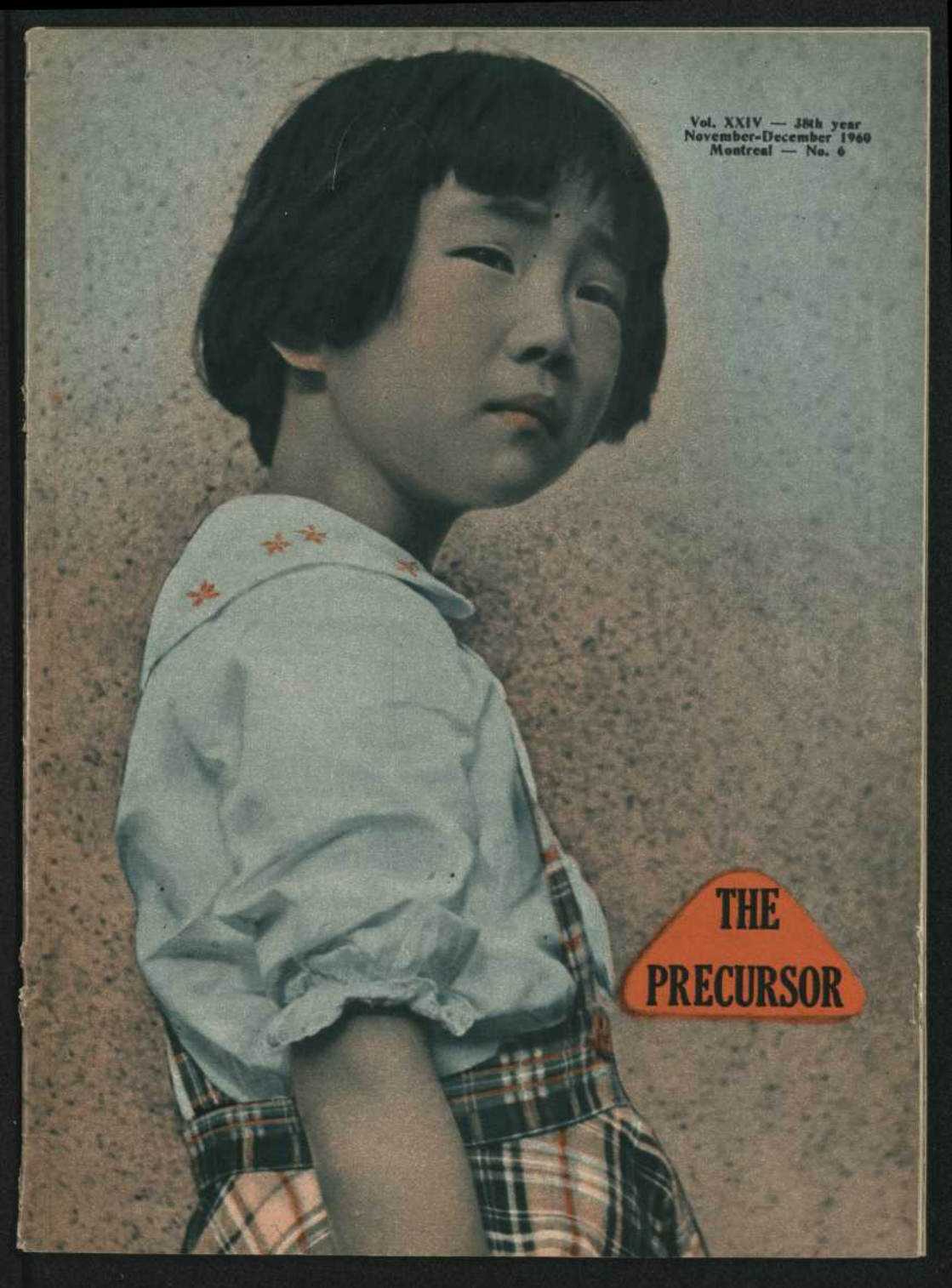




Vol. XXIV — 38th year
November-December 1960
Montreal — No. 6

**THE
PRECURSOR**

The Precursor

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Our cover : Japanese school girl. The Holy
Father wants us to pray for the youth of Japan
during this month.

By Sister MONICA of the BLESSED SACRAMENT,¹
M.I.C.

It is no easy thing to write about young people whether they be Japanese, Canadians, or Africans. For the most part they are apt to be incomprehensible to themselves as well as to others. A general analysis of their quicksilver personalities being out of the question, I will simply tell you about the boys and girls with whom I am in daily contact at Saint Francis Xavier School situated in Wakamatsu, a proud stronghold of feudal Japan, now a quiet out-of-the-way town.

Among our students some of the more precocious already seem to have stepped over the boundaries of adolescence into adulthood. With instincts and emotions held under the leash of traditional Japanese restraint they are model students, poised, self-controlled, apparently impassive, perfectly studious, so well behaved in fact that their rational conduct renders them impervious to their surroundings and to everyday happenings. Fortunately, such "perfections" are growing rare. The great

JAPANESE STUDENT YOUTH



majority are very human in their zest for living and their love of mischief. I find their simplicity engaging.

In Japan, all children start school at seven. A good number have previously attended kindergarten during one or two years, but none are admitted to attend elementary school before the age set by the Ministry of Education. Once enrolled, the pupils are promoted to a higher grade each year without passing any examinations. The obligatory course of study ends with the ninth year, the pupils being then awarded certificates no matter how low their grades may have been. There is no "loss of face" for anyone.

The six years of elementary studies over, the pupils change schools for the three additional years of secondary education. Unless they have been attending a private establishment, they are expected to enter school in the section of the city where they live.

¹ Monique Cloutier, Ottawa.

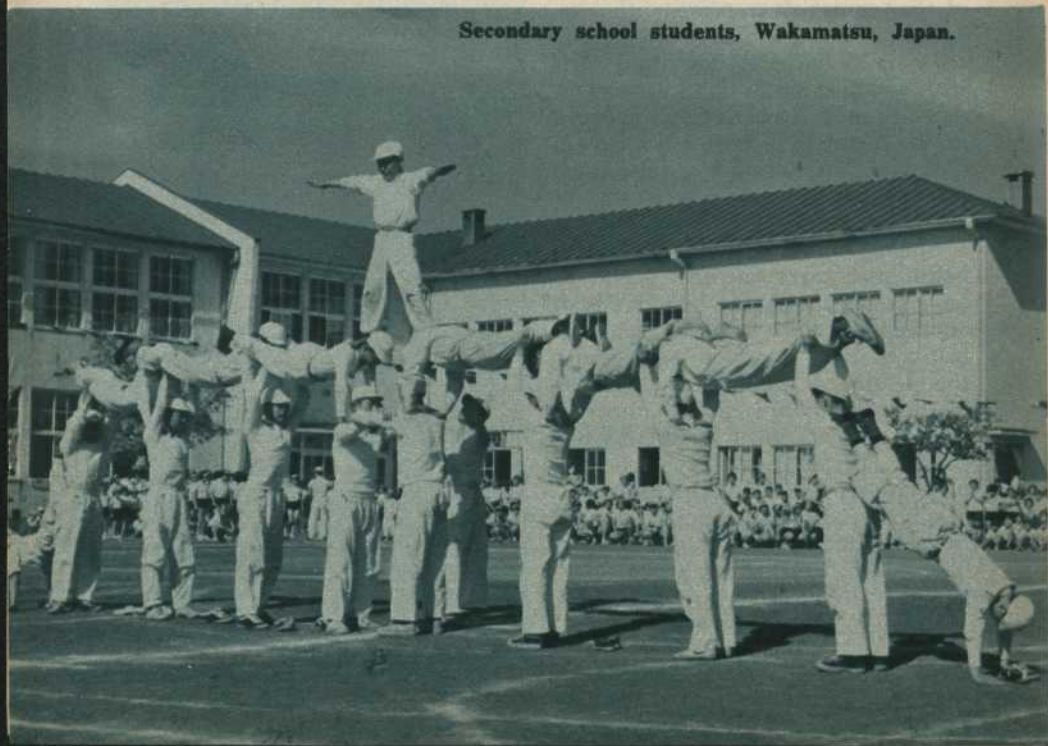
It is at this period that the boys begin in earnest to assert their superiority over the girls, a superiority which from time immemorial has been stressed in the family and elsewhere. From babyhood the little girl has been taught that in the family the next most important person after Father is Brother. She finds it natural to give in to him, to come second to him on all occasions. Even at school, it is not "Ladies first," but "Men first". Japan is still a man's world. This superiority complex causes the boy to look down on the fair sex as below his notice.

