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KEEPING IN TOUCH
THE **BENGALESE** MAGAZINE 1919-1956

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Keeping in Touch

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Catholic America began to take interest in the Bengal mission from the early years of this century through the efforts of the American province of the Holy Cross Congregation. A number of factors were responsible for this interest, particularly the eloquent foreign mission appeals of Rev. Gilbert Francais, Superior General of the congregation; the decision taken in the 1906 General Chapter to financially support the Bishop of Dacca and the appointment of Mission Procurators in each Holy Cross province to raise funds for the missions; the "heroic" departure of Rev. Timothy Crowley for Bengal in 1906 and the interest his students at Notre Dame University took in that mission. It may be recalled that the Holy Cross Congregation had accepted the difficult East Bengal mission in 1852. The first "colony" of missionaries arrived in Bengal in the summer of the following year. In the twenty years that the congregation was in Bengal before their recall, sufficient roots had been taken by their missionaries that when the offer was given again by Propaganda Fide in 1888, the congregation willingly accepted the challenge to return. The missionaries in Bengal faced many hardships. They were particularly concerned that more men were not being added to their numbers. Finance was always a limitation in their work.

With the organization in 1919 of the Bengal Foreign Mission Society at Holy Cross seminary, Notre Dame, members could be more closely united to the Holy Cross missionaries in the missions and share in the special spiritual privileges. Among the earliest of student societies in the USA, the enthusiasm of its members was kept alive for many years by Rev. James

French, the seminary rector and general mission procurator and his constant reminder to students of the seminary that funds were needed for the Bengal missions by their placing in the 'Crowley Box', the monetary toll exacted of them for the slightest infraction of rules.¹

Antecedents: Another way by which Rev. French got Catholics interested in the Bengal mission was to appeal to them through **The Bengal Witness**, a magazine he started in 1910. He realized the importance of a literary appeal for the magazine encouraged formation in the congregation and interest in the mission vow.² Fr. Michael Mathis followed this lead in 1914 with 'Bengal Mission Notes', three pages of information on the Bengal missions which were incorporated in the **Annals of Our Lady of Lourdes**. In three years 'The Bengal Mission Notes' grew steadily with "danger of trespassing upon the hospitality of the magazine." Accordingly it was decided to publish the 'Notes' as a separate pamphlet for the clientele it had secured for the missions. By the spring of 1919 the four page folder grew into a sixteen page tract. Its success was noted by the enthusiastic editor's superiors. Permission was given by Fr. French to expand the **Bengal Mission Notes** into a regular mission magazine.³ The Provincial Chapter of the American province of the congregation meeting in July 1919 officially authorized the publication of a mission magazine the first issue of which was to be printed by September that year. Permanent approval was subsequently given by the 1920 General Chapter.⁴

¹Michael Mathis, 'The Bengalese', **The Bengalese**, vol. 18, No. 6, June 1937, p. 10; David R. Syiemlieh, **They Dared To Hope: The Holy Cross Congregation in India**, Bangalore, 1998, pp. 24-25.

²J. B. Delaunay, 'The Golden Jubilee of a Friend', **The Bengalese**, Nos. 6-7, June-July 1933.

³Michael Mathis, op. cit.; Michael Mathis, 'Our Eighth Birthday', **The Bengalese**, vol. 8, No. 11, September 1927, p. 7.

⁴Province Archives Center, Charles O'Donnell Papers Bengalese Correspondence 1920-1921, Box 1 Folder 10, O'Donnell to Mathis, December 14, 1920; **Circular Letters of The Very Reverend Superior General**, Series II, No. 23.

