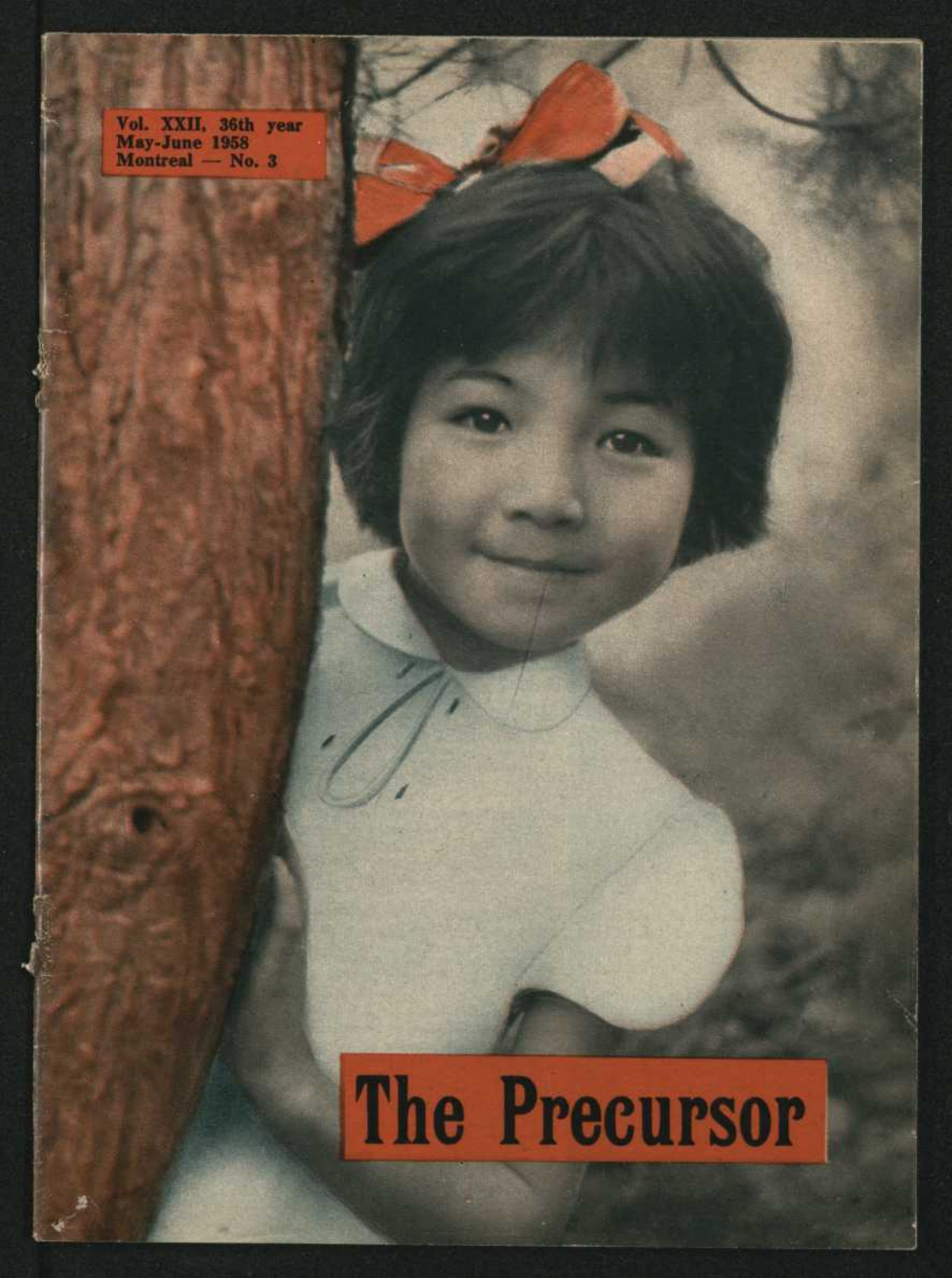




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Montreal — No. 3

The Precursor

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Our front cover: *Elfin smile of Japan.*

Am I Doing My Share

Obstacles encountered during 1957, contrasted with rather encouraging statistics leave us, nevertheless, under the impression that the march onward of the Church is slow indeed. The powers of evil have at their command men, arms, and money in unlimited quantities while the powers of good, short of hands and short of funds must submit to heartbreaking delays and tardy progress. If this be true, then not the Church but we Catholics are to blame.

It is high time we convince ourselves of the fact that the Missions cry poverty. Taken together, the three chief Pontifical Missionary Works have at their disposal a budget of 21 million dollars. Although this sum may appear enormous it is absolutely insufficient to support all the works, from seminaries to foundling homes, in 700 missions. After all, 21 million dollars is a paltry sum when compared with the 44 million dollar budget assigned to the three great works of the United Nations (Unesco, OMS, OIT) for purposes of education, health, and labour. The sum of 21 million dollars is by no means staggering when one reflects that 30 million dollars were spent for the transport by plane of 34,090 Hungarian refugees to the

U.S.A. and that United Nations Emergency Force occupying with 6,000 soldiers from ten nations the famous Gaza Zone to prevent another Suez conflict, spent 35 million dollars during this first year of occupation. What are 21 million dollars to provide for the needs of one entire year of missionary apostolate when, to indoctrinate 30,000 young people enticed to Moscow, the Kremlin lavished 50 million dollars on the occasion of a festival which lasted only a few days? When will Catholics become alive to the fact that by giving up something of their superfluities, they might yet save the world?

We must also take into account that the missions are short of hands. The Holy Father himself in his Easter encyclical has pointed out the danger of delay. Where will be found the priests, brothers, Sisters, lay apostles so desperately needed on the missions? The Church acknowledges no compulsory service. Why are volunteers so woefully few? Will the rising generation one day accuse us of having lost Africa because of our lack of generosity? Will we let it be said that the history of Missions in our time was one of golden opportunities thrown away?

Adapted from Fides



LITANY

OF OUR LADY OF SERENITY

Sister SAINT NEMESE¹, M.I.C.

I have been asked, dear Blessed Mother, to write something in your honour in this centenary year of your apparitions at Lourdes. If only I were an expert weaver of words! I might perhaps hope to pen a tribute not too unworthy of your sublime grandeur.

Being but an awkward pencil pusher, mine will be a prayerful essay. In its accents you will straightway recognize the prototype of the orisons addressed to you by your selfish 20th century children — orisons in which the *ora pro nobis* outnumber by far the *Laudate Mariam*. But the fact that I have recourse to you as to the most loving and comprehensive of mothers, is not that in itself a delicate and sincere homage?

Allow me then to call you by a novel appellation, one of my own coining, an appellation particularly adapted to our feverish modern times

— Our Lady of Serenity. How do you like this new name, Mother dear?

Our Lady of Serenity whose eyes were modestly cast down, teach us to

keep ours veiled with prudence, shut against the snares of Evil One. Train us to guard these peepholes of our spirit from the mirage of the world's false glamour.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the humility of your downcast eyes, inspire the oppressed of so called free nations to endure their cruel lot without bitterness, and bid their oppressors to loyally examine their consciences and to redress their devious ways.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the gentleness of your downcast eyes, grant us control over the fires of anger smouldering in our hearts, volcanoes which threaten eruption on the least provocation more especially on days when the temperature is 90° Fahrenheit in the shade.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the discreet, subdued splendour of your downcast eyes, guard us against hasty, uncharitable judgments.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the patience of your downcast eyes, train

¹ Claire Garceau, Three Rivers, P.Q.

us and train all educators, parents, and teachers, in ways of constant quietude while discharging our daily tasks. Smooth away all irritability. If Juana demands frequent repetitions as her due, she is doubtless suffering from at least partial deafness. Listless little Margarita has missed so many lessons! Is it any wonder that she is all at sea among adjectives and adverbs? First, she had the "flu", then she came down with the measles, and finally, she caught the mumps. This explains why she is limp and inattentive, unable to concentrate on what is being said. Lightheaded Marta is not much more at fault; her flightiness unconsciously betrays the sorry instability of her divorced parents. Dear Mother, help us reach beyond appearances; obtain for us a share in the unalterable patience of your divine Son.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the thoughtfulness of your downcast eyes, reveal unto us the secret of generous pardons, the forgetfulness of slight or even grievous wrongs. Grant that we may keep at least one open gate in the tower of our hearts for those pleasant or otherwise who live around us. Could it be that we would imitate the conduct of the ungrateful debtor in the gospel who refused to cancel an insignificant debt after he himself had obtained remittance of an enormous one on his own account?