On the other hand, those girls who are acquainted with the boy friend custom of American students

use their wiles to the best advantage trying to make the boys take notice. In general, however, boys and girls of the secondary course do not mix. The Japanese girls retain their fresh girlhood simplicity much longer than their Western sisters. Girl students in our classes — high school pupils included — do not wear permanents, neither do they use lipstick or any kind of make-up. The girl who accepts a rendezvous at a restaurant or goes out for a walk with a boy student incurs the criticism of her classmates. Mixed dances are taboo in Wakamatsu.

After the completion of their nine years of obligatory schooling, the pupils who wish to pursue their

Secondary school students, Wakamatsu, Japan.





**Pupils rehearse tea ceremony with
Sister Monica of the Blessed Sacrament as guest.**

studies pass an examination prepared by the Ministry of Education. This examination takes place on the same date throughout the country and is the same for all schools. A minimum of 50 points is required to pass. Upon graduation, high school pupils automatically obtain their school-leaving diploma.

Matriculation, however, is such a severe test, that the majority of candidates are rejected. This is done on purpose as there is an overproduction of university graduates in Japan.

With the exception of those who intend to matriculate, Japanese stu-

dents lacking the incentive of yearly examinations tend to do less personal study than Canadian students although they have longer class hours. Spring, summer, and winter holidays add up to barely two months in all. The curriculum is extensive and in no way inferior to the Canadian. Athletics hold an important place in the daily schedule.

The character of the Japanese girl student is made up of contrasts. Free and easy with her companions, she is extremely wary of strangers. Rarely will she reveal the fascinating treasures of her inner life except perhaps to a kindred spirit — generally someone of her own age — but

like all adolescent girls she wants nothing more than to have someone spend hours discussing her and her problems. A little jealous perhaps and slow in forgiving injuries, she is nevertheless bighearted and thoughtful.

As for the boy student, his character is less complex. Sports take up all his spare time. He adopts new ideas with enthusiasm. What he needs is comprehensive direction that will point out stimulating heights to be scaled and at the same time inspire him with the courage to reach these heights.

At present, Japanese students avidly follow the doings of the youth of other countries desirous of imitating them in everything. Literary works and movies which treat of adolescent problems in Europe and America are extremely popular. Unfortunately, the influence received from such productions is not always of the best. The old Japanese traditions can hardly withstand the shock. While in Wakamatsu and other remote localities the danger is not yet imminent, in more important centres like Tokyo, Kobe, Osaka, Japanese youth adopt many objectionable modern patterns of behaviour.

The responsibility for this rests on those from whom the inspiration comes. In their contacts with our so-called Christian civilization, the young had the right to expect something better than a parade of foolish independence. What a pity if sensual propaganda should preponderate over idealistic propaganda and if lack of enthusiasm on the part of young Catholics abroad should prevent the gospel message from influencing as it should the youth of Japan!

I have sometimes heard it said that our young people thirst for the truth. This expression seems somewhat exaggerated. Among non-Christian students, very few feel the need of God for the simple reason that they do not know Him. Others have vague notions regarding Christianity, but are entirely ignorant of the divinity of Christ.

To the youth of Catholic countries then falls the important duty of igniting in the souls of non-Christian youth the spark of faith struck from the flame of their own unshakable convictions. Theirs to present Christianity by word and living example as an ideal worth living and dying for.

MISSIONARY INTENTIONS

NOVEMBER: Japanese youth.

DECEMBER: Social sense among Catholics of India.



The Family in Japan

by a JAPANESE NOVICE

Because they see nothing degrading for them in the fact, the women of 1960 like those of ages past graciously acknowledge the superiority credited to man by all Oriental peoples. After all is it not natural for the weak to look up to the strong? In the Japanese home, the father enjoys undisputed authority. The wife considers her husband not merely as a symbol of power and virility, but as a staunch defender on occasion and a faithful purveyor.

It is an error to think that the position of Japanese women during the prewar period was one of abject submission bordering on virtual slavery. Young girls of our country, it is true, have been impressed from their earliest years with the necessity of cultivating the virtues of gentleness and obedience.

In his code of *Greater Learning For Women* the celebrated moralist Kaibara Eiken asserts, "More precious in woman is a virtuous heart than a beautiful face... The only qualities that befit a woman are gentle obedience, chastity, mercy, and quietness... Let her consider her

husband as if he were Heaven itself and never weary of thinking how she may yield to him and thus escape celestial castigation..."

Such serious training in the virtue of obedience doubtless renders the spirit of gentle submission easier to Japanese women; it does not, however, reduce them to the rank of servants to their husbands in the literal sense of the word. On the contrary, the mother has always been the heart of the family just as the latter is the heart of the nation. The evolution of later years has borne more particularly on the basis of woman's social status. The Constitution of 1947 has placed her on a level of juridical equality with her husband; she may now vote, be elected, possess and inherit, privileges which she did not before enjoy.

The Japanese mother is the guardian of age-old traditions — the pride and the strength of our nation. Her home is her own little universe, for upon her entirely devolves the upbringing and education of the children. Her happiness she finds in tenderly caring for her husband,



her father and mother-in-law, her children, and in surrounding them with delicate attentions. Up before the dawn, she lights the little charcoal stoves and cooks the rice. She has taken along with her the younger

children so that their chatter may not disturb the morning rest of their father. Having to work hard for the family living he deserves as much sleep as he can get.

When there are no servants in

the home, the mother-in-law helps with the children's toilet. For his part the father-in-law busies himself in the garden, sweeping and weeding. As soon as his son rises, he greets the old man affectionately, "Father, what an early riser you are! Thanks to you the garden has grown beautiful. Don't work too hard."

Before breakfast the children respectfully bow to their parents and say a merry "*O hayo*, Good morning!" Should the father have to leave before breakfast is over, the children with their mother accompany him to the vestibule saying as he takes his leave, "*Itte irasshai*, Go honourably!"

