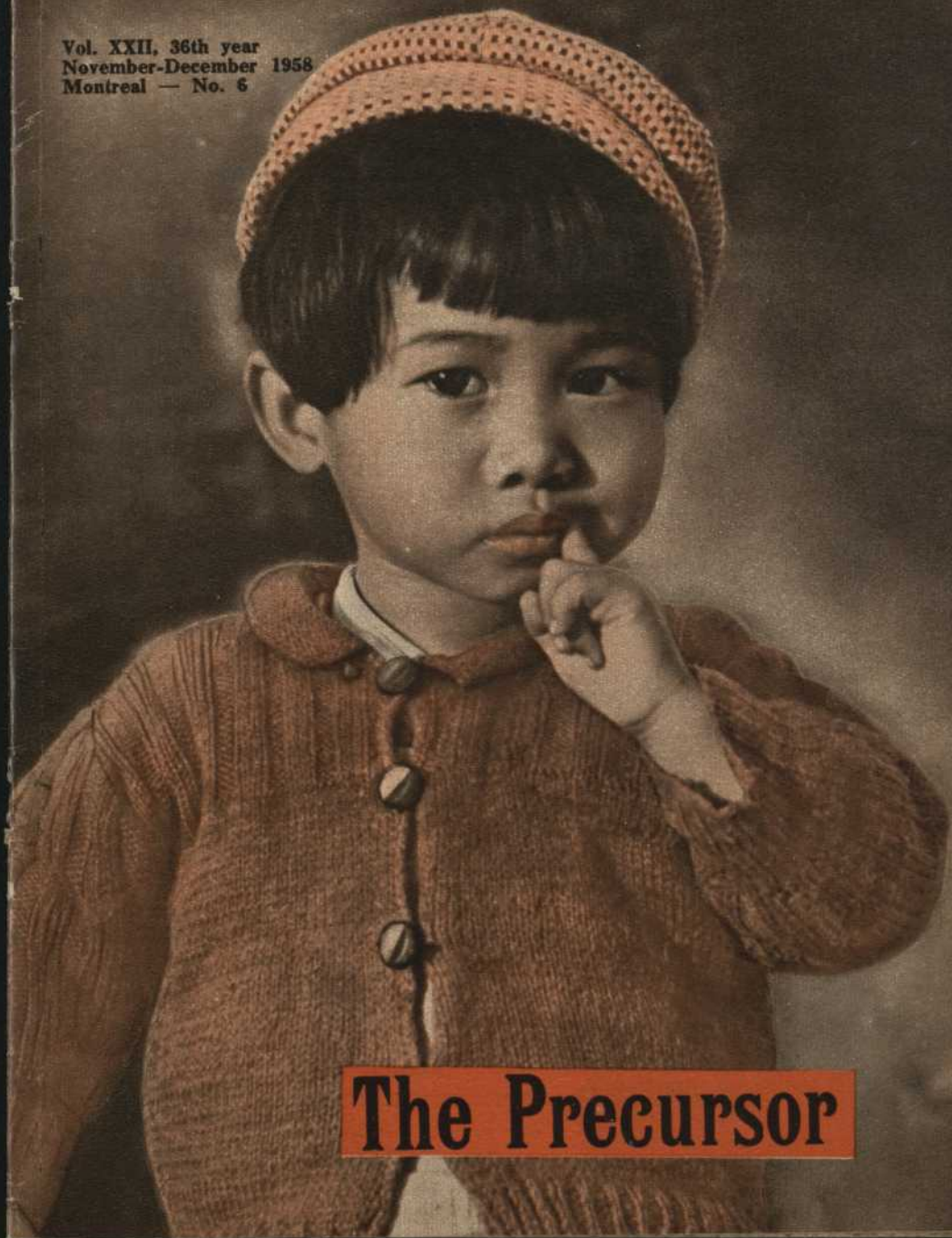


Vol. XXII, 36th year
November-December 1958
Montreal — No. 6



The Precursor

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IN THIS ISSUE

<i>The Lost Sheep</i>	243
Sister Margaret of Jesus, M.I.C.	
<i>Missionary Co-operation</i>	249
Sister Marie Esther, M.I.C.	
<i>"That Woman"</i>	252
Reverend Edward MacElroy	
<i>With Our Koriyama Orphans</i>	254
<i>Land of Multiple Taboos</i>	262
Sister Saint Clement, M.I.C.	
<i>From Wealth to Poverty, to Heavenly Treasures</i>	266
Sister Marie des Oliviers, M.I.C.	
<i>Who Will Adopt?</i>	269
Sister Saint Yolande, M.I.C.	
<i>At Immaculate Conception Refuge, Vancouver</i>	270
Sister Saint Hilaire, M.I.C.	
<i>Somewhere a Voice Is Calling</i>	271
A Postulant	
<i>Surprise Visit</i>	276
Sister Marie of Lourdes, M.I.C.	
<i>Mission Doings in Intramuros</i>	279
Sister Saint Omer, M.I.C.	
<i>Yohomme</i>	284
Sister Saint Lucille, M.I.C.	

Our cover: (Formosa)

What was it Mamma told me to do?

THE LOST SHEEP

Sister MARGARET OF JESUS¹, M.I.C.

I met the Good Shepherd but now on the plain
As homeward He carried His lost one again . . .

These words of an old hymn often hum within my memory as I go about my task of caring for the sick in the Mission dispensary. Many is the time I have met the Good Shepherd on the plains and hills of Kaseye, searching for His straying lambs or His lost sheep.

Let me tell you about Mikedona and how she was safely hemmed within the Fold almost at her last hour. She came to us one day escorted by her husband and her father. Scarcely able to stand because of extreme weakness, she suffered from a very serious heart ailment aggravated by harsh treatment on the part of her husband. Her soul was in a still more critical condition, for young though she was, she had fallen into evil ways. Her husband roughly stated that he was not going to pay a farthing to have her treated; she did not deserve it since she had played false to him. Poor Mikedona hung her head, shamed and miserable.

What right had the man, a poly-

gamist, to thus cast stones at this young woman, his second wife? In my heart I excused her, for as often is the case she had doubtless been more sinned against than she was sinful.