Our Lady of Serenity, by the calm recollection of your downcast eyes, teach us to make of our hearts sanc-

tuaries, gardens enclosed where the divine Friend may dwell every moment of the day and night.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the ardent glow of your downcast eyes, consume the dross of our human foibles, kindle in all hearts the undying flame of divine love. Hearts torn by the brambles of their unruly passions, cringing under the threat of the Bomb. Hearts of this good people that has become my people, hearts fond of *fiestas* but too often forgetful of the essential laws of Christianity; remind them that the great *fiesta* of eternal life is the only one really worthy of their aspirations. Hearts of your priests, of your religious, hearts of my parents and friends, my own heart redeemed by the precious Blood of your Son.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the inexpressible beauty and the shadowless peace flooding your downcast eyes, grant that we may be so deeply fascinated by eternal Beauty that our features may at length reflect some faint resemblance to your pure face, mirror of God's infinite perfection.

Our Lady of Serenity, by the smile hovering in the depths of your downcast eyes, deign to smile upon us as of yore upon Bernadette. Thus may we be enabled to lift heavenward our eyes steadfastly turned away from the sham beauties of the world.

Amen.

Thanks to Our Lady

Sister SAINT ALICE¹, M.I.C.

Twice a week, accompanied by Miss Li, I had for some time been going to teach catechism to the members of a certain Formosan family. The news having spread throughout the region, neighbours started to drop in at first merely out of curiosity; then out of genuine interest, several groups asked to be instructed. The informal course consisted in a repetition of the prayers in daily use followed by the singing of hymns; in last instance, came the doctrine lesson proper. Because of their memory which was fresh and receptive and of their familiarity with the mandarin language they learned at school, the children made faster headway than their elders.

One day it came to our ears that a ninety-year-old blind woman wanted with all her heart to learn about the religion of the Lord of Heaven. With a little girl as guide we set out for her hut. Where we had expected to meet a decrepit invalid tottering on the brink of the grave, we found instead a still hale and hearty housewife

busily scrubbing peanuts clean in her miniature kitchen. How disappointed she was not to have been told of our visit in advance! "If you had sent a messenger," she said, "I might have had time to prepare tea and cakes . . . You are welcome in my poor house. Please be seated." Noticing by my halting speech that I did not belong to the locality she inquired where I came from. The Formosan catechist told her that I was a missionary Sister who had left my own country and come to Formosa in order to teach the people about the one true religion. Drawing nearer Grandmother lightly touched my veil, my dress, my rosary exclaiming all the while over such courageous conduct. After we had spoken to her in simple words of God, the heavenly Father, of His love for us, His earthly children, we left promising to call again every time we came this way to teach catechism.

We kept our promise. The lessons grew in length as time went on, for this senior of our catechumens — perhaps the oldest catechumen in the

¹ Jeanne Bastien Montreal.



**An interested and interesting group
surrounded the catechist.**

mission world today —proved to be a curious, attentive, and sympathetic student. About a month after our first meeting, we were told by one of Mrs. Hoang's nieces that her grandmother was very ill. Although it was late in the evening and rain was pouring down I thought it would be best to visit her without delay as it might be too late tomorrow. Miss Li, however, disagreed, explaining that a Formosan custom forbade to visit patients in the afternoon hours. The

family would take offence more especially the son who looked askance at the friendship that had ripened between his mother and Catholic missionaries. He might forbid us access to the house once for all. After reflection I reluctantly agreed to put off the visit as advised. That night I added a special petition to my customary bedtime prayers: "Dear Blessed Mother, please keep Mrs. Hoang alive until morning. She must not die unbaptized."

Early the next day, we left for the distant village. Nobody being in sight when we arrived, we slipped in and began preparing our aged friend for Baptism. Unfortunately, her son put in an appearance before we were half through. "Please go," he rasped. "My mother is not dangerously ill. All she needs is rest." I surreptitiously inserted a miraculous medal beneath the sick woman's pillow and made my exit as gracefully as I could, inwardly placing this soul under Mary's powerful protection.

Several days elapsed while Grandmother Hoang tenaciously clung to life. On the morning of May 2, I boldly presented Our Lady with an ultimatum. "This is your blessed month, dear Mother. You must grant us today the favour to see Grandmother Hoang alone that we may baptize her." Then the catechist and I sped on our errand of mercy. O joy! There was not a soul to be seen in and around the hut. So dark was it inside, however, that it took us a few minutes before we could make out anything. Our presence at her bedside seemed to bring Grandmother deep-

felt joy, for she held out her emaciated hands and affectionately patted Miss Li's face as she bent over her. While the catechist gave preparatory instruction, I kept a sharp lookout near the entrance in case the son should return unawares.

I heard Miss Li's query, "Do you wish to become a child of God through Baptism?" and Grandmother's quavering reply, "Yes, yes, I want to be baptized." My companion gently lifted the hoary head to avoid moistening the pillow and thus arouse suspicions and I poured the sacred waters that washed another human soul clean of sin. As Christian name I gave her Marie Beatrice in memory of a dear one back home.

After making the moribund as comfortable as possible on her rude pallet, we bade her farewell. Thanks to Our Lady, she was ready now for the blazing beauty of God's presence. What ecstatic delight must have been hers as she was ushered into the splendid mansions of heaven before the throne of the august Trinity and of Mary Immaculate!

MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

May: That in India, material progress may not be given the lead over spiritual interests.

June: That justice and peace reign among Arab nations.

Our Lady in Haiti

SAN
RIO
PUERTO RICO

Down pathways of starbeams Our Lady walked to inspect her vast earthly domain, that domain which the Creator made over to her as her inheritance. Eyes wistful with yearning tenderness, she lingered as she came to the beautiful arc of islands flung over the waters of the Caribbean. Thousands of her brown-skinned children roamed these lands, some gentle and peaceful, others fierce and warlike. To them had not yet been brought the stupendous affair of centuries as St. Bernard has called it — the Incarnation of the Son of God born of her Immaculate womb. But now, at last, God's hour was about to strike. It was the year of grace 1492.

For full many a lustre she had secretly been preparing the man who was to be the herald of her Immaculate Conception in these regions. According to the accepted pattern of celestial nobility, she had chosen him from among the common people. She saw to it that this future knight-errant of hers was trained in the stern school of poverty and adversity. Success he was never to know in its full measure. Of one thing, however, she made sure; never for a moment would he be left in doubt as to the sacred mission that was his. Samuel Eliot Morison remarks in his book *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, that the hardy Genoese was convinced God

destined him to be an instrument spreading the faith in far away lands. Was not his name *Christoferens*, bearer of Christ, Light of the World? Nothing and nobody could deflect him from this purpose. And to ensure its attainment, he dedicated to the Queen of his heart and thoughts all his actions as may be gathered from a fact mentioned in the biography written by his son Ferdinand: "When he (Columbus) had to write anything he would not try the pen without first writing these words: *Jesus cum Maria sit nobis in via*. (Jesus and Mary be with us in all our ways)."

We will not be straying too far from our subject if we recall here some instances of ardent piety to the Mother of God evidenced aboard the *Pinta*, the *Nina*, and the *Santa Maria* on their voyages of discovery. Regardless of what may have been their human weaknesses, the mariners who manned these ships carried the seeds of a lasting devotion to the Mother of God to Haiti.

It may come as a surprise to many to learn that at this epoch, the sailors of Christendom were the most religious of laymen. There were neither clocks nor ships' bells then. Instead, every half hour members of the crew in turn sang out a ditty while turning the ampoletta or hour glass. Before the first night watch, all hands as-

JUAN
PIEDRAS

VIRGIN GORDA

SAINT-MARTIN

VIRGIN ISLANDS

BARBUDA

ST-JEAN
ANTIGUA

RECONDA

MONTserrat

GUADELOUPE

SAINT-ROSE

SAINT-ANNE

MARIA GALANTE

DOMINICA

SAINT-MAIRIE

MARTINIQUE

ST. LUCIA

SAINT VINCENT

MT. ST. CATHERINE

sembled for evening prayers. After saying aloud the Our Father, the Creed, and the Hail Mary, they concluded by singing the *Salve Regina*. Regarding this practice Columbus wrote: "Seamen sing or say it after their own fashion, bawling it out in several keys at once and murdering the stately Latin words." Nonetheless, this sincere homage could not fail to touch the Immaculate Heart of Mary. While the caravels progressed ever westward, tossing and pitching over uncharted waters, chanteys such as the following marked the passing hours:

Blessed be the hour in which God was born
Saint Mary who bore Him
Saint John who baptized Him.
The watch is called
The glass floweth
We shall make a good voyage
If God willeth.

Thus the members of Our Lady's peaceful armada advanced towards their goal singing her praises over the deep where never yet human voices had lauded her name.