When the youngsters have left for school or kindergarten accom-

panied by Grandmother or a servant, the mother is at last free to eat her own breakfast. During the forenoon she does her household tasks and goes to market while Grandfather takes a stroll, carrying Junior pickaback. Sewing and mending fill up the rest of the day for the little mother. When in the evening she hears the sound of the outside sliding door and the "*Tada ima* Here I am!" of her husband, she hastens to the vestibule, presents the house slippers, calls the children to greet their returning ricewinner.



Father heaves a sigh of relief as he enters his cosy home, oasis of quiet after the turmoil of the day spent in the noisy city. Here he finds the atmosphere of calm and silence after which he yearns.

The principal meal for us Japanese is the evening meal. Neither the father nor the children return home for dinner as they take along in a small aluminum container a light *bento* (lunch) to be eaten at work or at school with a cup of hot tea. All the more pleasant then is the supper hour, the only time of the day when the whole family gathers around the low table in joyful intimacy. Grandparents and par-

ents are given affectionate marks of esteem and veneration. The transformation of modern techniques have not been able to eradicate these profound sentiments from our national soul. New poetic aspects have been added to this traditional tableau in the music provided by radios which may be found in even the poorest homes.

The evening is so to say the "children's hour". Parents and grandparents solicitously inquire about the subjects learned at school that day, discuss the progress achieved, help the little ones with their wider experience, stimulate their efforts in mastering calligraphy... Mamma tells



Junior likes

to ride pickaback.



The "Children's Hour".

the family about Baby's latest roguish pranks. Father listens, a quiet smile on his serious features. Although he is not talkative — his dignity must be maintained — the little ones feel that he loves them with a strong, protective love. He likes to dawdle the baby on his knee, but he does not play with the older children as this might cause them to forget the respect due to the head of the family.

Children are greatly cherished in our country and everyone is at their service. Ceremonies to ensure their well-being start four months before

their birth, with the presentation of the *yumata obi* a large girdle offered to the expectant mothers. This supposedly attests that the unborn one has "received its soul". At birth, friends and relatives offer gifts and congratulations to the proud papa and mamma, but the newcomer is formally introduced only after seven days when a name is given him and his personal presents are received.

Next on the list of festivals are the 31st day ceremony for a boy baby and the 32nd for the girl baby. On this occasion, infants clothed in formal



A light BENTO (lunch) is eaten at work or at school.

black silk kimono are carried to Shintoist temples for their first bow to the gods of the Empire.

Boys and girls who have reached their third, fifth, or seventh year observe on November 15 the *shichi go san*, a festival which consists in visiting the temple to honour the gods and invoke their continued protection for the future. Fond mammas give their children a kind of candy served only on this one day of the year. Besides, the temple bonzes provide them with amulets and charms that are supposed to help them grow up strong and happy.

Little girls enjoy a special festival on March 3, when fifteen ceremonial dolls are displayed on shelves in time-honoured fashion; the emperor and empress sit on the top shelf; below them squat ladies-in-waiting, court musicians, and guardsmen. The mothers cook rice cakes of various shapes and colours which their little daughters eat with their guests in front of the doll display. Another name for this holiday is Peach Blossom Festival because it is held during the season of peach blossoms, symbols of the gentleness and grace which should adorn Japanese maidenhood.

Huge coloured carps
made of cloth or of paper
are flown from a tall mast...



For centuries, Japanese families have celebrated May 5 as *Tango no Sekku* Boy's Festival. On this day huge coloured carps made of cloth or paper are flown from tall masts together with graceful white and red streamers. We Japanese consider the carp as a very spirited fish known to swim up waterfalls. The parents fondly hope that their sons

also will grow up spirited and sturdy enough to swim against the treacherous currents in the stream of life. Traditional delicacies served on this festival are *kashiwa mochi*, rice cakes filled with sweet bean paste and wrapped in dried oak leaves, and *chimaki* conical rice cakes wrapped in bamboo sheaths.

Catholic families in Japan are still all too few. On a total population of 92,000,000, Catholics number a mere 266,000. But they are in general very fervent; among them are exemplary fathers and mothers, artists, professors, diplomats, ministers whose influence is felt even in governmental circles. Will not this powerful leaven succeed in permeating the mass of those who live in complete religious ignorance?

Unfortunately there is no teaching in the curriculum of our State sponsored schools and universities which might throw some light on supernatural truths. The majority of Japanese are, therefore, either deprived of all knowledge with regard to Christ and His Church or such knowledge as they may have ac-





Blue Monday in Japan.

quired is so defective that it rather keeps them away from Catholicism than it draws them to it.

Nevertheless, ours is far from being an irreligious people. In nearly every home may be found domestic altars erected in honour of Buddha or of the ancient gods of Japan. Every day, thousands turn in a religious spirit to the ancestral manes to beg for guidance.

On the other hand the love of silence and the yearning after contemplation which characterize nu-

merous Japanese souls admirably predisposes them to Christian contemplation and fervent adoration of the true God. Enlightened religious teaching, the testimony of militant lay apostles and of autochthonous priests and religious should suffice to lead our nation in ways of Truth.

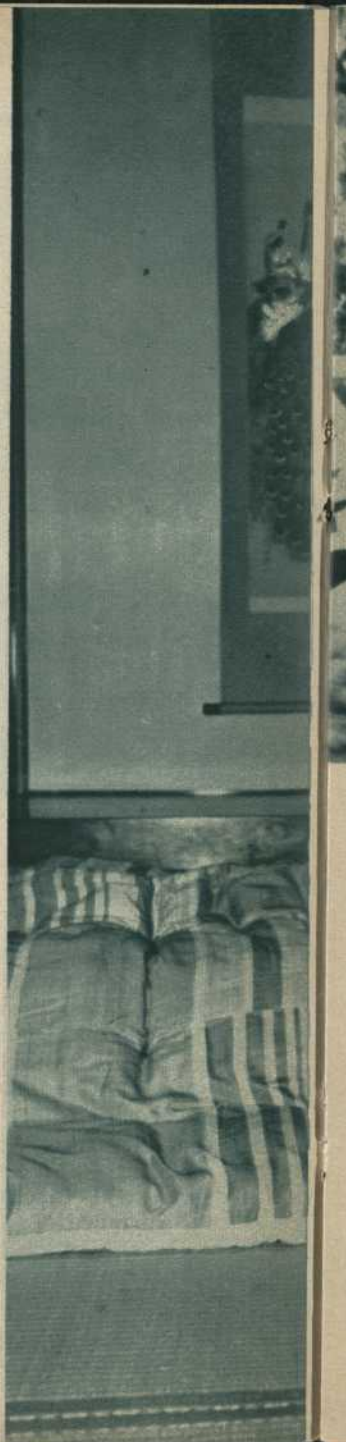
Fervent prayers must be offered without ceasing that the Sun of Justice may soon shine in all its splendour over our beloved Land of the Rising Sun.