The editorial staff of Frs Joseph Miner and James Kehoe with Fr. Mathis as the first editor worked out and planned the inaugural and subsequent issues under tents while on vacation along the banks of the Shenandoah river in Virginia. A borrowed typewriter and cash capital of \$ 50 got **The Bengalese** started. There appears to have been some confusion in the mind of Fr. Mathis of who gave the name to the new magazine. In an editorial on the sixth year of **The Bengalese**, he mentions that Professor Roderick Mackeachen of the Catholic University contributed the name.⁵ In another article written many years later he notes that it was Rev. Michael Mulcaire CSC who suggested the name.⁶ The first issues were printed by Fr. John Noll in his **Sunday Visitor** office at Huntington, Indiana. They had the appearance the editor noted "of an ambitious pamphlet."⁷ The size was enlarged and the number of pages increased from the January 1921 issue. In November 1924 **The Bengalese** underwent another facelift with still larger a format and its distinctive name written in Indian stylex. By then it had become "A Catholic Magazine of India and the Orient," an indication that its contents for some years would go beyond the confines of the Bengal missions.

Missionaries in Bengal were impressed with the first issue. Bishop Joseph Legrand of Dacca wrote to Fr. Mathis, "Your Bengalese just at hand. It cheers us greatly." From Shushung among the Garos, Fr. Charles Finner acknowledged, "Yesterday I received the September number of the new Bengalese. It is just the thing. I hope that each succeeding copy will bring with it the same measure of hope and gladness that the first one brought. Fr. Crowley encouraged the editor by mentioning in a letter that "It is

⁵The Bengalese, vol. 6, No. 11, September 1925, p. 2.

⁶Michael Mathis, The Bengalese, vol. 18, No. 6, June 1937, p. 10.

⁷The Bengalese, vol. 6, No. 11, September 1925, p. 2.

interestingly gotten up and should in its twelve months probation secure such a large circulation as to win itself an indefinite existence down the years..”⁸Fr. Alfred LePailleur, later to become the Bishop of Chittagong, then editor of the Bengali mission journal **Dharma Jyoti** shared his joy with Mathis after reading the first copy of the magazine. “Working alone”, he wrote, “seeing the good that needs doing one feels a little disenchanted. But when we see religious souls from abroad coming to our rescue and trying to remove our obstacles barring the road, then the courage becomes stronger than ever.”⁹

Enclosing a copy of the first issue for the Bishop of Dacca, Fr. Mathis wrote that he wanted from the missionaries, “actual doings, personal letters, jungle stories, conversions; you cannot say too much on this point, everything is interesting here because Americans like to see results—they will help a thing that is booming.” He wanted write-ups from the pens of native Christians, missionary experience and Protestant opposition as this would “fire Catholics with the determination to excel them.”¹⁰ The Bengal missionaries provided much of the material for the early issues of **The Bengalese**. They understood the importance of the magazine to keep in touch with their families, their benefactors, their clubs and Catholic America at large. From their letters the editor would piece together short notices of the work being done in the different missions. Throughout its publication **The Bengalese** informed its readers of ordinations, departures for the missions—these included news of Brothers, priests and Holy Cross Sisters in Bengal, their postings, transfers, celebration of jubilees, news of missionaries returning home on furlough or in need of medical treatment and often their return to Bengal. It also kept the confreres and friends of the mission informed of the

⁸The **Bengalese**, vol.1, No.6, February 1920, p.86.

⁹The **Bengalese**, vol.1, No.8, April 1920.

¹⁰David R. Syiemlieh, op. cit., footnote 63, p.36.

passing away of missionaries and their contribution in the work of their congregation. There were articles on some of the early converts; the catechists on whom the missionary priests were so dependent; appeals for support for native clergy as also many accounts written by the men and women in the field, about their parishes and their efforts to take Christianity to tribal communities. **The Bengalese** started publication soon after the Garo apostolate had begun. Much attention was very naturally given to the missions in what was referred to as Garoland.