After giving her some medicine I offered to have her hospitalized in a hut near the dispensary where I could continue to treat her. A few days of complete rest coupled with careful medication effected a slight improvement in her health and opened her heart to the consolations of the true Faith. This was enough to annoy her sullen lord and master who decreed an immediate return to the bush under the specious pretext that the food did not agree with her. I tried to convince him that Mikedona was incurable and that besides, she had not many more days to live. Finally, I asked him point-blank for permission to baptize her. He did not demur. Without any further delay I had a heart-to-heart talk with my patient telling her of God's tender mercies and of the love He bore her

¹ Emilia Martin, St. Alexis, P.Q.

A patient is brought in a primitive ambulance.





immortal soul. Mikedona eagerly drank in my every word. "*Amayi*," she confided, "I sinned because I did not know any better. I deeply regret having offended God and am firmly resolved never to offend Him any more."

"Would you be happy if all the mistakes of your life were washed away?"

"O, *Amayi*, it seems too good to be true. *Inya!*"

"Cheer up, then! Not later than tonight you shall be made a child of the heavenly Father through Baptism. I have to go now but I will send Bartholomeo, the catechist, who will instruct you in the most important Catholic truths."

* * *

I was busy at the dispensary when Bartholomeo poked his head in at the door. "I'd like to have a word with you, *Amayi*," he said motioning me outside. "Mikedona now refuses to be baptized. Her husband came in right after your visit and forbade her to become a Christian. What can she do? She fears him too much to brook his displeasure." Leaving the dispensary in charge of an aide, I almost ran to the hut.

It was empty. Leaning against the doorpost, the husband sneered when he saw my disappointment. "Where is your wife?" I asked.

"She's gone home."

"You have hidden her. Where is she? I must see her right away."

"Didn't I tell you she'd gone home?"

Patients hospitalized in neighbouring huts assured me that Mikedona had indeed been seen on her way back to her village. Sending up a brief but fervent invocation to Mary, I sternly bade the man point out the path his wife had taken. With a sidelong glance at me to see whether I was in earnest, he shrugged his shoulders,

then strode on ahead, taking the road that leads to Ipanga.

The sun beat down like molten copper; there was practically no shade, for this part of the bush had recently been cleared in view of cultivation. In this heat and with her bad heart, Mikedona could not have gone far. This reminded me that in my anxiety to reach the woman before it was too late, I had forgotten the most important medicine — the water. Not knowing whether there were any *dambo* (streams) in the neighbourhood, I called to the man, "Go back and fetch a cup of water. I need it to administer some medicine to your wife."

He retraced his footsteps willingly enough while I emptied a bottle of pills in case I should find a *dambo* before he returned. Continuing on my way I suddenly espied Mikedona lying by a little stream, under the shade of some scanty underbrush. Her breathing was laboured, her heart raced a wild race with death. I knelt beside her and sponged her face, "Why did you run away?" I gently probed.

"*Amayi*, it was not my fault. My husband forced me to leave. He does not want me to receive Baptism."

"But what about you? Do you still want to be baptized?"

"Oh, yes, yes, *Amayi*, in my heart I always wanted to, but you know I am not free. My husband is terrible . . . I am afraid of him."

"Listen, Mikedona, your strength is about all gone. If your desire is sincere I shall baptize you here and now." She nodded acquiescence, repeated after me acts of faith, contrition and love; then I poured the waters that washed her soul whiter than driven snow. I had often heard it said that the features of the newly baptized radiate their inner happiness. I know now that this is no mere metaphor. Mikedona's face strained with anxiety and pain suddenly assumed a look of ineffable peace and contentment "*Yewo, Amayi*," she murmured, clasping her hands over her throbbing heart.

Her husband just then re-appeared bringing the cup of water I had requested. "I have baptized Mikedona," I gravely declared. "What has been done, you can never undo. Forever, she will be a child of God. You are not worthy of such a woman, for if she was guilty of wrongdoing, she has sincerely regretted her faults. The best thing you can do is to take her back to her father's place. That is where she belongs."



Sister Margaret of Jesus
(Emilia Martin, Saint Francis of Assisi.)
at her Katete dispensary.





Only later did I learn that the polygamist had obeyed my injunction and that Mikedona was visited by a Catholic priest at her dying moments. It turned out that her own family was sympathetic towards the Catholic

Faith, one of her brothers being baptized and other relatives catechumens.

And this is how it is given me to live over the gospel story, leading the lost and the straying sheep safely within the Shepherd's Fold.

Missionary Co-operation

Sister MARIE ESTHER¹, M.I.C.

Lately, it was our pleasure to have as guest at our Taipei Convent an Ursuline Sister of the Sacred Heart, Madre Maria Edwidge Tavoni, directress of a High School in Nobeoka, Japan.

During her stay in our midst, the Madre one day suggested that I accompany her on a visit she wished to make to the home of a Mr. Chiang, father of one of her Chinese Sisters, at present teaching in Japan. This young lady who entered the novitiate of the Ursuline Sisters ten years ago, never once returned home. Her brother, Doctor Chiang, welcomed us at the family residence. In the course of the conversation, we learnt that the mother stricken with paralysis had been bed-ridden for seven months. Although attended by the best doctors and surrounded with tender care by her children and grandchildren, the flame of her life burned more and more dimly.

Having expressed the desire to meet the venerable patient, we were taken to her room. Age and disease had chiseled filagree of furrows over her face which still radiated kindness and serenity. She was overjoyed to hear about her beloved child living so far away from home.

Gradually, the talk drifted to the all important subject of religion. The old lady hung on to our every word like a starved person who has at last found the food she craved. Yielding to the impulse of divine grace she asked for Baptism. Before we left the house, we knew the ineffable joy of vesting this soul with the wedding garment that would ready her for the marriage feast of divine grace. Madre Maria Edwidge baptized her under the blessed name of Mary.

As we knelt at her bedside lost in a fervent prayer of thanksgiving, one of Mrs. Chiang's grandsons photographed the scene.

¹ Alice Buteau, Notre-Dame de la Guadeloupe.