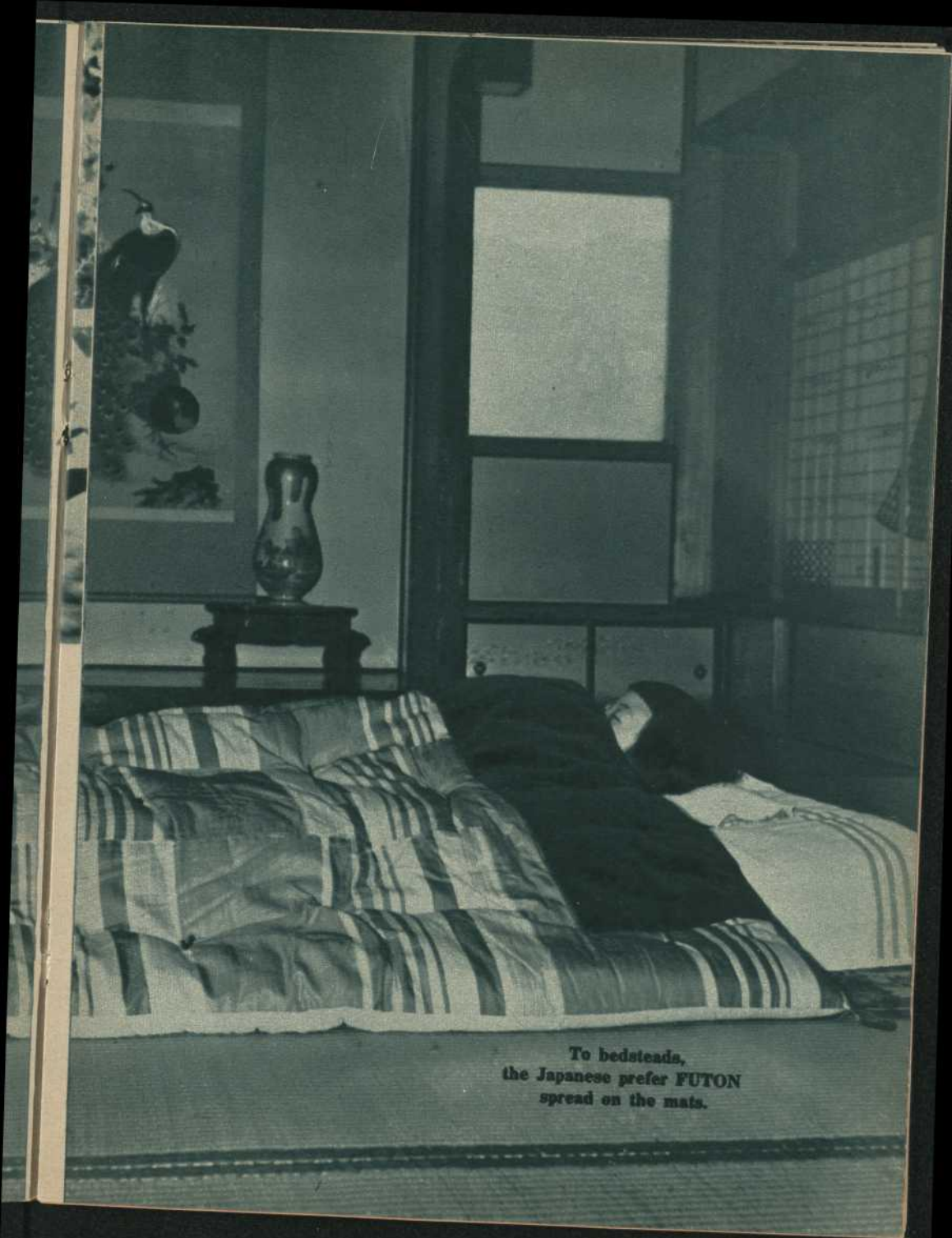
JAPANESE HOUSES

Japanese houses are built to meet the requirements of a land frequently rocked by typhoons and earthquakes. Their light framework without any foundation, obeys the earth's violent fits of ill temper better than would stone or brick walls, and their tiled, thatched or shingled roofs — the only substantial thing about them — are also constructed in such a manner that they can stand a good deal of vibrations.

Their drab unpainted exterior pitted by the wind and rain wears a secretive look, for they are windowless and they give you no idea of what may be found within. The best rooms are at the back where also is the garden facing the south in order to escape the northern blasts in winter and to benefit by the southern breeze in summer.

Let us enter the vestibule and discard our street shoes taking care to leave them neatly turned outward on the step that leads up to the *tatami* (mats). Careful now. Do not give the door a tug or a push. Your fingers might pry holes into the delicate translucent paper of the upper part. The best way to open such a door is to kneel as Japanese ladies do and send it gently gliding along its well-worn groove.





To bedsteads,
the Japanese prefer FUTON
spread on the mats.



Japanese country house.

The clean, sober, uncluttered interior is punctuated by a floral arrangement, a hanging scroll in black and white, and beyond the passage a tiny garden breath-taking in its simple beauty. Rooms are divided from each other by opaque paper screens called *fusuma* which run in grooves at the top and bottom. Remove these light sliding screens

and you have several rooms turned into one.

The floor is covered with thick mats made with rushes, perfectly fitted together so as to leave no interstice. As they are always of the same size — six feet by three — the area of the rooms is usually computed by their number. Thus you speak of a six mat room, an

eight mat room... Kitchen and passages are not matted, but have a wooden floor which is kept brightly polished.

The furniture consists of a low table, usually fashioned out of some rare wood, and of square flat cushions used in lieu of chairs. To bedsteads, the Japanese prefer *fulon*, heavily padded quilts, laid out at night wherever most convenient, and put

away in the morning in wall cupboards screened in by paper slides.

No paint or varnish mar the natural appearance of the woodwork whose every vein and knot are shown to the best advantage. The Japanese do not like their homes to look new. Are they not lovers of antiquity?

Westerners find Japanese houses regular refrigerators in winter. True, they are cold, but, oh, how cool

Send the door gently gliding in its groove...





Greeting a visitor.

they are in torrid weather with all their sliding panels open to let in any frolicsome breeze. Furthermore, physicians who have studied Japanese dwellings give them a clean bill of health.

Many people nowadays set aside a room to their Japanese style house in which furniture, floors, and walls are in foreign taste.

In well-to-do families, a two-room *hanare* is set apart from the house proper for the *go inkyo* retired masters of the house, Grandfather and Grandmother. This is not to get rid of the old, but to afford them the rest and tranquility they need. At meal time the *go inkyo* join the rest of the family.

JAPAN



THE WAY OF THE GODS

by Sister MARY OF THE REDEMPTION,¹ M.I.C.

The origin of Shinto is as obscure as that of Japanese civilization itself. There were no written documents relating to it before the year 712 A.D. Until that time, numerous legends had been circulated by the corporations of *kataribe*, storytellers who travelled from one province to another reciting their mythical tales in the houses of the great, much as did the gleemen or minstrels of ancient Europe. The best told tales were the most highly appreciated. Rivalries among the *kataribe* often resulted in distorted and widely divergent versions. The imperial court of

Nara, therefore, decreed that an official chronicle should be written which would henceforth serve as standard.

No easy task was this. Japan as yet possessed no system of calligraphy, and facts and legends existed only in the memories of the people, more especially of professional storytellers. Fortunately, there lived at that time a sixty-five-year-old woman, Hieda no Are, gifted with a phenomenal memory. She was urged to learn by heart the words of "hoary ages" while the learned Yasumaro was ordered to write down her nar-

¹ Basillisse Maillet, Saint Louis, N. B.