To the first land Columbus sighted in what he imagined to be "Cipangu of the golden roofs", (Japan) he gave the name of *San Salvador* and to the second that of *Santa Maria de la Concepcion*. This was the first region baptized by him under his Lady's name but by no means the

last. At every turn, wherever he came to some particularly enchanting spot, straightway he offered it to Mary in filial homage. A chaplet of her appellations, strung as emeralds on a chain of silver, encircles the Antilles: *Santa Maria Redonda, Santa Maria la Antigua, Puerto de la Concepcion, Santa Maria de Monserate, Maria galante, Santa Maria de Belen*, to mention only a few. Of the first two permanent settlements made by Columbus, the one established in the regal plain of *La Vega* he placed under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception. Even the great plain itself became known as *Concepcion de la Vega*. In this place dear to him, he built a chapel to Our Lady hoping to erect one day a splendid cathedral in her honour. Whenever his strenuous occupations left him any respite, he loved to retire within its walls to ponder over the best means of converting the aborigines. There it was

that his enemies found him when they had succeeded in having his authority brought into disrepute. One of his greatest griefs when he died was that the natives he had loved had been so shamefully oppressed by Spanish adventurers instead of having been made to share in the benefits of Christianity. Wishing to reserve until eternity the reward of her good and faithful servant, Our Lady did not afford him "the sense of fulfillment that would have come from foreseeing all that would flow from his discoveries". He died in sorrow at the ingratitude of men but fully resigned to the Will of his Maker. How could he have guessed that the whole history of two huge continents would stem from his four voyages? Enough for him to have been chosen to give Haiti "the hilly country" a Mother whose love would never allow the Light of true Faith to be totally extinguished on its shores.

Our Lady and Colonial Hispanolia

The seeds of Marian devotion cast into the soil of the Spanish Isle sprouted, grew, and gave forth fruits. Under the sign of Mary, this first permanent settlement made by Europeans in the New World became "the eldest daughter of the Church in America", a bishopric having been established there by Pope Leo X as early as 1513.

Among the missionaries who accompanied the first Spanish settlers to Hispanolia were the Dominican Friars so deeply devoted to Our Lady. With what zeal they nurtured in the colony the seedlings of love for the *Madre de dios* planted by Columbus! As their portion of the apostolic vineyard they were assigned the region that

extends between the plain of Artibonite and the region of Les Cayes. In 1690, they organized in the plain of Cul-du-Sac (today Croix des Missions), a parochial centre with a chapel consecrated to Our Lady of the Rosary. Some years afterwards, at twenty kilometres from Cul-du-Sac, another outpost was organized which later grew into a regular parish with Our Lady of the Assumption as patroness. No outstanding event marked the life of these two parishes until the foundation of Port au Prince in 1749. At this date the two first settlements were united to form one parish beneath the aegis of Our Lady of the Assumption. The motherly solicitude of Mary for the "hilly

country " prompted her to lay immediate claim over this humble hamlet that was to know glorious destinies as capital of Haiti.

During this colonial period of its history, Haiti was crowned with garlands of churches and chapels.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help and Present-Day Haiti

In the early days of January 1882, a grim visitor stalked the hills and valleys of Haiti, terror and mourning in its wake. In overcrowded towns and hamlets the plague of smallpox, for such was the visitor, wrought greatest havoc. In a time and place where doctors were few and adequate medication practically unknown, there was no earthly hope of checking this disease which was rapidly transforming the city into a graveyard. In vain the distressed population stormed heaven with prayer; the number of victims went on increasing.

At this critical moment, the pastor of the cathedral parish, Father Francis Kersuzan, told Archbishop Guillaux about a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help brought from France. He asked and obtained permission to expose this picture in a chapel situated at Bel Air, a hillock outside the city limits. On February 5, a procession was organized to this shrine. The Archbishop explained Our Lady's miraculous image emphasizing the favours which she constantly lavished upon all those who knelt before the original copy in Rome. Why should she not bestow like favours upon her afflicted children of Haiti? On the following day, a novena of Masses was started in her honour; before the nine days had elapsed those who were stricken with the disease suddenly

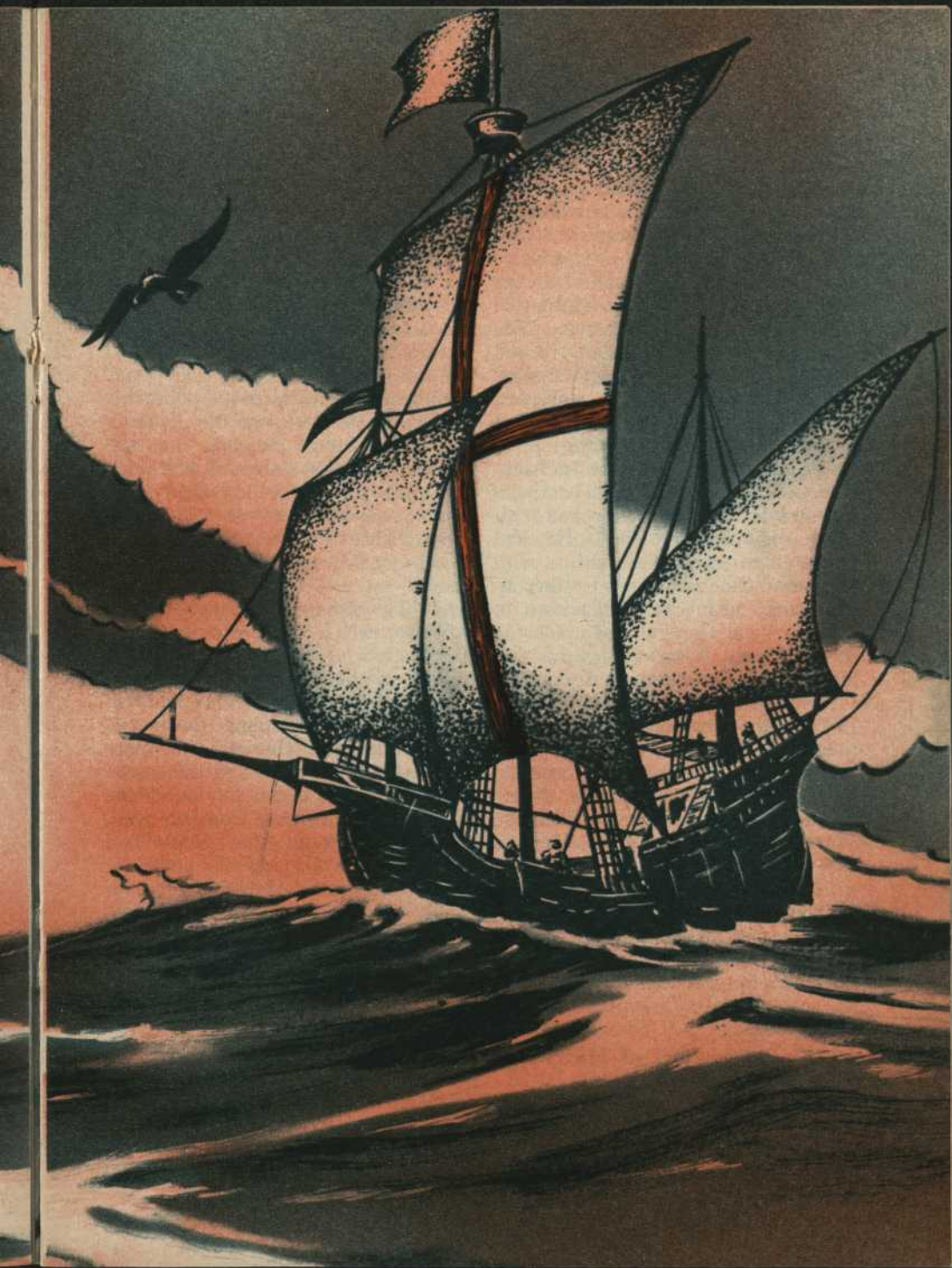
After the concordat in 1880, appeals to Mary were again multiplied in sanctuaries which glorified her as Our Lady of Hope, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Sorrows, and in a particular manner Our Lady of Lourdes.

improved. Better still! From this time onward not a single new case of smallpox was reported in Port au Prince.

Is it surprising that after this event the Haitians took Our Lady of Perpetual Succour to their hearts? With the passing of the years, her picture came to adorn almost every church and *caille* on the island while the modest shrine of Bel Air became her regal demesne. Perpetual Help! How sweet this title sounds to the people of Haiti! They cherish it as the French cherish Lourdes, the Portuguese Fatima, the Mexicans Guadalupe.

On September 23, 1883, Our Lady of Perpetual Help was to give her good people of Port au Prince another singular proof of her maternal protection. For two days, fires set by arsonists raged in the streets of the capital; the most beautiful part of the city had already been destroyed. Fanned by a strong sea breeze blowing from the west, the flames continued their ravage, threatening the cathedral and adjacent buildings. All seemed lost when, suddenly, the wind veered to the southeast. As everyone in Haiti is aware such a phenomena never occurs in Port au Prince at three o'clock in the afternoon. In a short time, the fires died down completely much to





the relief of the population. What mysterious power was this which caused the wind to turn from the west to the southeast and paralyzed the fury of the criminals who had sought to destroy the capital if not she who as Queen of the universe sways the elements at will? In his essay on devotion to the Mother of God in Haiti, His Excellency The Most Reverend J. M. Jan, retired Bishop of Cap Haitien, remarks: "A fact that remained unknown about this happening and which I accuse myself of proclaiming thirty years late, is that the saintly Archbishop Msgr. Guilloux in that crucial and tragic hour had invoked Our Lady of Perpetual Help. He had promised to present her shrine with an *ex voto* if she put a stop to the conflagration; meantime, unbeknown to him his Vicar General had made the same promise. It was at this moment that the wind changed direction."