A few days later, a missionary Father completed the ceremonies of Baptism and administered the Last Sacraments. The aged neophyte was beside herself with joy and thanked God unceasingly for His wonderful mercy. Shortly afterwards, she passed away as peacefully as a child falling asleep in its mother's arms.

A solemn Requiem was celebrated at the Catholic Mission Church, the whole Chiang family being present. On this occasion I was asked to represent the absent daughter. At one end of the flower laden coffin stood a large portrait of the departed one.

According to local custom, Mrs. Chiang's body was cremated and the ashes placed in a casket of precious wood. When peace prevails once again and China is truly liber-



**Madre Maria Edwidge Tavoni,
Ursuline of the Sacred Heart,
pours the waters of regeneration
on Mrs. Chiang's forehead.**



**Sister Marie Esther,
Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception,
enjoyed the privilege of imparting religious
instruction to the venerable patient.**

ated, her children hope to reunite her mortal remains to those of her ancestors in the Chiang burying ground.

Cremation of bodies in general practice here among non-Christians, was introduced by the Japanese during their occupation of the Beautiful Isle. This explains why coffins are so rare. The ashes are deposited into small caskets carefully sealed, then placed in niches hewn into the neighbouring hillsides. At various periods during the years, mourners visit these cemeteries bringing flowers and incense.

A short time after Mrs. Chiang's funeral we received a letter postmarked Nobeoka, Japan. The exiled daughter wrote her heartfelt gratitude and her happiness upon learning that her beloved mother had been ushered into the place of eternal refreshment, rest, and happiness.

"THAT WOMAN!"

It happened in China.

Elizabeth was a member of the Legion of Mary. Legionaries were constantly being brought to police stations for prolonged and tricky questioning. They soon got to know the questions, the pitfalls — and the best answers. But Elizabeth while

being an excellent Legionary, could never get the answers straight. And all feared for the worst on the day that summons came for her.

Elizabeth arrived at the police station, sat down across a table from her interrogators, and laid her handbag on the floor. Then she opened the proceedings with a large, slow Sign of the Cross.



The usual questioning, shouting, bullying, began.

"Are you a member of the secret reactionary subversive spy ring known as the Legion of Mary?"

"Never heard of it."

More shouting. More bullying.

The same question repeated. The same answer. And then the interrogator lost his temper.

"There's no use in denying it," he shouted. "We know you're a member of the Legion of Mary."

"Of course," smiled Elizabeth. "But I thought you were talking about an international spy ring."

The questioning went on. Elizabeth, asked if she had any ammunition, denied it. But the police kept at her and in the end she admitted that she *had* ammunition.

"Ha!" the policeman said, "that's better. Where is it?"

"Here," said Elizabeth.

"Here?" repeated the puzzled official. "Where here?"

"In my bag," replied Elizabeth. She reached down to her bag, opened it and pulled out her Rosary beads.

The interrogator was very angry. He insisted that someone had put Elizabeth up to these answers. Elizabeth insisted that nobody had. Quite truthfully too. Nobody would have dared to suggest replies like these. But in the end Elizabeth gave way and admitted that she *had* been taught those pert answers. "Good. Who taught them to you?"

"Our Lady did."

If the policeman was angry before, he was livid now. He walked over near where Elizabeth sat and spat viciously on the floor. Then with a hate barely human he hissed just two words: "That Woman!"

Elizabeth was dismissed. She now closed the proceedings with another Sign of the Cross, picked up her bag and ammunition and walked off. She is no longer in China and that is why I can tell her story.

"That Woman" and her Legion have had a very special place in Catholic resistance. I will not even try to tell the full story here, but as I write of it memories crowd my mind. There was, for instance, the group of girl Legionaries in Shanghai who kept their hair constantly cut short so as to be, thus far at any rate, ready for jail at a moment's notice. There was the Autumn day laid down by the Communists as the very last day on which Legionaries must come to the police stations and deny the Legion. They came — but carrying their jail bundles on their arms. But to mention only these things would be to miss the essential contribution of the Legionaries. They were the small heroic band which first came under attack. By their courage and gay untroubled certainty they revived drooping spirits and led the way. They were the nucleus around which hardened the core of resistance. Today many of the Legionaries are in prison or in slave labour camps for their courage. It is good for all of us, and especially all Legionaries, to remember that the Legion prayers are being whispered by half-starved boys and girls hauling bricks or shovelling mud on one or other of the great projects of the Red regime. They certainly need what the Legion prayers beg for: "a faith firm and immovable as a rock."

Reverend Edward MacElroy
in *Life in Communist China*.



**This is the house that
love built in Koriyma, Japan,
for birdies
fallen from the home nest**

The missionary Sister is the only mother most of these
orphans have known.

Sister Agnes of Assisi (Lucienne Renaud, Montreal).



She likes
to sit alone
and think.





Household chores can be fun!



Appetites that never lag enjoy a cookie handout.

Sister Saint Eustache (Lucille Prévost, Saint Eustache).



Breezy hours at the seaside.

God

made the Dark

for children . . .