Shinto priest.



ration in Chinese characters lately introduced in Japan. There resulted a book in three volumes, the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Things) the first part of which is concerned with the "age of the gods" since the creation of the world; the second part relates the accession of Jimmu Tenno, ancestor of the imperial dynasty, together with the events of the lives of the first fifteen emperors; the third part, the only one which may be considered as at least partly historical, begins with the reign of the sixteenth Emperor and ends with the mention of Empress Suiko, 628 A.D. The whole body of Shinto liturgy has been influenced by the *Kojiki* to which two other books are closely related: the *Nihongi* (Chronicles of Japan) and the *Engishiki*, a Shinto ritual recalling the form used in ancient ceremonies.

Primitive Shinto was nothing more than simple nature worship. All volcanoes, rivers, flowering trees, any manifestation of power and beauty was believed to enshrine a *kami*, word which implies spiritual superiority and refers to objects evoking awe or affectionate admiration. These *kami* were everywhere; they caused the trees to blossom in spring and wove the delicate brocade of autumn leaves on their magic looms. Butterflies were their steeds by day and fireflies by night. Although the nature *kami* were legion, they did not enjoy the monopoly of the Japanese pantheon. As time went on, departed clan chieftains and renowned warriors came in for deification under the name of *uji gami* (clan gods). Eventually, a national cult developed, centering around the sun god-

dess, Amaterasu Omikami, regarded as ancestress of the ruling house. We find her depicted in the *Kojiki* Record of Ancient Things. According to these sources, before the beginning of the world of men, there was a long succession of creation deities. Two of these "divine generations" descended from heaven on a rainbow and gave birth to the Japanese Islands as well as to a great number of additional gods and goddesses. Amaterasu Omikami and her brother Susano, the "swift, valiant, impetuous hero" were the last born among these deities. Amaterasu later sent her grandson, Nin-igi, to establish the divine race upon the Eight Islands. His great grandson, Jimmu Tenno the first

"human" emperor conquered the province of Yamato in 60 B.C. thus founding the imperial dynasty which has continued until present times.

There was not the slightest ethical complexion to the various aspects of this primitive quasi-religion. No attempt was made to teach virtue or dictate rules of conduct; evil was con-

Riding to the temple
for a ceremony.



sidered as associated with mere physical uncleanness. How could it be otherwise since each Japanese soul was a spark of the shining soul of Amaterasu? According to Motoori, "To know that there is no way to be followed, is to know and to follow the way of the gods." Loyalty seems to have been the core of Shinto, summing up its moral content: loyalty to the *kami* according to their more or less exalted position in celestial abodes, loyalty to their descendants here below.

Shinto suffers a setback

Towards the middle of the sixth century, Shinto suffered a serious setback, for at this period the "Law of Buddha" began to penetrate into the island empire. The Japanese, who until then had sought in vain for means of giving outward display to their religious emotions in Shinto's austere empty temples, felt irresistibly drawn by the splendid ritual of Buddhism, more so perhaps than by the riches of its religious philosophy and its lofty moral teaching. Because of its jejune simplicity and ethical vacuum, Shinto was ill prepared to resist the influence of Chinese culture which flooded Japan in the wake of Buddhist missionaries. After a period of fierce opposition on the part of the Shinto priests the conquest of the primitive cult was effected, the two religions blending so that the "Law of Buddha" attained a position of equality with the "Way of the gods".

Nervertheless, the indigenous cult was never completely discarded. Not even the great Lord Buddha could

displace the *kami* from a land where they were so closely and so familiarly related to the everyday life of the people. Shrewd Buddhist exegetes offered a compromise. Behind every Shinto deity, they solemnly averred, lurked a reincarnation of some Buddhist saint or deity.

This second period of Shinto which lasted from about 550 to 1800 A.D., was one of stagnation and decrepitude. The absolutism of the Mikado, Son of Heaven, soon waned, for the effeminacy of the imperial court at that time was scarcely conducive to the formation of able rulers. Among the few Shinto shrines where knowledge of Shinto was maintained in its native simplicity was Ise Jingu where one of the maiden daughters of the Mikado was assigned as guardian to the three sacred treasures inherited from Amaterasu — the mirror, the sword, the jewel. On this shrine all other Shinto shrines were originally modelled. Being a development of the simple native hut of prehistoric times, the architecture of these unpainted thatch-roofed wooden structures was of the plainest. Set in groves of towering cryptomeria trees brooding over them, dark and sombre like sentinels from some nether world, most shrines consisted of a *hoden*, sanctuary, and *haiden*, oratory. Worshippers first passed under an elegant arch or *torii*, performed ritual ablutions at stone basins, then proceeded to the steps of the *haiden* where after making their offering they clapped their hands twice and bowed in prayer.

Within Japanese homes, miniature replicas of these shrines called *kami-*

dana or godshelves, continued to be held in more or less veneration. In this *kamidana* were placed the tablets of deceased members of the family. A sacred hemp or straw rope *shime nawa* hung above the tiny roof with small plaited white paper strips attached to it just as it did on the temple proper. Offerings of food, always uncooked, were daily placed before the *kamidana* as mystical refreshment for ancestral manes. At this family shrine took place special ceremonies such as the naming of a child on the seventh and thirty-third day after birth, the anniversary of deaths or marriages. It was customary for the head of the family to perform these private rites. But Buddhism invaded even the privacy of the home when in 674, A.D., the Emperor Temmu ordered that every Japanese house should have its *butsudana* (miniature shrine) where Buddha and *hotoke* were honoured by daily offerings of food and flowers.

In most Shinto temples, religious services were assured by Buddhist monks who used their own ceremonial and altered the simple indigenous architecture. Pilgrims from the middle and lower classes, not even remotely concerned with theological distinctions, kept flocking indifferently to the shrines of either religion, intent merely on paying homage to any superhuman powers claiming their allegiance.

Shinto revival

Such was not the case with the literati. How could these men with their fierce hatred of everything "barbarian", placidly accept the sub-

servience of the "Way of the gods" to the "Law of Buddha" which was of foreign importation? From the beginning of the 18th century blazed the fires of a pure Shinto revival, kindled by advocates of the home *kami*. Ancient manuscripts were brought to light, old histories and old poems printed anew, the primitive *yamato kotoba* (language of Japan) was studied and exalted as the language of the gods. Gradually, however, what had started as a strictly religious revival, evolved into a fanatically patriotic movement. Buddhism and Confucianism were reviled because of their foreign origin. This order of ideas came to a head in 1868, when the Son of Heaven became the rallying point of the forces behind the Meiji Restoration, the figurehead and the symbol of the nation. Shinto was declared to be the only State religion and thousands of temples formerly Buddhist or *Ryobu Shinto* (dual aspect Shinto) after being "purified" of all Buddhist taint were handed into the keeping of the Shinto clergy. Rites, symbols, and monuments were utilized to promote unconditional devotedness to the Imperial family. On this State Shinto was made to rest the basis of education. It had in reality been transformed into a national mysticism, a mysticism which in World War II was to drive numerous "divine wind" pilots to plunge to certain death in order to assure triumph to the descendants of the sun goddess.