Named Bishop of Cap Haitien in 1886, Msgr. Kersuzan's first act was to entrust his diocese to the powerful patronage of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. With what vigilance Mary guarded his person and his flock, he never tired of proclaiming. In the year 1887, he saw himself entrusted with the care of recruiting aspirants for the priesthood. There were only eleven pupils in the Major Seminary and after the June ordinations there would remain but four. Casting him-

self before the revered image of his protectress, the Bishop of Our Lady of Perpetual Help vowed to offer her an *ex voto* and to publish everywhere her favour if she but deigned to double the number of seminarians. Three months later there were thirty-six young levites preparing for the priesthood. Again in 1893, Msgr. Kersuzan had recourse to Mary regarding the affairs of the seminary. He was in urgent need of a new establishment where he could house his aspirants. He knelt one day in tears before her image pleading that she come anew to his assistance and work a miracle if need be; his prayer was hardly over when he was told that a lady wished to offer him a castle which her deceased father had willed should be affected to some pious work. The bishop set out immediately to visit what he interiorly called Our Lady's legacy. What was not his joyful surprise to find in the vestibule a large picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help smiling down benignly upon him! He was in for more surprises. As he inspected the castle, in every single room he found the same picture hanging from the wall. Who could doubt that Mary had jealously been keeping this house for her priestly sons of Haiti since for seven years past the owner had unsuccessfully offered it to various religious communities or personages in charge of charitable works?

Consecration of Haiti to Our Lady of Perpetual Help

In 1942, the country was officially consecrated to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. After consulting ecclesiastical

authorities, the Honorable Elie Lescot then President of the Republic, decided that the consecration should

take place on December 8. Port au Prince offered its National Palace, a gem of architectural beauty, to serve as setting for this glorious ceremony. In the rear, rose the green-mantled hills from which Haiti borrowed its name "the hilly country"; in front, like a gorgeous carpet, unrolled the "Champ de Mars", one of the handsomest parks in the West Indies. At eight o'clock in the morning, the outdoor Mass was celebrated by His Excellency the Most Reverend Jules Pichon, Bishop of Les Cayes. In spite of the torrid heat, over two hundred thousand people from every part of Haiti stood in the park. After Mass, Archbishop Le Gouaze delivered a brief message stressing the twofold motive for the consecration of the Republic to Mary: gratitude for past favours more especially that granted in 1882, the "miracle" of Bel Air and in 1893, the splendid property provided for the Haitian seminary; the hope that Mary would continue to protect her dear Haitian people in the difficulties and trials of the present times. An impressive hush fell over the multitude while the five prelates recited the act of Consecration closing with these eloquent words: "Today, Our Lady of Perpetual Help we consecrate to thee forever the land and people of Haiti... Our Lady and our Queen do thou remember that Haiti belongs to thee for all time. Guard her, defend her, guide her, fortify her, bless her as thy dowry and thy possession." President Lescot in turn proclaimed to the assembly that he associated the whole nation to this sacred pledge whose significance he explained. As Queen of Haiti, Mary then inau-

gurated her reign by reviewing the troops. Church bells rang in unison, cannons roared, and two hundred thousand human voices, the rich melodious voices of Haitian singers, chanted her glories and her bounties.

That this memorable event might never be erased from the memory of his people, President Lescot decreed that, henceforth, December 8, would be a national holiday. Not content with this, he caused this solemn consecration to be commemorated by a new series of postage stamps, the first religious stamps ever issued by the Haitian government. The picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help occupies the upper part with, beneath it, the motto of the Negro slaves during the war of Independence. "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Below is the simple inscription "The Patroness of Haiti".

"The sovereignty of Mary demands the Kingdom of Christ." Publicly acclaiming the queenship of Mary the people of Haiti by the very fact acknowledged the kingship of Christ, for the Mother can never reign without the Son. They have thereby given other nations a splendid example of Faith in a world that is tottering on the brink of atheism's dark abyss.

Three "firsts" distinguish the sturdy Haitian Republic: first seat of a bishopric in the New World; first State to be constitutionally governed by Negroes; first nation to place itself officially under the protection of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. May it guard as its most precious "first" the faith brought to its shores by Columbus, ardent and loyal herald of Mary Immaculate.

The Redaction



Drawing Exhibition

Sister SAINT ANGELE OF MERICI¹, M.I.C.

The Catholic Committee of Japan lately organized an exhibition of drawings for all Catholic schools throughout the Empire. The best specimens were to be appraised and then forwarded to the International Exhibition of Brussels. Afterwards they were to become Vatican property.

Our pupils accepted the challenge and set to work with cheerful enthusiasm. In all, we sent forty of their drawings to Tokyo to be examined by members of the Committee.

Imagine our pleasant surprise when, some weeks later, a message from the capital advised us that two of our pupils in the primary grades, Toshiko Nishihara, a girl in the fourth year, and Sei Saburo Hayashi, a boy in the third year, were among the lucky winners of the first eight prizes; another twosome were granted awards, while fourteen received honourable mention. Our school thus came second after that of the Religious of the Sacred Heart.

The parents of the proud winners, Toshiko and Saburo, resolved to accompany their children to Sophia University in Tokyo, seat of the exhibition, where the solemn awarding of the prizes was to be held. The judges pres-

ent valued each "masterpiece" mentioning more particularly Saburo's sketch titled "The Hour of Prayer at the Convent", depicting three Sisters walking Indian file on the convent verandah telling the beads. Was the appreciation of the judges founded on the fact that the house was easily recognizable? Not entirely. It rather took into consideration the boy's limpid interpretation of this one "prayerful" impression received among so many others at the Catholic school he attends.

If our dreams of apostolate are seldom promptly realized in this Land of the Rising Sun at least may we hope that the mute example of wholly dedicated lives will not fail to wield a deep and lasting influence on the spiritual destiny of our non-Christian pupils.

We are pleased to know that these two modest sketches drawn by a boy and a girl of our Xaverio Gakuin (St. Francis Xavier School) will eventually find their way into the Vatican. Will not thereby our Japanese Mission itself and all the souls entrusted to our care be sheltered under the protecting mantle of Holy Mother Church?

¹ Marie Jeanne L'Heureux, Loretteville.

Because no One Is an Island

According to my friends, fair weather, pleasant picnics, convivial gatherings — all had combined to make of the summer holidays one blissful stretch of enjoyment. In this chorus of praise I was a lone dissenter. While my companions had enjoyed themselves to the hilt, I felt all out of sorts; grave thoughts about the futile emptiness of wordly amusements buzzed in my mind like swarms of mosquitoes after an evening shower. It was all very well for Pope Pius XI to have been haunted by the one thousand million pagans straying far from the Lord's fold. He was pope and the whole responsibility of the salvation of souls weighed on his shoulders. But why should these same pagans suddenly begin to harass a flighty modern girl like me to the point that my comfortably cushioned life appeared hollow and meaningless? Try as I might these solemn thoughts refused to be shoved away. Apparently they had come home to roost. I caught at every wisp of song and gaiety, I threw myself in a swirl of social affairs, but the one thousand million of pagans kept on pursuing all my waking hours. Could a person as fond as I was of swimming, dancing,





movies, all sorts of good times be called to the missionary life? God's ways are mysterious. Many a time those words had stared up at me from the pages of the Holy Book but until now I had not understood their hidden meaning neither had I guessed that a person usually uncomplicated could unexpectedly grow all mixed up on worthwhile issues, irresolute in the face of practical decisions to be taken.

Fortunately at this bend in the road of life, someone suggested a pilgrimage to our national shrine of Cap de la Madeleine. Our Lady did not raise her lovely eyes as she had done years ago but she did grant me light and guidance. It was August 15. The sanctuary was packed to the doors. I waited until the flow of pilgrims had diminished then I went to kneel as close as possible to the miraculous statue. With all my heart I prayed, "Dear Blessed Mother, please do tell me what God wants of me and obtain for me the generosity to respond." I had the presumption to add, "Show me a concrete sign . . . You know how dumb I am when it comes to decide important matters. Let one of the pilgrims say something that will help me." Our Lady no doubt smiled at my request — best of all she granted it.

As I emerged into the brilliant sunshine I paused a few moments to enjoy the panorama, then leisurely started to walk across the bridge. Groups of pilgrims were crossing it in the opposite direction and as some were taking photographs I stepped aside to let them pass. Just then I heard

my name called and turned abruptly.