and

guards

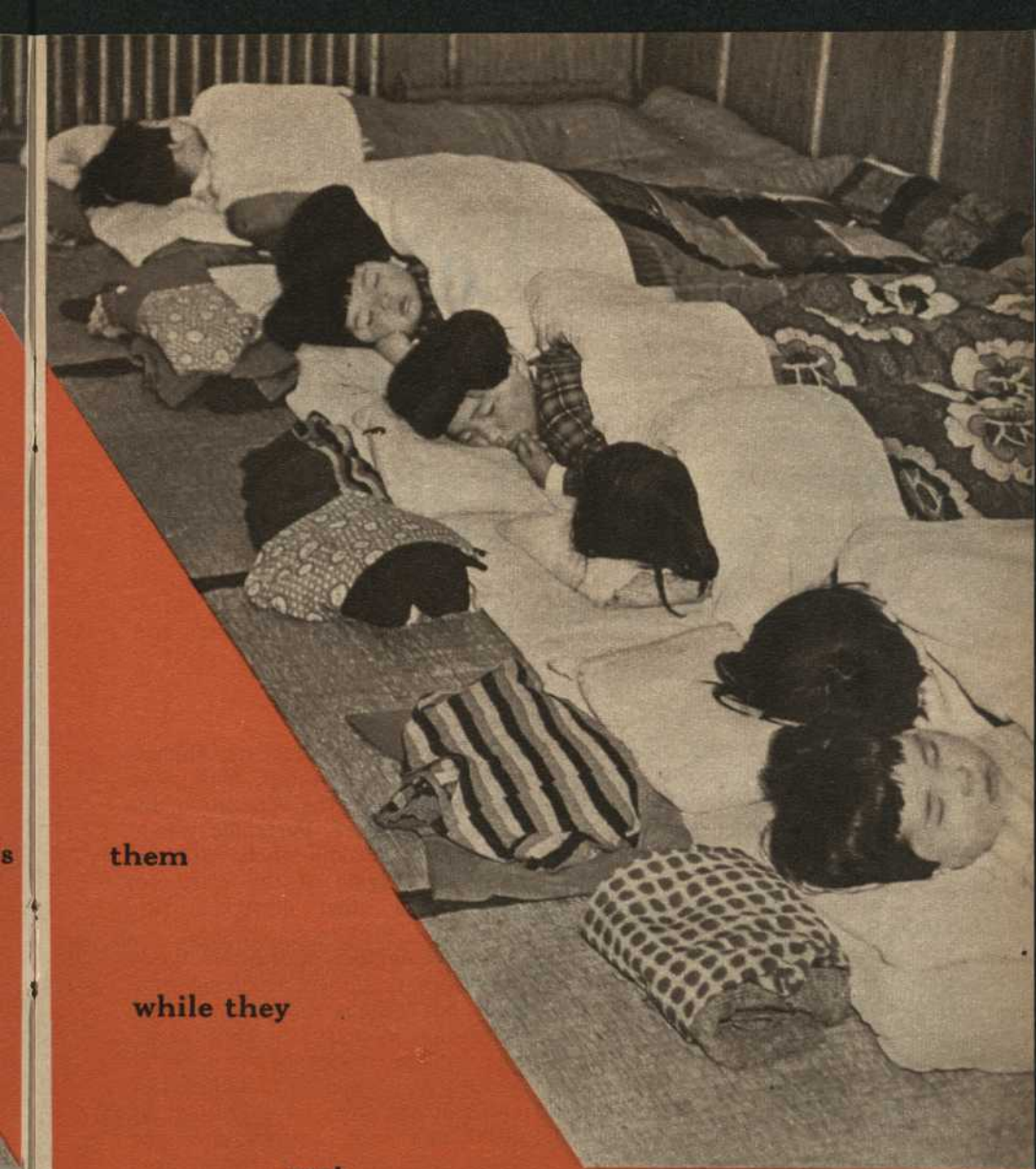


s

them

while they

rest.





Land of Multiple Taboos

Sister SAINT CLEMENT¹, M.I.C.

Madagascar is a land of multiple *fady* or taboos. Their origin can be traced to the primitive idolatrous cult whose ministers proclaimed a series of sacred interdictions transmitted to the people as issuing from the mouth of the gods. Even after the *sampy* (idols) went out of fashion, the *mpisikidy* (sorcerers) jealously maintained the traditional *fady* finding it to their advantage to exploit the ignorance and credulity of those who continued to consult them in their distress and perplexities.

Among the various taboos, some are more or less closely related to the Oriental concept of metempsychosis. It is forbidden to kill certain animals because the soul of the departed may have sought refuge inside their bodies; slaughtering them would expose one to commit the heinous crime

of murdering one's forebears. Animals or fishes such as sheep, hens, eels, are treated with the veneration due to one's ancestors. Particularly honoured is the crocodile who is supposed to be the abode of the spirits of princes and other illustrious personages.

A good number of *fady* are based on sundry prejudices resulting from innocuous findings which affect special foods, days, or activities. Evil omens, vague apprehensions, at times simple mishaps attributed to the vindictive power of ancestors have finished by authorizing such interdictions and have caused people to abstain from actions which in themselves are perfectly harmless or indifferent.

The principal Malagasy taboos may be divided into two classes: first, those regarding *fady* days when

cultivation of fields or garden is forbidden to entire populations on the assumption that it would draw epidemics, inundations, or expose labourers to mortal accidents; secondly, partially *fady* days when only a given activity is barred, for instance, the sowing of a certain field which would cause failure of the crop; the setting out on a journey whence there would be no return; the "turning-over" of a corpse, for the dead one's spirit might then wreak vengeance on the living; the cooking of food, the house then risking to be burnt to the ground; the cutting of one's hair which would bring mourning into the family circle... Each day of the week is considered ill-omened from one aspect or another and none

can hope to escape scot free from this tyranny.

Fady restricting the use of certain foods are perhaps the most numerous. Pork is banned from nearly all Malagasy menus as eating it would invite the worst physical afflictions. Occasional *fady*, prohibit partaking of the flesh of certain birds under penalty for the offender of being carried off into the Great Beyond at a moment's notice.

The only tabooed vegetable in the Island is the onion. Tradition has it that long ago an ancestor died suddenly while pulling up his onion crop. Revenge of the local deity, decreed a sorcerer! From that time onward, fool-hardy would be the man who dared sow, cultivate, or



eat Malagasy onions. Housewives have found a way out. On market days they buy imported onions which remain untouched by the anathema.

Would you believe that even virtues are governed by taboos in Madagascar? The gratitude *fady* is one of the most important. In compliance with it, certain animals who have done men signal good turns must never be dispatched nor their meat eaten.

A Malagasy legend relates the high feats of a young bull. One day, an aged woman wading across a river was attacked by a *roay* (caiman). The reptile having inflicted countless wounds on his victim and judging her to be quite dead, dragged the body to his lair on the bank. Then licking his chops in anticipation, out he sauntered to invite his friends and acquaintances to share his repast.

Meantime, two bulls started quitting scores over the caiman's underground dwelling. So violent was the struggle that the earth caved in and one of the two fell through the hole. The old woman who was still living caught hold of the bull's legs and was pulled to safety. Filled with gratitude towards her saviour, she fulminated curses on whoever among her descendants should henceforth dare to eat beef. This explains why certain tribes in Madagascar have never tasted it to this day.