The mission history of Akyab in coastal Burma may be reconstructed in part from the pages of the magazine. The Holy Cross conducted a flourishing mission there among the Burmans and Chins. Some early issues had reports on the missions which after 1927 came under the Canadian Province of the Holy Cross. After the divide in that year of the East Bengal mission between the American and Canadian Provinces **The Bengalese** only occasionally referred to the missions further to their east. There are innumerable references to the Indian people's struggle for freedom from which the American missionaries' attitude may be drawn. Mahatma Gandhi made quite an appeal to the men in the missions and the editorial staff of the magazine. Gandhi features on the cover of one of the issues in the early 1920's. While the impact of the Economic Depression on the missions is not much apparent, the hardship endured by the missionaries and the plight of the people of Bengal during the famine of 1942-1943 comes out graphically in the issues of these years and in this extract of a letter from a Bengal missionary: "Food is simply not available in the market. I have sent out frantic appeals in all directions to buy rice, in Mymensingh, in Dacca, in Barisal. Not a grain for sale! Some charitable people in nearby villages donated

enough for about a week but they too, were for the most part without rice and we could not expect them to give us more.”¹¹

The American experience in credit societies was adapted for the social and economic uplift of the people. This experiment was successfully applied to the Garos, many of whom had got into the grips of moneylenders. Rice banks were started in villages where the Holy Cross ministered. The staple crop of rice was stocked in time of harvest and plenty and could be converted into cash if required to purchase other needs. Education which is the forte of the congregation in its mission work has undoubtedly contributed significantly to the development of East Bengal. The magazine features articles on St. Gregory's School, Notre Dame College and St. Mary's College in the city of Dacca. These and the many other large and small institutions remain as enduring edifices of the work of Holy Cross Brothers, priests and sisters among the people of East Bengal.

The Bengalese gave much attention to the start and the growth of the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries. Founded in June 1925 by Dr. Anna Dengel and Fr. Mathis, readers were kept informed of the development of the idea, the structure and work of the new missionary society and their training preparatory to their sisters going to hospitals in Rawalpindi and Dacca. Dr. Dengel used her Indian experience to contribute for the magazine a number of articles on 'Women in India'.

Fr. Mathis is also remembered in the congregation for the effort he put in, despite much opposition, to the development of the idea, the construction and operation of the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Seminary in Washington DC. With some humility he tells readers that the idea of the seminary was not his, but Rev. Timothy Crowley whom he held in high

¹¹The Bengalese, vol. 24, No. 9, November 1943, p. 13.

regard and that the idea was mooted by the visiting missionary while on a visit to Notre Dame in 1921. The idea was welcomed by the Bishop of Dacca. As correspondence and discussions progressed in this matter, permission was given by the Provincial, Rev. Charles O'Donnell to start a seminary. The Bishop of Detroit graciously invited Bishop Legrand to build a foreign mission seminary close to his own so as to enable Holy Cross missionaries taking the fourth vow to attend classes at Sacred Heart Seminary.¹² Fr. Mathis' canonical visit to Bengal in 1921-1922 [which was prominently featured in a series of articles and later published as a collection, **With The Holy Cross in Bengal**, Washington DC, 1924]¹³ so impressed the visitor of the need of missionaries for Bengal that he urged upon his superiors a change in the original plans toward the idea of constructing a seminary for Holy Cross priests. Eventually it was decided that the seminary should be located in Washington DC. The blessing of the construction of the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Seminary took place on February 9, 1924. **The Bengalese** kept readers informed of every stage of its construction. The editor sent out appeals for donations to help meet the cost of construction and furnishing the new building. The 'House on the Hill' as it later came to be called was dedicated and occupied on September 24, 1924.

In course of time there would be two 'Bengalese', the magazine and the head-quarters of the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Society located in the seminary. Preparatory to the start of the seminary the Provincial transferred **The Bengalese** publication and its assets of stocks, liberty bonds

¹²**The Bengalese**, vol. 5, No. 2, February 1924, p. 4.