Modern shinto

With the defeat, came the abolition of official Shrine Shinto but its spirit was too deeply rooted in the national



character to be destroyed. Shinto has been re-organized under a federate system uniting all shrines headed by the most dignified and ancient of all, that of Ise, upon a foundation of common faith in the *Kami*, social and cultural development of Shinto festivals, and a novel mode of formation of the *kannushi* (Shinto priests). On the future trends of Shinto, Dr. Kato Genchi, famous Shinto scholar, remarks, "During the Meiji era, as a national secular cult... utilized by politicians and military men for purposes of political convenience... Shinto was ostensibly divested of its true religious nature and became a warped and deformed cult. Since its disestablishment in 1945, however, it has come to resume its fundamental religious nature and is groping along

the way toward the achievement of a world-wide, universal nature..."

As Christians and as missionaries, what orientation should be given our prayers regarding Shinto? It cannot be denied that this ancient, primitive cult has inspired the soul of Yamato with noble traditions of respect, patriotism, and courage. These natural virtues constitute authentic values which, assumed and supernaturally transformed by Catholicism would undoubtedly enrich the Japanese nation.

May our prayers then hasten the day when men such as the eminent scholar mentioned above and the 19,000,000 faithful who attend the 80,601 *jinja* (shrines) come to see the Light of the one true Faith.

← The great bronze Buddha
of Kamakura.



WAKAMATSU, JAPAN

ART CRITICISM IN JAPAN

by Sister SAINT VINCENT FERRER,¹ M.I.C.

Five o'clock P.M.

I paused to admire the work of a pupil, a painting which represented the warm tints of autumn lighting up a small grove. At the bottom the youthful artist had written a *haiku* (seventeen syllable verse) which seemed like a mystic doorway open on a world of thought:

Aka aka to hi mo
Tsurenaku mo
Aki no kaze

The sun bright red
Relentlessly hot, —
But the wind is of autumn.

In art criticism the first consideration of the Japanese is whether the painting or sculpture has *fukasa*, depth, profundity; that is whether it leaves the spectator in quest of new mysteries... Behind visible outlines, do others suggestive of yet more delicate beauty lie concealed? If the answer is in the affirmative, the first barrier has been passed. It now remains to discover whether under the strokes of the brush, a human soul reveals itself animating the objects reproduced. On this second premise rests the pledge of suc-



What the pupils paint in Wakamatsu.





Sister Saint Vincent Ferrer and Miss Shigeko Gondo
whose painting was awarded a prize.

cess. The work is then awarded a prize and declared worthy to figure in the various art exhibitions.

When an artistic production gives a *katai ningyo* (rigid doll) impression, it is judged a failure. The critics may, out of politeness, declare it "*Umai, umai*, Lovely! Lovely!" Such appreciations are forced.

In order to keep abreast of Japan's artistic evolution and to teach modern culture to my pupils of the secondary and higher courses, I make it a

point to visit the annual exhibitions of the Ueno Gallery of Arts, a famous school founded in 1889, during the Meiji era.

For over two centuries, the exclusion policy of the Tokugawa cut the land off from all relations with the exterior world. This led the Japanese to progress along artistic lines of their own. In the days of the powerful military rulers rose great castles whose interior walls were decorated with gorgeous landscapes vying with

one another in boldness of stroke and brilliancy of design. When, in 1867, the shogunate was abolished, Emperor Mutsuhito took up the reins of government and allowed the doors of the Empire to be opened to foreigners. European influence then invaded every domain in such a way that a wave of vandalism threatened to destroy traditional classical culture. For instance, the famous Himeji castle in the Kobe neighbourhood came near being sold for the ridiculous sum of one hundred yen (about thirty sen in present-day currency) on the express condition that the metal parts only would be preserved. Fortunately, no buyer came forward. Marked for destruction by fire, the lovely tower of Kofuku Temple in classical Nara was spared only because the citizens objected that such a fire might endanger the whole city.

To save traditional art from decay or from thoughtless depredations, Kakuzo Okakura undertook with the help of Fuenorosa, an American, the task of classifying inspiring models of sculpture and painting. Thanks to the enthusiasm and expertness of these two men, classical Japanese art knew a vigorous renaissance. To foster its development, the celebrated Ueno school was established. Every year students still flock to its halls for admission, but only one

in twenty successfully passes the entrance examinations.

Although at present, numerous other art schools function, that of Ueno remains unrivalled. The first teachers of this establishment taught only the classical Japanese art. In 1894, however, the impressionism of Manet and Degas began to find favour in its studios where, ever since, Oriental and Occidental art freely fraternize.

The Japanese Catholic Committee annually organizes an exhibition where are presented artistic works from all Catholic schools. Last year, this exhibition took place in the great Mitsukoshi department store daily visited by thousands of people. On this occasion one of our eleventh grade pupils, Miss Shigeko Gonda, won a first prize awarded by His Excellency Katsusaburo Arai, bishop of Yokohama. Her modern palette knife painting, an original representation of the Magi done in brown tones, might be classed as a neo-cubist work.

In their art programme for 1960, our pupils will study the Christian art of the Middle Ages. May the gracious figures of the Madonna which they will learn to admire reveal the ardent soul of those who painted them not as *kalai ningyo*, but as the symbol of faith and of love eternal.



COCHABAMBA



Why?

by Sister SAINT GHISLAINE,¹ M.I.C.

(Ghislaine Seguin, Les Cèdres).

Ever since I was missioned to Bolivia I have been asking myself many a *why*. For instance, why should I have lived, not in luxury perhaps, but in the enjoyment of every modern comfort and superfluity, while the Indians around here have barely enough to keep body and soul together?

Theirs is a harsh, hopeless existence. Centuries of serfdom have

left them ill equipped to stand on their own. They live in windowless, one-room houses whose furniture when there is any is of the crudest. Infant mortality runs high and no wonder since the meagre, starchy diet brings on malnutrition and numerous diseases. It is not uncommon to find families that have lost four or five children before they were out of infancy.

As regards religious care, Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in South America. Although the greater number of Bolivian Indians are nominal Catholics, they know practically nothing about their religion because they have never been instructed. Only too often they mix up Catholic practices with superstition. The witch doctor still plays an important role in their daily pattern of life. Numerous are the shepherdless folds in this region. My first reaction upon being confronted with such spiritual

distress was to offer fervent prayers for Bolivian priestly and religious vocations to save the souls that are famished for the Bread of Truth.

Some may be tempted to deduce from what I have said that Bolivia is not a religious country. Far from it. But it does stand sorely in need of being rechristianized. Today, more than ever before, the forces of materialistic Communism are at work spreading their net of subversion among the simple populations. There is a crying need for priests and missionaries to dispense solid instruction. Illiteracy is a major problem.



Nine out of ten Bolivians have Indian blood. The rest of the population is a mixture of different nationalities: Bolivians of Spanish descent (a small minority), Yugoslavs, Germans, Italians, Arabs, Americans, Canadians... These people usually live in urban centres. Totally different from that of the Indian, their mode of life can afford the tourist no clue to the real Bolivia.