Besides collective *fady*, there exist personal ones which also emanate from the sorcerers. Clients who consult them when illness or misfortune strikes are advised to drink the water from a certain well, to use salt, to lie in bed on such a day... Caste

fady distinguish one tribe from another and guards it against profane contacts by obliging its members to wear, for instance, black garments only.

It can easily be surmised how close-tied people can be by such taboos. Woe to him who would dare disregard these ancient interdictions more especially those stamped collective! Automatically he would find himself ostracized. Of any misfortune occurring during the year he would surely be held responsible and would have to bear the brunt of public displeasure. The transgressor would, moreover, personally suffer physical calamities such as leprosy, malignant pustules, besides being exposed to the loss of his material possessions. He has no other means of regaining favour with his compatriots than to submit to a humiliating public penance doubled by the expensive offering of an animal, preferably a bull, in sacrifice.

Fady present many an acute problem to the catechumens and Christians. It takes genuine heroism on the part of the individual convert to override ingrained prejudices. In order to help the Malagasy free themselves from oppressive *fady*, the most urgent thing to do is to spread knowledge on the true nature of things thus dispelling their vain terrors and drawing them out of the quagmire of age-old superstitions.

As Christianity penetrates the masses, it bears aloft the torch of truth and delivers misguided populations from the yoke of the Evil One. It is no rare occurrence in Christian villages for the faithful to have recourse to their pastor's blessing to counteract the influence of local *fady*. They believe, and rightly so, that the minister of the true God can remove interdictions and liberate them once for all.

Dear readers of "The Precursor", now that you are acquainted with some of the difficulties which confront your Malagasy brothers and sisters desirous of embracing the true Faith, won't you say a prayer for them once in a while? Remember, we missionaries in the field afar rely on you home-front apostles, to garner plentiful spiritual harvests.





FROM WEALTH TO POVERTY, TO HEAVENLY TREASURES

HONG KONG

Sister MARIE DES OLIVIERS, M.I.C.

(Gertrude Laforest, Montreal.)

Nearly all my pupils at the catechumenate are refugees from Canton or surrounding districts. Most of them, in the happy days before Red "liberation", belonged to the wealthy middle classes. Now all are reduced to earning a skimpy livelihood under the hardest conditions imaginable.

A tactful inquiry or a spontaneous outburst at times reveal heartbreaking situations. M. Y... dignified of



Her only home
is a precarious shelter on the roof.

bearing but with a cadaverous look about him had missed several doctrine courses. "I'm happy to welcome you back," I told him when he reappeared. "Have you been sick?"

"Ah! Sister, I'm exhausted," he sadly replied. "You cannot guess how deeply I have suffered. A few years ago, I was a rich man, at the head of an important and prosperous business concern. Then the Communists overran the country and robbed me of my wealth. How they gloated over my tortures! After mishaps too complicated and too numerous to relate, I made good my escape. But nobody here will hire me. Because of my skeleton-like appearance people usually jump to the conclusion that I suffer from tuberculosis." Moved with compassion I tried to encourage him. "You still have one consolation. Without these bitter trials you might never have come to the knowledge of the true God."

"That's right, Sister," he conceded smiling through tear-blinded eyes. "Heaven will seem all the brighter, I suppose, after the shadows of such a life."

Another catechumen, a pleasant mannered, cultured man, was remarkable for his ardour in studying

religious books. One day, I inquired if he had found suitable employment. "I am a graduate from the University of Canton as you are aware, Sister. Would you believe that the only work I can get here is that of scavenger? If only I knew a little English, things might be easier..."

The melancholy smile that played about the lips of this young Chinese was like a veil thrown over a world of suffering, anguish, and humiliation.

These two I am citing at random. I could fill a book as big as Kowloon Peak with the pitiable life stories of those whom a common fate has thrown into the melting pot of Hong Kong.

Still, despite misfortune or perhaps because of it, souls are being led through Light to Peace. What marvelous spiritual adventures lived on dismal city streets or in hovels dotting the hillsides!

The fields here are white unto the harvest. Humble harvesters of the Lord, we are reaping what others have sown and continue to sow in tears and in travail. We cannot help but rejoice, convinced that the day is bound to come when sowers and harvesters will exult together in the heavenly Father's eternal mansions.



Who Will Adopt



Liautaud and Joachim, the inseparables? They are two Haitian lads who have grown up bound by the closest of friendships. Together they played boyish pranks and gamboled over Haitian mornes, together they learnt their A B C's, and together at fifteen they are haunted by the same ideal — the holy priesthood.

At present, we are doing what we can to help them by providing extra lessons in Latin. The pair also follow a few of the most important courses included in the curriculum of our Mirebalais « Lucienne Estimé » School. Like misers hoarding gold, they hoard every bit of knowledge they can get that will further their purpose of becoming the spiritual leaders of their people.

But the going will not be easy for them, for they are both knights of poverty. As there are numerous little brothers and sisters at home, the parents find it hard to make both ends meet. Food is never plentiful and money is so scarce that Liautaud and Joachim often have to go without the books they need to keep up their studies. In their hearts they know only too well that it will be impossible for their families to pay their way through college, but they keep on hoping and praying for the impossible to happen.

Don't you think these courageous lads deserve to be given a helping hand? Although they tactfully refrain from discussing this problem in front of their parents for fear of giving them pain, they often remind me of it being convinced that somehow I will find a solution.

So frequently in the past, have I experienced the zeal and generosity of our dear Canadian friends that I feel sure a benefactor or some benefactors will come forward who will deem it a privilege to lead these two Haitian levites towards the goal and thus procure the eternal salvation of countless souls. What joy will it be for these charitable persons on the last day to hear Christ declare to them before the whole world, "Because you did it for these my least brethren, you did it unto Me." I wish to thank them most gratefully in the name of Liautaud and Joachim as well as in my own.

SISTER SAINT YOLANDE¹, M.I.C.

¹ Elizabeth Vanchestein, St. Matthew of Laprairie.



VANCOUVER, B.C.