¹³Another collection of articles, written by Brother Theodore, was published as **Memories of Bengal 1930-1940**, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1945.

and war saving stamps totalling \$ 1485 from the congregation to the Board of Trustees of the Bengal Foreign Mission Society.¹⁴

The Bengalese reached out to school children and youth. A section of the magazine, 'Jungle Juniors' was aimed at these readers. Parents were urged to have a copy of the magazine in the name of a child to enable them to become involved and support the Bengal missions. The Bengalese staff set up Bengal Clubs in numerous high schools in the mid-west and eastern states. These clubs were visited during the months of July-August by the editor and other religious attached to the seminary to encourage interest in the magazine, to collect whatever small contribution the members could raise and to keep a sustained interest in the missions. A number of clubs were named after Fr. Mathis. Some missionaries too had clubs named after them. Fr. Massart [there were two - Raymond and Edward] had a club in Racine; Frs. Paul Shea and John Harrington each had clubs in Chicago; Bishop Crowley had one in Boston while Fr. Joseph Rick got support from his club in Texas. Fr. Lawrence Bauer had young supporters in Michigan. Fr. Charles Young benefitted from two clubs in Rochester [NY] and Syracuse. Write-ups with photographs of their meetings were regularly reported. Young mission supporters' contributions went toward repairing churches damaged by tornadoes, catechist funds, the construction of schools and for other mission needs. Their support came from a variety of ways. Touching was the help given through the sacrifice of one member's first salary; another gave his first month's raise in salary. A mother contributed the back pay of her son 'R' who had died in France in the 'Great War'.

¹⁴Province Archive Center, Charles O'Donnell Papers, Bengalese Correspondence January-April 1924, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Bengal Foreign Mission Society held at Holy Cross College, Brookland DC, October 25, 1923. The name of the Society was changed to conform more closely to the special corporate title under which the congregation administered mission funds.

Someone in the editorial office who took the name 'Ben Gall' had a poetic gift which he put to good use to draw in donations large and small. One poem published in time for Christmas of 1921 ran:¹⁵

This Christmas

Keep the cradle rocking,
Give your purse another squeeze;
Something for the stocking,
Of the baby Bengalese.

Old Santa doesn't know them,
He has the rich to please;
So its up to us to show him,
How to reach the Bengalese.

Decline: **The Bengalese** began publication with a print order of 2300. In the early part of 1927 the magazine reached its all time high of 53,000 subscribers.¹⁶ Thereafter the subscription declined. Concern was shared with the Provincial, Fr. Burns by Fr. Mathis when the subscription fell from 43,000 to 20,000 in 1929-1930 ¹⁷and further dwindled to 14091 in the following year.¹⁸ The editor Fr. John Delaunay [October 1929-July 1933] was asked by his superiors first to explain the fall in subscription and then to draw up plans for the revival of the magazine. The editor explained that among the factors for the decline were the prevailing Depression; difficulty in getting churches to make new appeals; the lack of continuous effort to promote circulation and the editorial's renewal efforts being limited to

¹⁵**The Bengalese**, vol. 3, No. 4, December 1921, p. 8.

¹⁶Michael Mathis, op. cit., p. 11.

¹⁷Holy Cross Foreign Mission Center records, Provincial Administration 1924-1942, Mathis to Burns September 13 1930.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, Mathis to Burns, January 30, 1931.

sending out two post card reminders. He also remarked on the relative saleability of the magazine owing , he reasoned to the lack of reading interest. Further analyzing the problem he wrote was **The Bengalese's** exclusive mission appeal that relied on churches and similar charity methods; methods that weakened its usefulness by its insistence on mission interest which he personally believed was bad journalism.¹⁹ Fr. Delaunay suggested two principles might be followed by the magazine; that while mission interest appeal should remain the dominant keynote of the publication, interest should be combined with other interests in the quantitative proportion of 50-50. The other interests he spelt out could be non missionary but Catholic. Excessive mission coverage , he charged had resulted in "repetition and sameness." Further he gave suggestions for renewing and promoting circulation by various appeals, a more vigorous magazine publicity by introduction of advertisements and changes in magazine policy. After a thorough look into the problems he inherited he concluded that despite many claims to be the best, **The Bengalese** at that time was the least known of foreign mission magazines and that given a change in policy and content it could become the most interesting and attractive of Catholic magazines.²⁰

The changes outlined by the editor could not be fully implemented. Though he and his staff were able to control further decline in the subscription **The Bengalese** never fully recovered. However it must be pointed out that throughout the Depression years the magazine maintained the high standard it had set for itself. It did not decrease in size in its 24 page content nor in quality and it continued to fulfill its function as the intermediary between the missionaries and their benefactors. Rev. Francis

¹⁹Holy Cross Foreign Mission center records, Bengalese Mission Magazine, Note by Fr. Delaunay.