A tall Sister in white habit and flowing black mantle moved to my side. Although her voice was strangely familiar I did not recognize her until she stood in front of me and took both my hands into hers. "Veronica! You here and in this dress? What happened? Tell me, quick." While we strolled the length of the bridge, she told me her story. "Didn't you know I had joined the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception? Today is my farewell pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Cape. I'm leaving for Haiti this week." I listened as if in a daze. In my heart I felt that this was the sign I had requested from the Blessed Virgin. Unconscious of the struggle going on in my heart my former classmate kept on telling me about her vocation and her impending departure for the missions. All at once she slipped off the gold ring she had received at her perpetual vows, last August 5, and tried it on my finger. I toyed with it and remarked rather inanely, "It's too large."

"Never mind!" Sister's laugh tinkled like a crystal bell as she retrieved the slender gold band. "They make them in all sizes you know," she quipped. "See, the name of Jesus is carved inside."

"You seem happy," I ventured as I watched her putting on her ring again.

"Happy is rather a tame expression. Believe me, it is something like heaven on earth, this apostolic voca-

tion. God has even realized my childhood dream of flying to my Promised Land. Our plane will leave Dorval for Port au Prince via New York and Miami."

I realized that I made another inane remark when I told Veronica she looked happy. Why stress the obvious? Her eyes were twin pools of merriment, her lips were curved in smiling lines. During the five minutes we had been talking she had used the word joy at least five times. We parted after I had murmured *Bon Voyage*, for her family just then came forward to claim her for the return trip.

Instead of keeping on my way

home, I turned back and reentered the quiet sanctuary. There kneeling at Our Lady's feet I poured out my heart in prayers of thanksgiving.

I clearly saw now what the divine Master wanted me to do with my youth. He was offering me a little golden ring made to measure — the measure of my love and of my generosity. I had realized at last that a true and profound happiness can be found in spending oneself for others, for our pagan brothers and sisters whom we are bound to help. Called to work at the harvest of souls, I saw I had no right to shirk this duty because no one is an island.

A Novice





JOYS OF

The influenza epidemic now rife in our parts has sent the sick flocking to our doors. So many cases were reported in the city that several schools had to be temporarily closed.

'Tis an ill wind that blows no good!
The epidemic has been the means of

spreading the fame of our Taipei dispensary far and wide. This charitable work inaugurated by Mrs. Simone Simard of Montreal, today affords its generous benefactress many a deep-felt consolation. Besides the joy of relieving the misery of ailing humanity, it provides her with a vast field of apostolate where she may spend herself for the coming of Christ's kingdom.

HARVESTING

Sister MARIE ESTHER¹, M.I.C.

When doctors and nurses in turn paid tribute to the influenza, Mrs. Simard hastened to their aid, remarking "Work seems to give me wings. The more I have, the happier I feel". During a fortnight she thus lent us every assistance. Seeing that we were forced to turn away a number of patients because we lacked sufficient space to accommodate them, she proposed to utilize the rooms used for the first dispensary. Immediately she started putting up at her own expense a ward furnished with beds and well stocked with linen even ordering a sanitary terrazzo flooring to be laid.

She felt amply rewarded when some time later Providence allowed

her to baptize a little Formosan Simone *in articulo mortis*. For the last few days, in order to set the Sister Nurse free to attend to rows upon rows of out-patients, she has assumed entire charge of a poor woman dying of cancer. Like a guardian angel she will soothe the patient's last moments and facilitate her passage through the dark portals of death into the bright palace of eternal joy.

Thanks to the zeal of this lay apostle, numerous Formosans are daily being led to Him who is the Way and the Truth. May God bless her and "may her tribe increase".

¹ Alice Buteau, Notre Dame de la Guadeloupe.

KATETE, NYASALAND



Nyasaland's First African Bishop

Sister MARIE OF FATIMA¹, M.I.C.

Recently assigned to the Dedza Vicariate Apostolic detached from those of Likuni and Zomba, was His Excellency The Most Reverend Cornelius Citsulo, first African bishop of Nyasaland and twenty-first on the list of Africa's autochthonous prelates.

Although I am a little late in relating this happy event I am sure kind readers and generous friends of the missions will indulgently overlook my tardiness. Needless to say, the honour of the episcopate conferred on yet another priest of their own race thrills with joy and pride the hearts of all African Catholics. Christians and missionaries flocked in great numbers to Bembeke, a mission entrusted to the White Fathers and see of the new

Vicariate Apostolic, to assist at the impressive ceremony of the Bishop's consecration.

Newspapers had commented this promotion and announced the date and location of the felicitous occasion in advance. Trying its best to measure up to the glory that had descended upon it, Bembeke put on airs as if it had suddenly been transformed into a stately city. Pervaded by an atmosphere of joyous and triumphant animation, its narrow, modest streets bustled with pedestrians, bicycles, buses, and lorries.

With his usual considerateness, Reverend M. Riopel, W.F., had foreseen an arrangement which would allow the African postulants of Katete to join their compatriots in ac-

claiming the new Bishop of Bonizza. They will not forget this trip in a hurry. Bembeke is situated at 250 miles from Katete. Twelve persons—Father Riopel at the wheel, his catechist, the eight postulants, Sister Marie of the Presentation¹ and I were squeezed inside the *galimoto* (light motor lorry). It took us eight hours to cover the distance between the two missions.

At four, in the afternoon May 8, we reached destination and were cordially welcomed by the White Sisters of Bembeke. Already, preparations for Saturday's celebration were on the way. Arrayed upon the parlour table were the mitre, crozier, ring, gloves, and golden slippers for the future bishop. In the refectory nearby could be admired a monumental cake, masterpiece of culinary art, representing the cathedral of Bembeke in miniature.

During the days that followed we were happy to lend a hand at the decorations. Its pompous title of episcopal city notwithstanding, Bembeke remains a poor mission where the so-called amenities of civilized parts are lacking and therefore leave full play to ingenuity. The altar set up in the inner convent yard was of the simplest architecture. As there were no suitable flower vases we used instead empty casks and cartons draped in white cotton or paper. Planks laid on prie-dieu furnished additional kneelers.

On Saturday morning, the sun shone in a flawless sky much to the relief and delight of participants. At ten, an immense crowd stood expectantly about the convent premises.

His Excellency The Most Reverend J. Knox, Delegate Apostolic, advanced at the head of a procession of the clergy. The Bishop-to-be and Bishop Fady, W.F. of Likuni, bishop consecrator, accompanied by his two assistants Their Excellencies J. B. Theunissen, s.m.m., of Blantyre and L. Hardman, s.m.m. of Zomba together with numerous priests and seminarians, brought up the rear.

The mandate from Rome was read in Latin and afterwards translated into Cinyanja. Each important rite was likewise explained in the native language. What a consoling spectacle it is to see the advance of the Church in Africa! These noble sons of the soil will increase its power and vitality and assure its triumph in the inevitable struggles that are sure to occur between the City of Good and the City of Evil in a future that is perhaps nearer than we think.

After Mass, the new Pontiff wearing his mitre and holding his crozier, blessed the throng present numbered at about ten thousand. While the cortege went back to the cathedral, choirs sang in Latin, English, and African *Ad mullos annos! Long may you live! Zoka zinu ziculuke! Virimika vinu viwe vinandi!*

That very evening after presenting their homage to Bishop Citsulo who wished them perseverance in their vocation, the postulants were on their way back to Katete via Kasina where they spent Sunday. For them as well as for us missionaries the memory of this first episcopal consecration of a Nyasalander will prove a spur in the great work of evangelization in which we are privileged to take a share.

¹ Berthe Surprenant, Swanton, Vt.

BARANGAY

Sister ELIZABETH OF THE TRINITY¹, M.I.C

It was at Davao that I first heard tell about the Barangay. Upon recommendation of ecclesiastical authorities, the Fathers of the Pont Viau Foreign Missions had lately introduced it in their parishes and they were enthusiastically proclaiming its wonderful influence for good.

A few days later while visiting Mati, one of our missions in the southwest of Mindanao, I witnessed the modest procession daily organized to carry Our Lady's banner to the next rallying point.

It was really inspiring to watch these Oriental pilgrims piously defile under the swaying palm trees whose regal heads seemed bowed by the breeze in evening prayer. There was, however, in this scene something that went deeper than a mere picturesque demonstration of piety.

The Barangay is a lay movement recently initiated within Catholic Action, cadres and essentially adapted to the religious situation in the Philippines.

For several decades past, there has resulted from the acute shortage of priests such appalling ignorance of the fundamentals of Catholicism that it is a real wonder the Faith





has been kept alive in the hearts of the people. To what else can this be ascribed if not to the Filipinos' filial devotion to Mary? They may think lightly of neglecting the reception of Sacraments or assistance at Sunday Mass; they may criticise their pastors and Bishops, but they will never tolerate any depreciation of Our Lady. In the words of a Filipino priest, "God help you if you say anything

unpleasing about Our Blessed Lady in their presence!" In the name of Mary all doors open wide. She is the beloved Mother whom they can never forget, whom they cherish and defend always. The Barangay has seized upon this key to the heart of the people and through it works at renovating the truly Christian way of life in families as well as in society in general.