At Immaculate Conception Refuge

I enclose a snapshot of our oldest guest, 94 year-old Mr. Ho Cheng Tak, who is still as wide-awake as a youngster. Except for his rather wobbly legs, he is in excellent health.

One day, as I was distributing pocket money, part of the monthly allocation to the old men, Mr. Ho Cheng suddenly asked, pointing a bony finger in my direction, "Where's your cheque?"

In simple words that this old non-Christian could grasp, I explained about religious life and its total dedication to God and to the service of neighbour.

He listened politely, at a loss to understand. Shaking his head, he went on mumbling, "No married, no children, no drink, no money..."

Then with an impish grin, "That's why you always wear the same old hat, I suppose..." he added.

SISTER SAINT HILAIRE, M.I.C.

(Marguerite Mulaire, Saint Pierre-Jolys, Manitoba.)



Somewhere a Voice is Calling



Even if Father X, veteran missionary home on leave, had deliberately set out to pull down all my wordly castles in the air he could not have been more successful than

he was that evening when he gave a talk on the missions in our parish hall.

Until then I had only the vaguest idea that missions did exist to lead



the "other sheep" into the Fold. I had not allowed such a thought to intrude upon my personal life, secure and pampered. If some people with surplus zeal took it into their heads to rush out to the ends of the earth carrying the torch of divine truth, well and good. It had never dawned upon my consciousness that as a Catholic I had an imperious duty to do my share in this apostolate; that is it never had until that fateful evening.

As I slowly walked back home in the quiet of the late spring dusk with a group of friends all eagerly discussing the orator and his message, I remained strangely silent. The missionary's words had hit the target. Try as I might I could not forget the one thousand five hundred million pagans he had mentioned. How could I continue to live, light-hearted and carefree, when these millions strayed in the darkness of paganism? I remembered the words of an old song, "Somewhere, a voice is calling . . ." Deep within my heart a Voice re-echoed, compellingly tender, "Come, follow Me!"

The missions that had meant next to nothing to me at sunrise of this day,

meant more at sundown than love, laughter, and life itself. Before I quite realized what had happened, the divine Lover had swept me off my feet.

On the following Sunday after Mass, while I helped Mom set the table for lunch, I confided my secret and enlisted her help in breaking the news to Dad. Both were as always loving and understanding. Doubtless, they rejoiced that their little mad-cap, having ceased to chase will-o-the-wisps was reaching out at last for Reality.

When friends and acquaintances learnt of my project, there were ripples of amusement, admiration, and annoyance. With blunt frankness Barbara, my closest girl friend, commented, "I gave you credit for more sense. What's come over you? I suppose we'll hear next you've gone to evangelize the man in the moon... Well, I'll see you later when I get my personal space rocket."

Hilaire pretended to be heart-broken. "Do you really have to go into a convent," he wailed. "Life will never be the same without you. No more good time for me..."

Carl was blasé and detached. "I'm through with girls. They're all alike. They don't know their own mind and fall for every new project."



I was flattered and amused. These two were nice boys in whose company I had spent many a pleasant hour. They were good and dear friends, but no more. With Desmond I felt in deeper waters. In the first days of our acquaintance, I had been rather

bored by his idealism; he was too serious to my liking. Gradually, however, I grew to admire him, then to care for him more than I dared to admit even to myself. It would not be easy to give him up. When he called me on the telephone some time later to suggest a dance at the Country Club, I decided that I must tell him. It was now or — never. As I slipped on a blue chiffon formal, a token of dedication to Our Lady,

I prayed that she would be near to whisper the right word at the right moment.

Desmond booked my every dance. After the fourth, I declared half in jest, half serious, "This will be the last, Desmond. I'm giving up dancing." He was all solicitude. "Tired, Honey? Let's have some refreshments." Over the ices, I told him my resolution to enter the convent. The hurt look in his dark eyes smote me

Peace and joy reign at the Novitiate.





so I could hardly go on. I bit my lip to stop it from trembling. "So, that's it?" His voice was carefully modulated but his eyes continued to speak volumes. "I thought all along that spending my life with you was too good to be true . . . Well, at least I can be glad that you're not preferring any mere man to me." He went on gallantly, "Who am I to press my suit against the Lord?" That was our last meeting. There was a dull ache in my heart and a mist rose before my eyes as I watched him vanish into the darkness and out of my life.

* * *

August 2, found me at the Novitiate, one of a group of candidates all eager to start training for the grandest career in the world. I am happy beyond telling. My life now has a goal and Love makes everything seem easy that will lead me closer to it. In my smug self-complacency, I had once imagined I was doing a favour to God by entering religious life. The sacrifices I made seemed tremendous. In the light that streams down from Our Lady's downcast eyes, I have learnt that God has done infinitely more for me than I could ever hope to repay and that "to serve Him is to reign".

A POSTULANT

SURPRISE VISIT



KANYANGA, AFRICA

Sister MARIE OF LOURDES¹, M.I.C.

On September 12, feast of the Holy Name of Mary, Mr. Lyons, general school inspector in these parts, paid our mission an unexpected visit. Our Blessed Mother herself seemed to have foreseen and arranged every detail to our advantage. And why not since we have appointed her Celestial Directress of this our first educational venture in Rhodesia?

Although our seventy-four pupils belonging to three different tribes and coming from all over the land have not yet sprouted wings, they proved, on this important occasion, well-mannered and ladylike.

Our official visitor was present at all the different classes given throughout the day. The curriculum divided into periods of forty minutes includes religious instruction, English, African languages, mathematics, geography,

history, civics, natural sciences, drawing, physical culture, home economics. To honour their guest, the members of the school choir rendered an English song followed by one in the local dialect. It is for us a source of ever renewed delight to find how remarkably gifted Africans are for rhythm and harmonization.

The inspection of the classes over, Mr. Lyons made the rounds of the mission compound. When all of the fourteen houses built of brick with a tiled roof are complete we shall have at our disposal four or five dormitories for the seventy-four boarders, one refectory, lodgings for the lay teachers, a separate department to teach household sciences, a kitchen with outbuildings, a flour mill, stores for reserves of maize, etc. These various constructions are disposed

in the form of a U with the playgrounds in the centre.

