charles G. Heberman, et al., The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909), Vol. VI, p. 175.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Hayes, op. cit., p. 105.
- 17 Ibid., p. 117.
- 18 Tschan, op. cit., p. 155.
- 19 Hayes, op. cit., p. 554.
- 20 Guy Chapman, The Third Republic of France 1871-1894 (London: St. Martin's Press, MacMillan and Co., Ltd., 1962), p. 201
- 21 Tschan, op. cit., p. 1155.

- 22 Chapman, op. cit., p. 204.
- 23 Hayes, op. cit., p. 555.
- 24 Chapman, op. cit., p. 204
- 25 Denis W. Brogan, The French Nation From Napoleon To Petain (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1957), p. 203.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Tschan, op. cit. p. 1175.
- 28 Brogan, loc. cit.
- 29 Hayes, op. cit., p. 564.
- 30 Annals of the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross 1841-1941 (No publisher given; n.d., 1951), p. 172.
- 31 Minutes of General Council Meetings (Motherhouse Archives), #9, p. 300.
- 32 Letter to Cardinal Gotti (Motherhouse Archives).
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Minutes, #10, p. 28.
- 35 Ibid., p. 30.
- 36 Ibid., p. 65.
- 37 Sr. Suzanne Forest, "History of the Marianites of Holy Cross in France." Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross - History of the Provinces. (Published by Our Lady of Princeton, 1983), pp. 9-10.
- 38 Annales de la Congregation des Soeurs Marianites de Sainte Croix 1841-1941 (Montreal: Fides, 1948), pp. 372-373.
- 39 Annals, p. 245.
- 40 Minutes, #10, p. 49
- 41 Chroniques de l'Institut des Soeurs Marianites de Sainte Croix a Tottenville, Staten Island, New York, 1904-1912 (Motherhouse Archives), p. 41.
- 42 Minutes, #10, p. 34.
- 43 Minutes, #10, p. 143
- 44 Annales, p. 375.

- 45 Annals, p. 247.
- 46 Annales, p. 376.
- 47 Chroniques Enclosure, p. 3.
- 48 Minutes, #10, p. 67.
- 49 Ibid., p. 60.
- 50 Ibid., p. 61.
- 51 Ibid., p. 116.
- 52 Ibid., p. 170.
- 53 Sr. Suzanne Forest, op. cit., p. 14.
- 54 Annals, p. 135.
- 55 Ibid., p. 259.
- 56 Ibid., p. 260. Annales, p. 391-401.
- 57 Adrien Dansette, "Under the Third Republic", Religious History of Modern France New York, Herder and Herder, 1961), Vol. II, p. 332.
- 58 Sr. Suzanne Forest, op. cit., p. 19.
- 59 Minutes, #11, p. 166.
- 60 Ibid., p. 175.
- 61 Annals, p. 265.
- 62 Ibid., 229-230
- 63 Minutes, #11, p. 192.
- 64 Heston, op. cit., p. 476.

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S. C. D. 16. J. C.

Le. Mons, de notre Maison-Mons,

Le 3 Juin 1903.

à Son Eminence

Le Cardinal Gotti,

Préfet de la S. Congrégation-

de la Propagande.

Eminentissime Signeur et Père,

Les éminents qui se passent aujour-
d'hui en France, concernant les Congrégations reli-
gieuses, nous obligent mon Conseil et moi à exposer
à Votre Paternité Eminentissime que Dieu a
bien voulu, nous pourrions être dans la Douce-
sité de transférer provisoirement, à New York, un-
Amirique, notre Maison-Mons et notre Monastère
de Mons.

Les Décrets ordinairement accordés
aux Maisons religieuses pour l'entretien des
ordres émanant des pouvoirs civils sont si
restreints que je comprends, dans le cas où
l'on usait de cette mesure à notre égard, de
n'avoir pas, en temps opportun, la possibilité

De nous munir de l'Autorisation-prescrite par
nos saintes Constitutions, art. 2.

On-provision de l'Emp dont nos sœurs
attristées pourrnt être grevées, elles déposent
aux-pieds de Votre Eminence leur humble
requête, et la prient de vouloir bien accueillir
favorablement cette demande qui présente
leurs Statuts approuvés de leurs saintetés
Pie IX et Léon XIII.

Si l'occasion se présentait à nos Révérends.
Sons-Pères, nous vous serions redevables.

Sans de vouloir adresser quelques lignes
à notre sujet à M^{gr} l'Archevêque de New-York.
Lettre de recommandation nous servirait bien
coup-pour obtenir la-protection, quoique la
Grandeur nous commande déjà par les quatre
Etablissements de charité que nos Sons
Dirigent dans la ville archiepiscopale.