²⁰Ibid.

Goodall who took over the editorship in September 1933 added his own touch to the magazine. Unlike his predecessor, he was for **The Bengalese** continuing to be mission and missionary oriented. He introduced two special features- "the Bishop's Pen" and "The Curry Bowl", the first was news of the Diocese of Dacca from the pen of Bishop Crowley, the other as its title implied was to have snippets on India at large. These additions increased the contents to 30 pages. After many years of contributing his two page monthly news Bishop Crowley wrote to one of the Associate Editors:²¹ "I feel mortified month after month monopolizing your precious space. I shall continue to send you dope which you may dress up as you think well and insert anything, reserving what had grown to be "my page" for the important letter of the month." That the cyclostyled letters of the Bishop were having an impact on the readers is explained in a letter from the editor to the missionary Bishop:²² "Do keep your communication with us for the page in the magazine. So many readers have commented on this page that I feel that our magazine would lose much of its flavor without your contribution."

Behind the scenes: To better understand the make-up of the magazine it would be interesting to go behind the scenes presented to readers. Records have led us to a whole array of correspondence on **The Bengalese** in the Province Archive Center and the Holy Cross Foreign Mission Center. These show the concern of the editors of the magazine that many of the Bengal missionaries were not supporting their effort. They also view the concerns of the missionaries and how they looked at the mission magazine. Fr. James Burns, the Provincial was made to understand by the missionaries in Bengal

²¹Holy Cross Foreign Mission Center records, Dacca Bishops, Crowley No. 3, Crowley to Fitzpatrick, March 14, 1941.

²²Ibid., Goodall to Crowley. October 6, 1942.

that **The Bengalese** was "becoming too aristocratic." He asked Fr. Maurice Norckauer, the Religious Superior in Bengal to give his opinion on the matter.²³ Fr. Norckauer's own opinion was that he was against the policy of trying to make the magazine a literary magazine. He preferred more coverage on the missions in Bengal with less of articles on world topics, secular subjects and those of general interest. If Fr. John Hennessey, he took a case, was able to move a benefactor to open her purse and donate \$1000 for his mission in Bengal it was his blunt words, "No dear reader, at present I need the gift of the lover more than the love of the giver." He complained that many letters sent by the missionaries to the editors, "have not been allowed to appear or that have appeared only in a literary shape have produced nothing." "No suggestion I have made", he complained, "ever were considered worthwhile [by Fr. Mathis] and as there are grounds for difference of opinion I have considerably shut my mouth."²⁴ Meanwhile Fr. Mathis was facing a serious problem- letters were not arriving from the missionaries to enable him to fill the pages of the monthly. He wrote this concern to the Provincial and advised that the missionaries in Bengal be given a strict obedience, "to cooperate with us in sending a monthly letter from every missionary", and that Bishop Legrand be informed that "unless this is done the probability is that the budget cannot be met."²⁵ This was conveyed by Fr. Burns to the Bishop.²⁶

When the Bishop received the letter he replied to the Provincial with some pleasure, that much earlier he had suggested to Fr. Mathis that missionaries be urged to write letters which could be incorporated in the magazine, but the answer he received was that there was a staff of writers at

²³Province Archives Center, Burns Papers, Box 1 Folder 4, Burns to Norckauer, June 12, 1928.

²⁴Ibid., Norckauer to Burns, August 8 1928.

²⁵Ibid., Box 2 Folder 2, Mathis to Burns, June 7, 1929.

²⁶Ibid., June 10, 1929.

the Bengalese office who knew better what would suit the American reader. "Not being an American myself I said nothing but continued thinking"replied the Bishop.Fr. Mathis had himself approached the Bishop concerning the dwindling subscription and he had was advised that he should make the magazine less literary with more news of Bengal from missionary letters.²⁷As is apparent from the discussion above, neither Fr. Mathis nor his successor as editors took this advise.To be fair to the editors , however,while the missionaries were wanting more of news of their work , there had always been a fair coverage of the Bengal Mission in the magazine.