As regards school expenses, the government supplies books, food, and bedding. Each pupil is asked to pay a nominal fee of only four pounds sterling (\$10.80) a year. Even this small sum, however, appears and really is enormous to the majority of families around here whose pattern of life is primitive.

Before leaving, Mr. Lyons noted on the school register his deep-felt satisfaction, thanking the personnel for the cordial welcome extended, congratulating the pupils on their good deportment and their ardour at study.

He added gracious remarks addressed to devoted Brother Restitus who supervises the work of construction.

Now, I am sure you would like to get more closely acquainted with our lovely and lovable African girls, and to know how they spend their time in school and out of it. They are proud of their school and appreciate their good fortune in benefiting by the instruction denied to so many of their sisters throughout the bush districts. They study hard and success crowns their efforts.

Among them, thirty-seven belong to the Free Church of Scotland, a number are pagan, others are adepts

Sister Saint Jane of Valois

(Jeannine Forcier, Chicopee Falls, Mass.)

with a group of Kanyanga pupils.



of the Jehovah Witnesses. As conditions of enrollment require, they all assist at Sunday Mass and attend the doctrine course which immediately follows.

At present, they spend their free time when school is out, clearing the grounds of tall grasses and scrawny underbrush. It does them good to be out-of-doors for a while and they enjoy flexing their muscles after hours of sitting quietly in the school-room. On Saturdays, they do their washing in the river that meanders nearby, learn how to iron their clothes, catch up on their mending... Sometimes their dresses are so much patched up that hardly anything shows of the original material. And the colours! They think it quite smart to sew on blue patches on a yellow frock. It all depends, of course, on the pieces of cloth they can manage to find, the poor girls, in a place where cloth is not plentiful.

On Sundays, they have one hour of early study before they leave for the 9 o'clock High Mass. This is the only day when they are allowed to do their own cooking and they are delighted for the chance to try original recipes... In the afternoon, they read, write letters, do some sketching, or play games until Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament which immediately precedes supper. The evening is spent singing the haunting melodies of Africa or merrily skipping in the folk dances of which they are so fond. We like to watch them as they perform their simple steps. Sharing in their pastimes as well as in their studies, affords us many an interesting glimpse into their way of life.

With renewed zest we take up on Mondays our task of educators, the greatest task of all on the missions where every classroom holds the hope of the Church of tomorrow.

MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

November: That Catholics in Latin America may victoriously oppose the corruption of Faith and morals.

December: For the Church of Formosa.

MANILA, P.I.

Mission Doings in Intramuros

Sister SAINT OMER¹, M.I.C.

On the left bank of the River Pasig lies the old medieval walled town which owes its origin to the Spaniards after the 1571 invasion of the Philippines. It is still known today under the historical name of Intramuros.



¹ Madeleine Delorme, Worcester, Mass.



Filipino artist working at the restoration of the church of St. Augustine.

Off and on for over a century, Filipinos toiled erecting the sturdy walls about two and a half miles in circumference that were to gird their ancient capital remodeled along the lines of Castilian architecture. This kind of labour was imposed by the conquerors upon those unfortunates who were unable to pay the required tribute or personal tax.

During the bloody battle of Manila in 1945, the greater part of the medieval walled town, including priceless relics of the Spanish regime, was levelled to the ground. The few buildings which were all but miraculously spared, today emerge from piles of rubble, mute and melancholy witnesses to the tragedy of World War II.

The only church in Intramuros that remained unharmed during the conflict was that of Saint Augustine said to be the oldest in the Islands. Built by the Spaniards in the very first years of the conquest, it was thrice destroyed by fire and finally reconstructed, thanks to the Augustinian Friars, in 1599. Its doors and pulpit are beautifully carved; the molave choir stalls are gems of the wood carver's art. Although over three and a half centuries old, it is in an excellent state of preservation. During various foreign campaigns it served as a place of refuge for thousands. Along the inside walls are niches containing the remains of prominent Spanish officials and prelates. There also is kept faithful memory of numerous victims who, in 1945, were massacred within the precincts of Intramuros.

Our Anglo Chinese Academy stands

next door to the venerable sanctuary. Inaugurated in 1956, this educational establishment continues the work carried on for several years in the ramshackle Narra Street quarters. It started with eight hundred Chinese boys and girls on its roster. Besides these, seventy odd pupils followed courses in piano, violin, violoncello, etc., given by Sister Margaret Mary¹ and a staff of lay teachers.

In 1957, the boys were taken over by the Reverend Jesuit Fathers who had meantime opened Kuang Chi College for Chinese. We were left with five hundred girls distributed in seventeen classes from kindergarten to High School. Although the majority belong to non-Christian families, daily contact with the Sisters and with Catholic companions exerts a beneficial influence and acquaints them with sound Christian principles.

During the school year 1956-57 a good number of Baptisms, Confirmations, and First Communions were registered and 1958 is full of promise. What a deep-felt joy it will be for us to present these fadeless flowers in homage to Our Lady on the occasion of the Lourdes Centennial!

A pupil in the eighth grade began her schooling at the Narra Street institution. When we moved here, we lost sight of her for a while. In June 1957, she enrolled in our classes anew and studied catechism with such fervour that she was baptized that same year on the eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Later in the school year, she won first prize in a literary competition organized among the Chinese schools of Manila.

¹ Marguerite Latour, Montreal.



Centre, Sister Margaret Mary conducts a rehearsal.

It seemed to her as if the Heavenly Father through this delicate attention somehow manifested His approval of her generous conduct.

With "Be Marylike" as motto, a Purity Crusade was organized at the Academy, lasting from the 21st of November to the 27th. The High School seniors distributed folders illustrating Marylike dresses and inviting all the pupils and teachers to wear the liveries of Mary. Subjects of essays and themes during these days were drawn from ideas such



as "Dare to Be Different for Mary!" "Be Modest Without Compromise for Mary!" "Purity and Movies!" ...

A Marian entertainment brought the Crusade to a close on the feast of the Miraculous Medal. We have reason to hope that this happy initiative will bear durable fruit and will inspire our young girls to guard jealously the lovely natural virtues of modesty and reserve which adorned Chinese womanhood in centuries past. Thereby they will be imitating the perfect model given us two thousand years ago — Mary the Immaculate Mother of the Saviour.