Despite the fact that most of the Indians live in such grinding poverty, Bolivia is a land of tremendous natural resources. From tin and silver mines, on the slopes of the Andes, Indian miners have wrested fortunes, little of which has gone to the workers although the present government has eased the situation somewhat. But the missionaries have not come here to amass material riches for themselves like so many whites. They have come to help the miners transmute their backbreaking labours into treasures for heaven.

Since the last few months, we have started doctrine classes for the numerous pupils attending public schools where religion is not on the curriculum. My heart is deeply stirred by the plight of these children between ten and fourteen who are totally ignorant of even the sim-

Curing rubber in Bolivia. ➤➤➤





plest truths of the Creed. They are eager to learn, however, although they find it difficult to practise what they have been taught in a milieu where the family system of morals is not of the best. This is a drawback for the perfect Christian education of the children.

Even for us, life sometimes appears as an intricate puzzle. Joys, sorrows, vicissitudes can be explained only if we keep our eyes turned to the eternal city where God is waiting to welcome us home after we have faithfully walked the trail of

his commandments. Have you ever thought what it must feel like to stumble along in the darkness, without any hope of rest at trail's end? That is the fate of numerous Indians in Bolivia. How much this should make us appreciate the grace of having been brought up in a good Christian environment!

In the *Pater*, that splendid community prayer, we are urged to pray not only for our own daily bread but for that of our neighbour as well. You who partake without stint of material as well as of spiritual nourishment, will you not have a prayerful thought for the distress of the Indians deprived of both? The wealthy possess in order to share with the destitute. Live your daily *Pater*, then, by holding out a helping hand to the Bolivian missions.



Over the highest mountain peaks
little asses carry
merchandise to the city.

An African Guide Writes

On the occasion of her official visitation of our Kanyanga Mission, Reverend Mother Marie de la Salette¹, Assistant General of our Society, presided at the ceremony of the Guide Promise and presented the second-class badge to twelve members of the Cock Patrol. This was a red-letter day for the Company. Failet Chilembo tells us about her reactions with typical African exuberance.

Dear Mother,

Oh, Mother, how happy I am to written to you before. I think you write you this letter! I have never will be pleased with my letter. I

¹ Corinne Frenette, Saint Jean l'Evangéliste.



Sister Saint Rodrigue (Françoise Pageau, Quebec)
animator of the Guide movement in Kanyanga.

was told that you have received the picture where we are together. Oh, Mother, how can I thank you? I am so pleased to be with you on that picture because you are such a great personage.

I remember that night when, as a cock, I welcomed you. That is what I told all the girls, that you were a great personage. You must not forget the white cock who explained your name and your work to the girls. That night, on November 23, when you gave me my second-class badge, I was the happiest girl in the world. I have passed all the tests: how to make knots, how to hoist the flag, and first aid. This was hard. But the hardest of all was the behaviour, always to observe the law... Once, I was afraid that I had failed, but I did pass at last and I was so happy.

Was I the only happy one on that day? No, all the Girl Guides were happy. They waited so long for that day. My friends who promised to serve God and help all the people were so joyful to receive the Guide badge!

When I close my eyes I can imagine you looking at the leaders. How proud they were to receive their white stripes, and promise to help their captain and their patrols in all things! With all our heart, each one of us promised to obey her leader, to love her, to love everyone,

and to be faithful to her patrol always. I still remember your smile when twelve of us received their second-class badge I can still see you, Mother Marie de la Salette, pinning the badges on our arms.

Mother Marie de la Salette, when I remember your name, I remember the place where Mary appeared once to some children. I always pray for you so that you may do your work well. Please, Mother, do not laugh at my English because I am just trying to write. I am just a Standard Four girl. The most important thing is that we thank you very much for your work. You sent us Sisters and you came here in Africa to show us that you are the one who is sending those Sisters to us.

About our life here, we do live nicely. How is Canada, Mother? Here the weather is very good. We have planted many kinds of vegetables and they are nearly ripe. Perhaps we shall see you again in the future. I was told that Canada was a country where there is much snow. But here, the sun is always shining except during the rain season.

Please, Mother, pray for me so that I may be baptized and be good to my friends. And pray for my friends too. Greetings to all the Mothers,

Yours,
Failet Chilembo

Reverend Mother Marie de la Salette, Assistant General,
presents the badge to a Guide in Kanyanga.







Pottery Versus Education

by Sister SAINT MATHILDE, M.I.C.

In the edifice of human achievement, we each have our stone to contribute according to God's plans and in conformity with our bent and aspirations.

Philosophers study superior realities, discover supreme laws, first causes and last ends, explain the destiny of mankind, and transmit their message to other human beings.

Peasants by their daily labour provide food for the famished.

Religious educators endeavour to orientate towards truth and goodness the youth entrusted to their care.

Mothers present the world with the most precious of all gifts: human hearts capable of love, human minds capable of finding the truth.

Mr. Jolicœur, a Haitian potter of our acquaintance, as his share in promoting progress and the full blos-

soming of human faculties deftly shapes clay utensils of all kinds with a smiling pride in a craft almost as ancient as the world. The wares that have come to life under his artist fingers are to be found in every home around here.

Lately, we requested him to give our students of the course on Home Economics a demonstration of his work. He began by placing a lump of clay on a small rotating table activated by hand. As the lump of clay whirled with the table, the potter raised or lowered his hands, spread them out or brought them closer together, and the clay followed rising and falling, spreading or curving, letting itself be shaped into a plate, a cup, or a vase, almost as

though it realized what was wanted of it.

As students and teachers crowded around attentively watching his performance, he suddenly exclaimed, "This potter's art, I've inherited from my forebears." Was he not repeating unawares the words of Goethe, "Make your father's legacy your own by hard work if you want to assure its possession." Mr. Jolicoeur benefits by the ancestors only because he put his whole heart and soul into his craft no matter what difficulties he encountered. His is a joyful life, for work well done cannot fail to bring contentment.

Dear Mr. Jolicoeur, you can hardly guess that while my eyes were

Pupils of the course on Home Economics, Cap Haitien.



focused on your whirling potter's wheel, my mind was lost in a singular meditation. As I admired how patiently your fingers went about moulding the clay, I could not help making comparisons between your craft and my own mission, the task of moulding human souls...

The noble work of an educator resembles yours, although on a higher plane, for the "clay" to be manipulated is immortal, endowed with wonderful gifts of reasoning and willing.

God wants His missionary "potters" to develop to the full each human personality entrusted to their care. The vase is what you make it, and the souls of children so supple, so malleable, will forever bear the imprint we educators have given them. To succeed in turning out masterpieces shaped after the divine Ideal, teachers must make constant use of the "wheel" of prayer to obtain heavenly help.

The potter carefully examines the clay to free it from grit and impurities, to mix it in exactly the right proportions for shaping the utensil he has in mind. The teacher learns how the basic psychic life of each student may be implemented, corrected, developed. As the potter's touch on the clay is gentle yet firm so must the touch of the educator be on the souls of children. Lack of comprehension may so easily spoil a life rich in potentialities.

...The Potter's hand

Is sure. It will not slip or mar the work

And no more shaping shall the vessel
have

And not a single turn upon the wheel
More than is needed to insure the
grace

The beauty and the strength the
Master Workman

Gives to all He makes...