Foundation of the Barangay

The Barangay was born in 1949, on the morrow of World War II which brought death and devastation to a large portion of the Philippine Islands. Its founder was Antonio Gaston, of Silay province of Negros in the Visayas. Son of a sugar cane planter, Antonio more than other perhaps had tasted the bitterness of Japanese imperialism striving to strangle the nation in its hold. Peace once restored, his co-citizens wishing to honour his courageous and heroic stand during the conflict appointed him mayor of their town of Silay. From the beginning, the young man won the esteem and affection of everyone by his integrity and devotedness. No stauncher champion could the poor wish for. Had he not succeeded in having them represented in the town council by dividing the municipalities in districts or groups called Barangay according to an ancient custom antedating Spanish rule? In fact, centuries hence, the Malays who came to the Philippines arrived in boats called *Balangay*. Each boat carried a family composed of parents, children, and slaves;

each group of thirty to one hundred families ordinarily settled down on the coast and was designated as a *balangay* or *barangay* as the Spanish pronounced it.

Remodeled in twentieth century style the new Barangay commissioned their leaders to expose their reclamations to the Mayor who then placed the matter before the town council.

In the early days of 1949, Mr. Gaston fell ill and had to be hospitalized. Enforced inaction provided him with plenty of time to ponder over present social ills and the means to be used in remedying them. While he gazed out of the window of his hospital room onto the exterior world, he felt illumined by divine light; until now he had failed in solving crucial problems because he had relied too much on his own strength. The words of the Saviour flashed across his mind, "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened and I will refresh you." Antonio Gaston was transformed. This happened during May and he somehow felt the assurance

that Our Blessed Mother would help him in the organization of his future Barangay. As soon as he was discharged from the hospital, he invited to his house for a preliminary meeting six men among his acquaintances. This little group consisted of people from various stations in life; not one of them was what is called a practicing Catholic. They were, nevertheless, honest serious men desirous of knowing the truth in order to conform their lives to its teachings. To them, the founder unfolded his plan and proposed a weekly meeting to be held preferably on Sundays in order to discuss religious problems. The first meeting which had started at seven in the evening closed at one o'clock in the morning. Each successive assembly was a success. For this the president thought himself indebted to the three Hail Marys recited at the opening of deliberations imploring Our Lady's blessing on the proceedings.

Mr. Gaston had been educated in a college conducted by the Jesuit Fa-

thers in Manila, and his sound knowledge of religious questions proved an asset in his new undertaking. His health, however, was in such a precarious condition that the doctor forbade him to speak, advising him instead to write out all he had to say. "Doctor," the patient replied, "I'll do as you say every day of the week except the seventh. On that day it is my duty to speak."

Weekly discussions had wrought a remarkable change for the better in the first six recruits. Stifled for many long years under a blanket of doubts and prejudices their faith was now being rekindled, becoming a vital, active reality. These members in turn drew their own friends, neighbours, and acquaintances into Mr. Gaston's charmed circle. Slowly the Barangay was taking shape. It still lacked a precise goal, for some came out of curiosity, others to settle a simple Barangay problem. Evidently none of them would have participated if from the start there had been question of a religious association.

Like an Eagle it Soars

In February 1950, Henri del Castillo became a member. An ardent and fearless apostle, this former classmate of Mr. Gaston in Manila was destined to become the "St. Paul" of the Barangay to quote the founder himself. Together they bravely launched their craft on the high seas of apostolate.

From the day when it was officially placed under Mary's maternal patronage, it grew and spread rapidly to other *barrios* in the neighbourhood of Silay. The meetings consisted in a brief religious instruction, a discussion on current problems, and the telling of the beads. In time, a Marian hymn completed the schedule.¹

¹ Information on the origin of the Barangay is based on an article by Reverend B. Smyth SS C, in the "Sentinel".

Organization of present-day Barangay

Ten to twelve men among the most fervent in the parish are chosen as organizers or apostles. Once these have been taught the aim and nature of the Barangay, they are entrusted with the formation of a fresh unit.

The first duty of these apostles consists in recruiting fifteen families living as close together as possible and prepared to assume the following obligations:

1. To hold their homes available for the Rosary meetings one evening in a fortnight.

2. To send a representative every evening to the Rosary meetings in one of the other fourteen homes.

These organizers occasionally meet with rebuffs but on the whole they are well received, for how could Filipinos resist an appeal made in the name of Mary? The unit being formed it is subdivided into three groups of five families each representing the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries of the Rosary. A particular "mystery" is assigned each home. Each group is

placed under the direction of a *cabeza* (head); the unit thus has three *cabezas* one of whom as *mayor* shoulders the responsibility for the entire group of fifteen families.

Do the organizers now rest on their laurels? Far from it. They continue recruiting two other groups of fifteen families which thereby constitute one "Trinity", the first unit symbolizing God the Father, the second, God the Son, the third, God the Holy Ghost. A *cabeza mayor* governs this "Trinity".

By the very nature of its organization, the Barangay teaches in concrete fashion the chief attributes of God as well as the mysteries of the life of Our Lord and of our Blessed Mother. On the other hand, no limits being placed on the zeal and ardour of organizers the "trinities" go on multiplying. The movement at times embraces whole parishes and even dioceses. These "trinities" are all answerable to the Barangay Centre, training-school of dynamic apostles who scatter in all directions sowing the good seed.

Particular obligations and advantages

At first, members are asked to say three Hail Marys a day. Later on they undertake the daily recitation of the beads. Gradually, they add the practice of monthly then of weekly confession and communion.

In return numerous are the spiritual

and material advantages offered by the Barangay. True to the motto inscribed on its banner "To Jesus Through Mary!" it leads souls the Marian way. Since its foundation in how many thousands of homes has it not introduced the Rosary! Thanks

to brief religious instructions and to familiar conversations between members, religion has become better known and more faithfully observed not merely by associates but also by the masses with whom they come into contact. These results are more especially tangible as regards assistance at Sunday Mass and reception of the Sacraments. A case in point is that related by Canadian missionaries working in Davao. When they arrived here in 1937, only a sprinkling of practicing Catholics were present at the three Sunday masses. Scarcely one year after the organization of the Barangay in the city parishes, twenty-seven Masses were offered each Sunday in churches packed with faithful.

Moreover the Barangay provides for its militant members, social and economic assistance in their difficulties. Founded among the poor and for the poor, it practices what it

preaches being content with the humble homes of the poor to hold its meetings. It succours those who are in trouble, fosters the spirit of true brotherhood, establishes cooperatives, encourages athletic activities, revives national folklore more or less forsaken and forgotten during centuries of foreign occupation.

But the principal aim of the Barangay is the spiritual renovation of the Philippines. If certain elements in its structure are not quite up to the mark, such as it is this initiative presents a practical response to Our Lady of Fatima's request. Is it not a providential means of opposing the indifference of masses and the invasion of false doctrines? Under the aegis of the Woman terrible as an army in battle array the Barangay successfully holds in check the red battalions threatening to invade its fair shores from the mainland of Asia.

IN OUR MAIL BAG

Reading the articles in your interesting review leaves me under the impression that I have made a round-the-world trip. It has been very pleasant travelling along with your young missionaries from one mission post to another. At Hong Kong, I paused with your two Reverend Mothers to drop a prayer on the last resting place of our Canadian soldiers. How touching it is to see those regiments of white tombstones all marked with the Cross and the maple leaf symbols of our faith and of our beloved country!

Jaunts in Taipei and in Baguio City were also agreeable. Over these lands everywhere our heavenly Father has lavished masterpieces of harmonious beauty. How true it is to say that the earth and the heavens extol the glory of the almighty Creator.

I enclose a cheque for \$2.00; one as a subscription renewal, the other as payment of my *travelling expenses* in such charming company. At my age, (78) I surely appreciate being able to travel without fatigue.

Mrs. T...

St. Marie de Beauce.

Bridgeway to the Japanese Soul

Sister MARY OF THE REDEMPTION¹, M.I.C.

Conclusion

Japanese idioms are colourful, with remarkable economy of words and compression of meaning. Some have a startling bluntness such as *nite mo yaite no kuenai otoko desu* (cantankerous man — literally an unpalatable fellow, boiled or fried). A good many display flashes of dry Oriental humour: *mimi ga toi* (deaf, literally, ears that are far away); *akachan* (new born baby, literally, the honourable red one); *o mawari san* (policeman, literally, the honourable one who makes rounds). Not a few have elusive connotations: *mem-boku wo ushinau*, (to lose face, literally, to lose exterior appearances); *osore irimasu* (excuse me, literally, with great humility I request). Many are quaintly amusing, especially for the beginner. For instance *hara ga tatsu* (getting angry, literally, raising one's belly); *o me ni kakaru* (to meet someone, literally, to hang from someone's eyes); *o kinodoku sama* (expression of sympathy, literally, it is noble poison for your heart). Another surprise Japanese springs

on you is that men and women speak a different language, the latter using the longer, more polite forms of verbs and avoiding harsh sounding contractions; the former expressing themselves in the shorter simple verbal forms and using curt abbreviations.