Musical concert at Intramuros Anglo Chinese Academy.

Nancy Lee, Jenny Tan, Videa Go, Vicenta Heramia, Dorcas Ting,
Margaret Chua. Nelly V. O. Arreola,
accompanies at the piano.





YOHOMME

Sister SAINT LUCILLE¹, M.I.C.

The first person you are likely to meet as you walk up the gravelled path to our convent is Yohomme, the gardener, his face wreathed in a perennial smile. He feels as if he were almost one of the "family" and is never so pleased as when he meets a new Sister.

He came here four years ago. Late one evening, as the Sister-Portress was about to lock the door, she was startled to find a ragged figure spread-eagled on our verandah. At her call, we quickly carried the man inside the dispensary where first aid was administered. He was delirious with an acute attack of malaria; besides, his hands and knees were badly bruised and his legs hung twisted and limp. Who had led him to our door then failed to notify us? Only the following morning did we learn Yohomme's tale of woe. For many years he had lived with none to care for him in a wretched hovel down in the valley. A passerby one day told him about the mothers recently arrived in Les Coteaux to care for the sick and

destitute. To him this was heavenly news. He made up his mind to go to them for help in his distress. But, how to do so? As nobody would give him a helping hand, he had started out on his own powers, crawling on all fours over rocky paths and shallow streams until, sick and exhausted, he had reached his goal.

As his condition required prolonged medical treatment, a neighbour agreed to let him have a corner of his *caille*. Whenever mealtime came around, Yohomme relying on the charity of the Mothers sent his *coui* (calabash) to the convent to be filled. Little by little, under continued medication, Yohomme's health improved and his interest in life reawakened. People began to drop in at the neighbour's *caille* to visit the cripple whose merry, goodnatured quips amused them.

Yohomme's physical ills once attended to, it was easier to provide the spiritual treatment he sadly stood in need of. Although baptized a Catholic, he knew absolutely nothing about his religion not even how to

¹ Adrienne de Grand Pre, Pawtucket, R.I.

make the sign of the Cross. Nevertheless, none was more eager than he to learn. As there was at that time a group of catechumens preparing for Baptism, he was given permission to join them for daily instructions. Crouching on the floor at the further end of the classroom, he listened attentively and pondered deeply over everything he heard. What a joy was his when he successfully passed the doctrine examinations!

In keeping with Haitian customs, we managed to have him dressed all in white for his First Communion day. With great fervour he approached the altar rail led by friendly hands. When the priest drew near carrying the sacred Host, Yohomme held out his arms in a touching gesture of welcome to his divine Guest.

From the time of his First Communion onward, he cherished a deep and respectful devotion towards Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Would he have been a true son of Haiti had he not also been affectionately attached to Our Lady of Perpetual Help? Daily he importuned her with pleas to make his paralyzed legs grow strong and supple. After countless petitions addressed to her for this intention, Mary at length deigned to smile upon her protegee; he was able

to sit up on a bench, something he had never been able to do. This first progress spurred his confidence. One evening, during the month of May, Yohomme crept out into the garden where by dint of almost superhuman efforts, hands gripping a stout tree trunk, he succeeded in standing erect. A group of neighbours and acquaintances stood admiring his prowess. "Try to walk!" someone suggested. The cripple loosened his grip of the tree and with infinite precautions put one foot forward, then the other. "Bravo! Bravo!" the spectators encouraged. "Now, take another step!" Beads of perspiration stood on his forehead, but his face wore a proud grin. He had done it! He had taken his first steps. So remarkable was the improvement in his paralyzed limbs that in a few months he was able to earn his living as handy-man around the school and gardener for the Sisters.

People often put to Yohomme the same question put long ago to the blind man of the Gospel after his cure, "Is it really you?" and Yohomme gladly replies, "Indeed it is I, thanks to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and the kind Mothers who took such good care of me!"



The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

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MOTHERHOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26.
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Montreal 9.
OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road,
Montreal 8.
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 112 Lagauchetiere St., West,
Montreal 1.
NOMINIQUE, Labelle County, P.Q.
RIMOUSKI, 85 St. Germain Street, P.Q.
JOLIETTE P.Q., 750 St. Louis Street.
QUEBEC, 1073 St. Cyrille Street West.
VANCOUVER, Oriental Hospital, 236 Campbell St.
VANCOUVER, Mount St. Joseph's Hospital,
3080 Prince Edward Street.
TROIS RIVIERES, P.Q., 1325 de la Terriere Street.
GRANBY, P.Q., 35 Dufferin Street.
GRANBY, P. Q., 279 Main Street.
CHICOUTIMI, P.Q., 766 Cenacle Street.
SAINTE MARIE, Beauce County, P.Q.
SAINT JOHNS, P.Q., 430 Champlain Street.
PERTH, N.B., P.B. 259.
OTTAWA, Ont., 443 Gilmour Street.

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Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

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KUANHSI, Catholic Church, Hsinchu Hsien,
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SHIH KUANG TSE, Catholic Church,
Hsinchu Hsien, Taiwan.
TAIPEI, 363, An Tung Chieh Taiwan,
Free China.

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WAKAMATSU, 480, sakae machi, Aizu Wakamatsu.
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MATI, Davao Province.
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall.
PADADA, Davao Province.
BAGUIO City, 11, Padad, Mountain Province.

WEST INDIES

LES CAYES, Haiti.
LES COTEAUX, Haiti.
ROCHE A BATEAU, Haiti.
PORT SALUT, Haiti.
CAMP PERRIN, Haiti.
MIREBALAIS, Haiti.
LIMBE, Haiti.
CAP HAITIEN, Hqaiti.
CHANTAL, Haiti.
TROU DU NORD, Haiti.
PORT AU PRINCE, cité No 2.
DESCHAPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital
Post Box No. 4, Saint Marc, Haiti.
MERCEDES, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
MARTI, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
MANGUITO, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
LOS ARABOS, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
MAXIMO GOMEZ, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
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RUMPHI MISSION, Rumpho P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
KARONGA MISSION, Karonga P.O.
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FORMOSA