Mr. Jolicoeur's wheel is a hand-turned primitive affair, but modern educators cannot cling to ancient methods no longer applicable in the rapidly changing times in which we live. These should be revised in the light of the most recent pedagogical and psychological principles to maintain their dynamism and conquering force.

In this divine and delicate task we educators are but inadequate human instruments. However, as our Haitian potter turns out lovely urns and vases with puny instruments, the Immortal Potter will accomplish beautiful work through us if only we know how to surrender ourselves into His divine Hands.

When the demonstration was over, we thanked Mr. Jolicoeur, congratulating him on his fine workmanship. But to educators it will rarely be given to see tangible results of their work. Although invisible these results are nonetheless real. As the fox in Saint Exupéry's *Le Petit Prince* wisely remarks, "The essential is invisible". Notwithstanding our efforts, there will to all appearances always exist children upon whom our influence will glide like water off a duck's back. Then is the time to remember that all worthwhile

work in education or elsewhere bears the hallmark of suffering.

... the impress of the loving hand
Of the Great Artist on His formless
clay.

"It is not so much by brilliant exterior action that the religious teacher can hope to make her influence felt within the Church but by interior action all the more profound and fruitful that she is more humble, devoted, and charitable."

Upon this last reflexion, I left behind the pottery demonstration firmly resolved to fulfill my apostolic task to the best of my ability. Can I not say after Mr. Jolicoeur, "This apostolic task I've inherited from my ancestors"? The Jogues, the Brebeuf, the Lallemant, the Marie de l'Incarnation, the Marguerite Bourgeoys who four centuries ago left the security of *la belle France* to mould in this new world vessels of grace for the Master Missioner...





PONT VIAU NOVITIATE

An Aspirant's Prayer



Tonight, dear Lord, I feel not really downhearted, but just a little "blue". No matter how hard I try to convince myself that the time spent training to be a missionary is not lost time, in the bottom of my heart I cannot help feeling a useless member.

When first my thoughts turned to the great missionary adventure, I resolved to work on my own in the fight for the salvation of souls until the naiveté of such a course struck

me between the eyes. Missionaries cannot improvise. They must have serious technical and spiritual training.

I then found out that in Pont Viau a warmhearted religious family would accept me as one of its members and assume my formation. But now that I am here, I sometimes am tempted to think five and a half years is quite a long time to wait before becoming a full-fledged missionary. Haste makes waste, the old saying goes... Perhaps... But, then, is it my fault that I was born in a century of haste? That I want to reach my goal within the least possible delay?

Dear Lord, do teach me to possess my soul in patience; make me understand that to force the rosebud open before its time will only spoil the beauty of the rose. Speak, Lord, your little servant is listening with a heart eager to do Your will.

There are people who blithely declare that we of the young generation no longer know how to listen to Your voice. They are unjust. Haven't I come when I heard Your voice calling, "Follow me!"?

Yes, I listened with all the eagerness of my ardent youth and in spite of the noise of music, of merry parties, of mundane conversations. You did not call in vain.

True, I didn't follow You at once... I'll explain why some other time. No, I'll tell You right now how terribly afraid I was of religious life. Busybodies had told me so much rubbish about it that even the mere thought of entering the convent made me shudder. You alone, dear Lord, know what a mountain of prejudice I had to scale in order to obey Your summons to work in Your vineyard.

But now that my *Ecce ancilla* has been said, please hold me close. Don't let me look backward. Help me keep the goal ever in view. Help me love You with a strong and tender love. All these graces I beg of You through the Immaculate Heart of Your Mother.

Tonight, your little servant will sleep in peace, dearest Saviour. She knows in Whom she has trusted and that He is strong enough to keep what has been placed in His Heart for safekeeping.





Favours Obtained

through the intercession of
Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit

I am happy to declare that I was cured of a phlebitis after a novena and the application of Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit's picture.

Mrs. C., Rigaud

While recovering from a serious illness, I was afflicted with total insomnia. Injections and other medication proved unavailing. I began a novena in honour of Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit and she obtained for me a perfect cure.

Mrs. E., Quebec

After making two novenas in honour of Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit we were able to sell some ground.

Mrs. C., Saint Agathe

A thousand thanks to Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit for the favour granted my husband. He no longer suffers from epileptic spells.

Mrs. T., Cowansville

* * *

PRAYER

for the Beatification of Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit

Almighty and eternal God Who hast deigned to make use of Mother Mary of the Holy Spirit for the expansion of Thy kingdom and that of Thy Immaculate Mother here below, we trustingly beseech Thee to glorify Thy faithful servant by granting us for her glorification, if such be Thy Will, this (such and such a grace, a cure...) and may this favour incite us to follow the examples and imitate the virtues of her whose memory we revere.

Hail Mary... O Mary, conceived without sin...

Persons who obtain favours after prayers offered for the glorification of the servant of God are requested to inform the

Motherhouse of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
2900 Saint Catherine Road, Cote des Neiges, Montreal (26).

The Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

MOTHERHOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26.
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Montreal 40.
OUTREMENT, 314 St. Catherine Road,
Montreal 8.
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 112 Lagauchetiere St., West,
Montreal 1.
NOMININGUE, 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 Ollmour Street.
EDMUNDSTON, N.B., 18 Saint John Street.

UNITED STATES

MARLBORO, Mass., 207 Pleasant Street.

CHINA

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103 Austin Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
OUR LADY OF PROTECTION HOUSE,
Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

FORMOSA

KUANHSI, Catholic Church, Hsinchu Hsien,
Taiwan.

SHIH KUANG TSE, Catholic Church,
Hsinchu Hsien, Taiwan.

TAIPEI, 363, An Tung Chieh, Taiwan, Free China.

SUAO, Catholic Mission, P.O. Box 2,
Suao Yilanhsien, Taiwan, Free China.

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KORIYAMA, 96 Toramaru, Koriyama Shi,
Fukushima Ken.

WAKAMATSU, 480, sakae machi, Aizu Wakamatsu
TOKYO, 108-4 cho me Fukazawa cho, Setagaya ku

ITALY

ROME, via Giacinto Carini, 8.

MADAGASCAR

MORONDAVA, Madagascar.

AMBOHIBARY, Madagascar.

BOLIVIA

COCHABAMBA, Academia Comercial,
Calle Oruro No 300, Casilla 1667.

PERU

PUCALLPA.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

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Academy, Gen. Luna St., Intramuros.
MANILA, 2212 S. del Rosario St., Tondo.
LAS PINAS, Rizal.
MATI, Davao Province.
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall.
PADADA, Davao Province.
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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, Haiti.
DESCHAPPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital
Post Box No. 4, Saint Marc, Haiti.
LA BOULE, Haiti.
MERCEDES, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
MARTI, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
MANGUITO, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
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MAXIMO GOMEZ, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
COLON, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.
SAN JOSE DE LOS RAMOS, Prov. of Matanzas, Cuba.

AFRICA

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Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
MZAMBAZI MISSION, Kaufkule P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
RUMPI MISSION, Rumpi P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
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Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
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Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
NKATA BAY MISSION, Nkata Bay P.O.
Nyasaland, B.C. Africa.
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Northern Rhodesia, B.C. Africa.
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Northern Rhodesia, B.C. Africa.
NYIMBA MISSION, Sacred Heart Hospital
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Koriyama, Japan