Four days later Bishop Legrand wrote to the missionaries,enclosing the letters he had received from Fr.Burns [June 10, 1929] and Mathis [June 8 1929]²⁸ urging the men to write to the **The Bengalese** office.He was very concerned that the monthly contribution of \$ 2000 from the Bengalese headquarters would be curtailed as threatened in the letters referred to.²⁹The three letters had an effect on the men and many took the advise of Fr.Mathis to "sharpen your quill or fill your fountainpen and set yourself to work". The magazine from mid 1929-1933 had a larger number of missionaries sending in their reports.Those who did not take the obedience seriously had their allowance withheld by Fr.Mathis , no doubt to their annoyance.³⁰When Fr. Francis Goodall became the editor one of his concerns was that his confreres in Bengal were lacking in obedience and not cooperating with the magazine.³¹ Into the mid 1940's their cooperation was still lacking. Fr. Gerald Firzpatrick

²⁷Ibid., Legrand to Burns, July 14, 1929.

²⁸The letter advised the missionaries to "take care never to generalize; don't speak of Bengal at large, least of all of India because what is true of your village or at most of your district, may be false of the neighboring village. You may say that we are in dire need want of men and money but never never say that we are more in need of men than of money or vice-versa."

²⁹Ibid., Legrand to missionaries, July 18, 1929.

³⁰Ibid., Box 3 Folder 25, Burns to Norckauer July 20, 1931.

³¹Holy Cross Foreign Mission Center records, Dacca Bishops, Crowley Box 2, Goodall to Crowley, September 18, 1935.

who took over from Fr. Goodall confided to Fr. John Kane , the Religious Superior in Bengal that the editors were getting hard put to find material for the paper that had to be cared for month after month. He understood the trouble the men would have in writing ,and that it was something to get down to the requirement, but that any letter to the editors meant much to them.³²The Superior came to the rescue of his erring men that it was not that they did not want to write : “With all the relief work beside the regular work they just do not get time enough to collect a thought”, he wrote back home.³³ Bishop Crowley saved the situation many a time with his regular column . The editor was so appreciative of the monthly letter from the aging Bishop that he wrote to Fr. Kane suggesting that the Bishop “should be awarded a Golden Star for his faithfulness.”³⁴

Winding up : Even a cursory glance through the last ten years’ issues of **The Bengalese** will convince readers that the magazine was finding it difficult to meet its purpose -propaganda for the foreign missions . It was fast losing out to two other magazines, the **Ave Maria** with a circulation in 1956 of 48,000 and **The Catholic Boy** with a popularity among 85,000 readers.**The Bengalese** in its last year went out to a mere 10,000 by comparison.³⁵ The attempt to give fresh interest in the magazine by Fr. Norman Johnson who took over the editor’s table in October 1946, by introducing ‘Dacca Data As Gleaned from Missionary Letters’ and ‘Mission Ramblings’, was merely providing mission news under new headings .Surprisingly neither of these pages made any reference to the independence of Pakistan and India in August 1947 and the effect it had on the missions.

³²Ibid.,Pakistan Religious Superiors 1942-1947,Fitzpatrick to Kane,January 14, 1944.

³³Ibid., Kane to Fitzpatrick, January 18 ,1944.

³⁴Ibid., Fitzpatrick to Kane,February 24,1944

³⁵General Chapter Report 1956, Report of the Provincial to the General Chapter of 1956,Priests of Holy Cross ,Indiana Province.