Nous prions aussi priéris des mains
tenant, Eminentissime Seigneur, que dans
le cas où nous serions obligés de nous

expatrier, force nous seroit, en arrivant à
New-York, de contracter des emprunts dont
nous pourrions, en le moment, présumer la
valeur. Mais afin d'agir aussi réguli-
èrement qu'il est en notre-pouvoir dans les
Circumstances où nos Règles nous font un
devoir de retourner à la S. Congrégation de
la Propagande, pour obtenir l'agrément
Apostolique, nous prions aussi Votre Eminence
Révérendissime de vouloir bien nous auto-
riser à faire le nécessaire, sous le rapport
des Difficultés pécuniaires en notre-Dépla-
cement pourrnt nous entraîner.

En traitant la propre de Votre
Eminentissime Paternité, je la prie de bien
notre-proteger Congrégation et d'agréer la-
respectueuse assurance de ses prières pour
Son Père et Protégés.

L. Marie des Anges
Sup^{te} G^{de}

S^{te} Marie Du-Carmel
S^{te} P^{re} B^{te}

23-32a

4 août 1904

Eminentissime Seigneur et Père,

A mon retour de la Visite régulière de toutes nos Maisons d'Amérique ^{+ des Indes Occidentales} je me suis empressé, aux termes de l'article 13 de nos saintes Constitutions, d'établir le Rapport ci-joint de l'état de notre Congrégation en France et en Amérique.

Les événements qui se passent aujourd'hui, si douloureux pour le cœur de notre saint Père le Pape, nous font un devoir de confier à Votre Eminence la part que nous prenons aux peines dont la Sainteté est abreuvée.

Enfants de la sainte Eglise, filles du Saint-Siège par Vocation, un double titre nous attache à la Personne sacrée, toutes les tribulations sont les nôtres. Nous osons donc, Révérendissime Père, déposer à ses pieds, par votre bienveillante entremise, le filial hommage de nos religieux sentiments, en déplorant, du fond de nos cœurs affligés, les outrages faits au Chef suprême du monde catholique.

Je crois aussi devoir informer Votre Eminence Révérendissime, que vers la fin de l'année scolaire, je reçois la notification officielle de ne plus ouvrir nos classes au 8^e prochain. En présence de ce fait, je me vois dans la nécessité d'envoyer nos sœurs enseignantes en Amérique, où nous serons probablement forcées d'aller bientôt les rejoindre. ~~j'espère que la sainte Providence leur procurera quelque travail, en rapport avec leurs aptitudes.~~

Avec l'autorisation de Votre Paternité Éminentissime,
en date du 21^e 7^{bre} 1900 notre Noviciat de France ^{+ sans} transféré
provisoirement en Amérique, afin d'assurer le recrutement néces-
saire aux œuvres de notre Institut. Le local est agréé par M^{gr}
l'Archevêque; il est situé à Cottonsville distant de 125 1/2
lieues de New-York. Nos Maîtresses y résideront aussi et pour-
ront donner des leçons particulières, en attendant l'ouverture
des classes, ardemment désirée par M^{gr} le Cui de la Province.

Introduction

Sacré Congrégation de la Propagande.
N° 56.958

Rome, 24 Septembre 1903.

Objet

Du transfert de la Maison-Mère
et du Noviciat des Sœurs Marianites
de St Croix du Maine à New-York.

Illustrissime et Révérendissime Seigneur,

Les Sœurs Marianites de St Croix dont la Maison-Mère et le Noviciat sont situés dans le Diocèse du Maine, ont adressé à la Sacré Congrégation de la Propagande une requête que Votre Grandeur a bien voulu apostiller. Dans cette requête, elles sollicitent la permission de transférer ^{+ à New-York} les établissements ci-dessus mentionnés. La Sacré Congrégation ayant demandé à l'Archevêque de New-York son avis, à ce sujet, a été informée qu'il ne s'opposait pas au désir des Sœurs. Il estime que leur Supérieure Générale devra, choisir, dans la ville de New-York, un quartier où l'affluence de la population étant moins considérable, on pourra plus facilement édifier une maison dans laquelle il sera possible de rencontrer le recueillement qui convient à une telle maison. Je prie Votre Grandeur de vouloir bien, au nom de la Sacré Congrégation, transmettre cette réponse aux Sœurs Marianites.

Quant à l'autorisation qu'elles ont demandée de contracter un emprunt leur permettant de faire face aux dépenses qu'elles devront s'imposer, vous voudrez bien les informer que, le jour où elles auront à réaliser cet emprunt, elles aient de nouveau à en solliciter la permission près de la Sacré Congrégation à laquelle elles indiqueront quelle somme elles veulent emprunter et à quelles conditions.

En attendant, je prie Dieu de vous avoir longtemps en sa sainte garde.

Votre très dévoué serviteur

F. M. M. Cardinal Gotti, préfet