It is considered impolite to call a person by his or her given name, this even among members of the intimate family circle. From one end of Japan to another, the honorific *sama* (in familiar use shortened to *san* and by children to *chan*) is tacked to everybody's name be he aristocrat or commoner, hoary grandfather or tiny babe. How charming it is to hear children calling one another's name always coupled with that graciously polite suffix, *chan*! One is delighted to find the innate courtesy of this people reflected in its language. How else explain the general use of honorifics applied even to ordinary objects? To a certain extent, one may be ready to admit the usage of the "noble" words *o* or *go* (literally,

honourable) when addressing persons to whom polite deference is due but it is something of a puzzle to understand why things such as, for instance, *o sato* (sugar) *o yu* (hot water) *o niwa* (garden) should share in this honour. Perhaps out of the gentleness of their hearts the Japanese have devised this way of compensating inanimate things for their long enduring service to humanity!

Two hundred and fifty years ago, Engelbert Kaempfer, the German-Dutch physician of the Nagasaki

Holland traders, remarked, "The behaviour of the Japanese from the meanest countryman up to the greatest prince or lord is such that the whole Empire might be called a school of civility and of good manners." This continues to hold good today notwithstanding the modern encroachments. Words with saddening or unpleasant connotations are thoughtfully replaced by others conveying the original meaning in more delicate if slightly confusing terms for a foreigner. Thus the words *shi*

Studying the difficult Japanese language.

Sister Gabrielle de l'Immaculee (Gabrielle Michaud, Plessisville)
Sister St. Jerome (Therese Renaud, l'Orme), Sister Frances of Carmel (Madeleine Coursol, Montreal), Sister St. Elodie (Simonne St. Amand, St. Aime).



kei 幸

mo の

soken 毒

(death) and *shi suru* (to die) are seldom used, the expression *naku narimashita* (to vanish, literally, to become nothing) or in certain parts of Japan *o kakure ni narimashita* (to hide oneself) being preferred. The withdrawing of the Empire into its shell for nearly three centuries (1614-1865) encouraged a leisurely social life and an elaborate repertoire fitted to almost any occasion from the most trivial to the most extraordinary.

Where else on earth would a street car conductor warn his passengers of an impending jolt as he starts his car, *Ugokimasu* (careful now! literally, we move) and excuse himself of poor service as they alight, *o machido sama* (sorry to have kept you waiting, literally, honourable waiting you have had)? Any slight benefit you may have conferred will frequently be recalled in your presence by the gracious expression *konoaida o sewa sama* (much obliged, literally, honourable service I received the other day). Even if to more mundane Western minds such pompously wordy sentences may appear unnecessary, still who will deny that they are at least pleasant to hear?

Ideograms

O kinodoku

(expression

of

sympathy).

Half-informed persons at times state the opinion that there must certainly be a way out of the labyrinth of the ideographic system of writing. In its present stage, however, Japanese can no more be completely romanized than Chinese can be written in English. Thousands of abstract words, an amazing number of homonyms could not be adequately distinguished by our alphabet of twenty-six letters. Moreover, when forced into the ill-fitting narrow confines of romanized syllables, most Japanese words lose their original meaning. They are like precious stones set in crude settings.

Perhaps one of the chief reasons which explain the enduring victory of *kanji* (ideograms) as the recognized medium of writing in Japan, is that this "shorthand of ideas" holds an irresistible fascination for a people of artists. Japanese art has been called calligraphic; it is equally true to say that Japanese calligraphy is artistic. In its supreme and elegant concision, a column of expertly drawn *kanji* possesses a strange, mysterious beauty. Be that as it may, learning to read and write

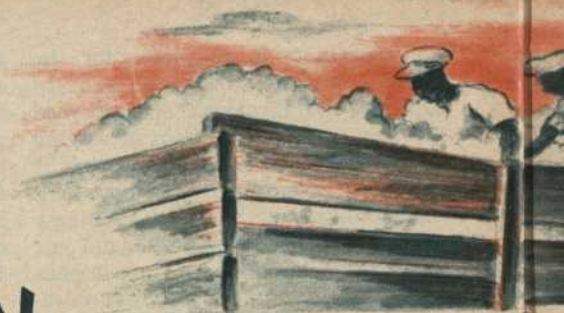
the characters is no picnic for the foreign student of Japanese. Inevitable complications accompanied the transfer of this system of writing from China to Japan. Supposing it had been possible to reproduce Chinese sounds exactly, all the Chinese teachers who came to Japan did not speak the same dialect. Thus it happened about that two or three readings for each character came to be established. To add to the perplexity of the situation, instead of always imitating the Chinese sounds, the Japanese in many cases translated the meanings of the characters into their own language, with the result that yet another reading was developed.

In addition to the Chinese ideographic script, *kana* another system of writing derived from it came into existence towards the close of the eighth century. Whereas genuine ideographs represent ideas, *kana* merely represent the sounds of which words are composed somewhat as our writing does, the only difference being that *kana* stand for syllables not letters. Although all Japanese words might be written in *kana*, these have not supplanted the ideographs. They play a minor role, their use being restricted to indicate verbal inflections and to write some of the adverbs and prepositions. *Kana* are divided into

two families, one plebeian, the other aristocratic; the squat, unattractive *katakana*, the elegant cursive *hiragana*. According to legendary accounts, the famous Buddhist monk, *Kobo Daishi* (774-835) fathered the latter. In order to facilitate memorization of this syllabary composed of 47 sounds, he wrote a mystic octet founded on one of the *sutras* (book of aphorisms) and so arranged that the same letter is never repeated twice. Its first line, *Iroha*, has given its name to the syllabary itself. Freely and briefly translated it runs, "All is transitory in this fleeting world. Let me escape from its illusions and vanities." A neat little capsule of Buddhist philosophy compressed into 47 syllables!

It might be of some interest to note a few of the almost countless combinations of compound words formed by ideographs but this would stretch far beyond the scope of a modest article. Enough has been said it seems to give the reader an insight into Japanese ways of thought. Also he will have at least a faint idea of the difficulties which confront the average missionary who is trying to master this harmonious but complicated language — the bridge which must be crossed before one can penetrate into the soul of Yamato.

Birthday of COTTON



Mrs. RUTH YAO

The ancient Chinese had a tendency to deify eminent personages and humanize soaring mountains and great rivers, fabulous creatures and legendary figures, exotic plants and symbolic flowers. Thus there were Shen Nung, the expounder of husbandry; You Tsao, the builder of "nest" shelter for the human race; Sui Jen, the discoverer of fire; the dragons, the rulers of waters and cloud; stars, thunder, wind, and all nature's elements became living beings with supernatural powers.

The fundamental motive for creating so many human-like characters was a basic fear of the unknown, of the restless moods of the physical universe, of the thousand evanescent changes, of all permanent and transient phenomena in space and time, and of the realization of the ephem-

eral nature of man's life as measured against the eternity of the earth. To deify the great and to make human inanimate objects were attempts to give the meritorious an eternal life, so that posterity could be benefited by their mythical existence.

Thus cotton, though a common plant, has beneficial as well as useful qualities. It is an adequate but cheap protection against the cold; it is spun into thread and woven into cloth and piece goods; it is necessary in the manufacturing of gun-powder; it is employed as raw material for artificial silk. Its seeds can be processed into oil to be used in cooking, soap making, etc. Cottonseed meal serves as a feed and a fertilizer. Its bark and stalk are important substances in paper making. Sterilized cotton is indispensable in the medical

and hygienic fields. For its wide applicability and service to mankind, cotton is elevated from a plant to a near-human status.

The birthday of cotton, according to the custom of Kiangsu Province, falls on the twentieth of the seventh moon (August 29). It is the fervent hope of cotton planters not to have rain on that day. There is a proverb: "If there is rain on the twentieth of the seventh moon, cotton will not reach the market." Again: "If stars shine on the twentieth night, a whole year's debt is cleared."

Cotton first grew in



India; its seed did not reach China until the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-908). Before the Tang Era, China had no cotton planting to speak of. In the "Book of Rites" on women's accomplishments was noted the "care of silkworms". Only silk and hemp cultivations were mentioned before the seventh century.

During mediaeval times, the south-eastern nations of Annam, Java, etc., sent cotton to China as yearly tri-

bute. As trade with foreign lands increased, Canton, with her strategic position on the seaboard, became the most important commercial state in China. Cotton seeds began to reach Canton, Fukien and other provinces bordering the sea. Soon cotton planting acreage flourished and became widespread. Trade and the pursuit of profit introduced cotton and cotton products from the southern to the norther parts of China.