The late Fr. Arnold Fell became the editor of the magazine in March 1952. Soon after he made a survey of the contents of the magazine over a period of eight years and found that in different issues the material pertaining to the missions ran between four to sixteen of the twenty-four pages. The rest of the pages were taken up with articles or stories that did not pertain to the missions and which, "because of the type of material you can get for the low rate we can pay, were of a caliber not calculated to sell the magazine as a piece of family reading material."³⁶ With much trepidation he made the first major change in 30 years of the magazine's history in its November 1952 issue by replacing the large 8.5 inches by 11.5 inches format with a 5.5 inches by 8.5 inches issue in October - November 1952. His editorial explained, "This is an age of the pocket -book, the purse size magazine, the digest. The new format of **The Bengalese** is an attempt to present the same mission news in a handier, more convenient form."³⁷ More changes were made from the September 1954 issue with a further reduction in size of a quarter of an inch on each side with the printing done in lithography process.

Since the inception of **The Bengalese**, it had been the propaganda magazine for the American Holy Cross foreign mission in East Bengal. As the number of men entering the religious life increased so did their zeal to start new foreign missions in Africa and South America. In course of time the American Province of the congregation was divided into the Indiana and Mid-West Provinces. The magazine came into the management of the Indiana Province. By then no longer could a name representing Bengal alone be representative of the foreign mission work of the congregation. As the

³⁶ Holy Cross Foreign Mission Center records, Post Office Re: The Bengalese. It is assumed that this letter which has a page or two missing and does not have the name of the author is written by Fr. Arnold Fell as he mentions Fr. Johnson relinquishing the editorship, the changes to be made in the size of the magazine and its contents.

³⁷ **The Bengalese**, vol. 33, No. 7, October-November, 1952.

newer missions' beginnings and growth could not be reported in a magazine exclusively meant for Bengal decision was taken to cease publishing **The Bengalese**. In 'Time for a change' the editor informed the readers: ³⁸ " One does not abandon an old name or an old friend without good reason and without much thought. We have given the matter much thought and have decided that the name HOLY CROSS MISSIONS would be more representative. It is simple, understandable, and adequately labels the purpose and content of the magazine, which is to feature the apostolic work of the Holy Cross." The editor also explained that with the change in the name of the state where the congregation ministered, to Pakistan, a new name for the magazine was called for.³⁹

Conclusion : **The Bengalese** was read with interest, we assume, in the years of its publication. It was able to keep the missionaries in Bengal in touch with Catholic America. Though the Bengal mission was not as large as the China mission, the work being done there by one congregation comes out as a significant effort in the American Catholic foreign missions. The number of American priests, Brothers and sisters in this mission were not large at any one time other than in the late 1950's and early 1960's, but their contribution to the uplift of the people of East Bengal has been immense. The magazine, understandably had a bias on reporting the mission work and the increase in numbers of Catholics. Mission and church histories such as the two volume and very detailed history by Raymond Clancy, **The Congregation of Holy Cross in East Bengal** [Washington : Holy Cross Foreign Mission Seminary, 1953] and his other histories of the congregation

³⁸ **The Bengalese**, vol. 38, No. 5, June 1956.

³⁹ Ibid. **Holy Cross Missions** was in print for only a few years. Congregation of Holy Cross Reports to the General Chapter 1962, Report of the Society of Priests, Indiana Province, p. 14, noted: **Holy Cross Missions** [formerly **the Bengalese**] has been discontinued. It was decided that the promotion purpose of this magazine could be served more effectively by newsletters, direct mail and other methods.

in East Bengal have utilised **The Bengalese** for reconstructing that past. Social scientists and particularly those interested in church histories will find in the pages of the magazine very valuable material and data related to a social and economic history of the people. There is a need and urgency also to portray such histories which, when attempted will have **The Bengalese** as a dependable source of information. The monthly has another value- in its forty-seven years of publication it captured in print some excellent photographs. A search for these and other photographs needs to be made to examine the proud boast of one of its editor's that the magazine had the best photo collection of Bengal.⁴⁰ **The Bengalese** will continue to keep us in touch with the past.

⁴⁰ The editors were at times careless with the captions for the photographs that were printed. One large illustration of the Garos used a photograph of Nagas, another tribe in North east India, the letters NAGA appearing very clearly in the photograph. In another, a caption of Shillong where the Holy Cross had a house, appears to be a hill station in South India!