● For the past five years we have been trying to establish a school for girls in Kaseye where it is badly needed. The good people in this part of Africa are not yet convinced that girls should be given a chance at schooling. They skeptically wagged their heads when the project was broached. "What good will it do?" they queried. "Women need only know how to crush the corn and boil the *sima* (corn mush) for the family meal, things which their mothers can teach them at home!" They relented somewhat as regarded their boys although they showed no great enthusiasm in having them enrolled at our school.

There had been an attempt at education for the village children some years hence, attempt that floundered

mostly because of excessive severity on the part of the teachers. I opened classes with only twenty names on the roster. Little by little, however, as the news trickled through the bush that the new teacher did not slap the pupils this number went up until now I have sixty, boys being more numerous than girls. Among these none as yet have been baptized. Besides the three R's I daily manage to teach my pupils the elements of the most important R of all. Wishing to know to what extent my teaching had borne fruit I questioned a ten-year-old lad. "Kese, can you tell me what it means to forgive one's enemies?"

"Of course I can, *Amayi*," he proudly replied. Then pointing to one of his classmates "Do you see that

Even Serpents Teach Lessons

Sister SAINT ALBERTE, M.I.C.

(Gabrielle Saucier, Montreal.)



one over there grinning like a monkey eating a stolen banana? Yesterday, without warning me in advance, he handed me an ear of corn he had smeared over with soap. I took a bite... Ugh! I still have the taste in my mouth... Well, that rascal is my enemy and I do *not* pardon him." It took a good deal of diplomacy to bring about a reconciliation between Kenese and his "enemy". At present

the boy has come to grasp the real meaning of the *Wadada Withu* (Our Father).

Among the few girls in my school was Erubé. Rejected by her own parents when she was very young, she had been adopted by an uncle who enrolled her here as day pupil. As bright as a button she often helped



me with the younger children, interpreting my lessons in their particular dialect. Everybody loved her, for she was as amiable as she was intelligent. One morning while I taught callisthenics to the boarders, a messenger rushed in and announced, "*Amayi*, you will feel great sorrow today." Nonplussed, I inquired the reason for this strange message.

"Your child, Erubé, is dead."

"Dead? But she was in the best of health yesterday. What happened? Tell me, quick!"

"She was stung by a serpent on her way home from school last evening." I found it impossible to believe

that Our Blessed Mother had let me down this once by allowing Erubé to die unbaptized. I told her so over and over again as, accompanied by a Sister-Nurse, I fairly flew over the road to Cipkama, the girl's village, situated at about an hour's walk from the mission school. When we arrived, we found a large gathering of villagers milling about the hut. "Let me in," I pleaded. "I want to see my little girl." As I elbowed my way inside I heard comments such as the following. "How the *Amayi* loved Erubé. Did you hear her saying she was her child?"

"Why didn't we call her right away? With good medicine she might have saved the young one."

"The whites use injections which are better than the mud packs used around here."

A hush fell over the assistance as we knelt beside the poor little victim who still breathed faintly. With infinite precautions we moved her nearer the entrance. The pulse was a mere flutter, hands and feet felt clammy,



**Prizes being awarded
to the boys
at the Mission School.**

Sister St. Jean de Lalande
(Clemence Caron, St. Jean
Port Joli)

on one swollen ankle deadly fangs had left seven livid marks. The patient seemed unconscious. Tenderly I stooped over and whispered close to her ear, "Erubé, the *Amayi* has come to see you." The heavy lidded eyes opened, mere slits in the poor bloated face. Upon my request someone brought me water and I baptized my beloved little pupil, giving her the Christian name of a dear one back home, Marie Gabrielle.

Among the awed spectators of this scene were many of my pupils. As soon as Erubé had breathed her last I made them sing a hymn they had learned at the mission school, "*Maria Mama withu . . .*" (O Mary, our solace in sorrow . . .) Then, "Let's recite a Hail Mary," I urged "to thank the Blessed Mother who has just welcomed Erubé home to Heaven."

Coming out of the hut, we found the men folk warming themselves in the yard around a fire of brushwood. They had silently watched while the children prayed and sang kneeling about their companion and playmate whom death had so unexpectedly claimed.

We were about to leave when we were told that a young girl was dying in one of the neighbouring huts. Immediately we called to see what could be done. As she was beyond any human remedy the Sister-Nurse baptized her under the name of Maria. She died a few days later.

Once back in their classroom my young charges exchanged their impressions on the day's momentous happenings. "I'm not going to put off becoming a Christian any longer",

declared Watson. "When I go home this evening I'm going to tell my father I don't want to wait another day."

The serpent has taught my pupils a lesson that has left a far deeper impression than all my doctrine lessons of the year. Since Erubé's departure they all want to become the children of God through Baptism.



Smiling water carriers from Kaseye.



Our Beloved Dead

Mr. Ernest Leger, **Montreal**, father of His Eminence Cardinal Leger; Rev. Joseph Geoffroy, P.M.E., **Montreal**; Rev. H. Tremblay, **St. John**; Father Thos. Bracken, Pastor of St. Gabriel's, **Point St. Charles**; Mrs. Adelard-Ross, **Fall River**, mother of our Sister Saint Hedwidge; Mrs. Adelard Delisle, **Worcester, Mass.**, mother of our Sister Joseph of the Holy Family; Mrs. J. O. Ricard, **Grand'Mere**, mother of our Sister Saint Yves; Mrs. Philippe DeSerres, **Montreal**, mother of our Sister Dominic of the Rosary; Mrs. Jeremie Bedard, **Orsainville**, mother of our Sister Marie Immaculata; Mr. Henri Chauvin, **Montreal**, brother of our Sister Marguerite of the Sacred Heart; Mr. Alphonse Letourneau, **La Sarre**, brother of our Sister Jeanne of Jesus; Mr. G. Vanches-tein, **Montreal**, brother of our Sister Saint Yolande; Mrs. Saint Jorre, **Montreal**, grandmother of our Sister Michael of the Sacred Heart; Mr. Louis Belair, **Saint Barthelemy**, grandfather of our Sister Saint Gilbert; Mr. Abias Pepin, **Longueuil**; Mr. Jean Marie Morin, Mr. W. Cadieux, Mr. A. Laberge, Mr. Henri Lalonde, Doctor J. A. Miller, Mr. Pierre Rouleau, Mr. Theodore Genest, Mr. A. Loiseau, Mrs. V. Carmel, Mrs. Alcide Thibault, Mr. André Labelle, Mr. Emile Dupont, Mr. Hector Ricard, Mr. J. U. Berebe, **Montreal**; Mrs. Yvon Lamarre, **Longueuil**; Mr. Edward Clermont, **Cartier-ville**; Mrs. Joseph Pigeon, **Vercheres**; Mrs. Agnes Berthiaume, Mrs. J. B. Plourde, Mr. Philisa Lord, Mr. W. Daigle, **Saint John**; Mrs. Alcide Plouffe, **Saint Felix de Valois**; Mrs. Theodore Paquin, **Saint Lin des Laurentides**; Miss Marie Hermine Marchessault, **West Shefford**; Mrs. Remi Fausse, **Granby**; Mrs. L. Desfosses, **Danville**; Mr. Camille Biron, **Pointe du Lac**; Mr. J. T. Perron, **Quebec**; Mrs. Herve Champagne, **Saint Prosper de Dorchester**; Mr. Gerard Sirois, **Cacouna**; Mrs. Loris Albert, **Saint Fabien**; Mrs. Mary J. Hale, **Boston, Mass.**; Mrs. Calixte LeBlanc, **Waltham, Mass.**; Mrs. Emma Lefebvre, **Webster, Mass.**; Mme Joseph Marcoux, **Welland, Ont.**; M. Jude Vanasse, **Woonsocket, R.I.**; Mme Luke Comeau, **Leominster, Mass.**; M. Conrad Perusse, **Valleyfield** brother of our Sister Germaine du Sacre-Coeur; Rev. F. Lavoie, **Saint Leon le Grand de Matapedia**.

"AS LITTLE CHILDREN . . ."

It is a terrible thing for man to completely outgrow his childhood. In fact, things are going to become a lot worse before they get better, unless more of us befuddled, confused adults become as little children again.

That isn't our own theory, either. We have the Word of God Himself to vouch for its truth. He once said, clearly and unmistakably: "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven . . ."

G. K. Chesterton

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JOLIETTE P.Q., 750 St. Louis Street.
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WEST INDIES

LES CAYES, Haiti.
LES COTEAUX, Haiti.
ROCHE A BATEAU, Haiti.
PORT SALUT, Haiti.
CAMP PERRIN, Haiti.
MIREBALAIS, Haiti.
LIMBE, Haiti.
CAP HAITIEN, Haiti.
CHANTAL, Haiti.
TROU DU NORD, Haiti.
PORT AU PRINCE, cité No 2.
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MARTI, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
MANGUITO, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
LOS ARABOS, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
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Japanese children
are fond of sketching
out of doors.