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LIFE

OF THE

REV. F. COINTET,

PRIEST AND MISSIONARY

OF THE

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS.

by
Mother Angela
Eliza Gillespie.

CINCINNATI:

JOHN P. WALSH,

NO. 170 SYCAMORE STREET.

1855.

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SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE OF REV. F. COINTET.

INTRODUCTION.

In attempting to give the religious public a short sketch of the life, and an imperfect delineation of the virtues of this devoted, but humble missionary of Jesus Christ, we shall confine ourselves to simple statements of facts, leaving inferences to be drawn by others; and though any account, however brief, of this life, must include some notice of his associates, and of the Soicety of whose history their lives and labors form a part, we shall be far from intending to hold up this good and worthy priest, holy as he may have been, as an object of veneration to the faithful, much less to laud the virtues or labors of those still living.

We are well aware, that however devoted he was to the glory of God, and the salvation of Souls, he does not stand alone. Had he, indeed, been aught else, he would have formed an exception to those zealous and saintly missionaries whose footsteps have for centuries hallowed this Western soil, and in whose traces it was his highest ambition to walk. That he did so, most faithfully—that he reproduced in his person the humility, zeal, and unwearied charity of these holy predecessors—shall be the endeavor of these few pages to show.

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The records of history, whether civil or ecclesiastical, can point to few men, who, either as a class, or as individuals, stand morally higher than the Catholic Missionaries of America. Their names should be their adopted country's proudest boast; for their memories hallow her sweetest regions; their labors first civilized her western wilds; their voices blessed her blue lakes and boundless prairies; their ardent prayers have merited for her the glorious destiny she is so rapidly fulfilling; and their holy ashes draw down benedictions upon the soil into which they have mouldered, and with which, mingled.

No one, possessing the least title to a human heart, can read, without profound emotion, a page of their thrilling annals; no one can refuse the tear of warm and generous sympathy to their sufferings, or the tribute of just praise to their heroic fortitude, their ardent zeal, their burning charity, which only the damps of death could extinguish; their self-forgetfulness, and contempt of danger and even death, when weighed against the glory of God, and the interests of souls.

Upon the very spot where this narrative is written, and where the events recorded in it have principally taken place, have lived and labored, since the beginning of this century, some of the noblest types of the true priest, the devoted missionary of Jesus Christ. The limits of this little book will not allow the introduction of any passages from the beautiful lives of these hidden saints, whose names, unknown to the world, and comparatively so to the Church, even in America, are yet known to God, and precious in his sight. They are also loved and venerated here, and although their cherished flock have long since crossed the distant Mississippi, exiles from the graves of their fathers, yet the virtues and memory of the good Fathers Badin, De Seille, and Pettit, yet live in the hearts of their successors in the evangelical ministry, one of whom, at least, the subject of the present memoir, was not unworthy to walk in their footsteps.

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Many of the letters and other records of these saintly Missionaries, are in the possession of the V. Rev. Superior of Nôtre Dame, who has long contemplated their publication, but fears to burden this little work with so many pages, which, however edifying, have not an immediate reference to its particular subject. They would also greatly delay its publication, and haste is somewhat of a desideratum, as the numerous friends of the late Father Cointet are impatiently anxious to have some lasting record of his holy and useful life, the last eleven years of which have been spent among them, here. It is therefore to these pious and affectionate hearts, that this little Memoir is dedicated, with the sincere hope that, while it speaks to them of their departed Father and friend, it will insensibly persuade them to the imitation of his virtues, especially his zeal for the salvation of souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. This zeal, indeed, was not only his virtue, but his passion; it was this that supported him amid his labors, and consoled him in affliction; this that made him insensible to cold or heat, fatigue, sickness, contempt and insult; this was his true life, and in hastening his premature death it opened for him the gates of a life that is eternal.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY HISTORY.

FATHER FRANCOIS COINTET, was the son of very respectable and wealthy parents, and was born on the 25th of March, 1817, at the little village of La Roc, in the diocese of Mans, France. His cradle was overshadowed by the half-ruined walls of the once celebrated Abbey of the same name; its pious tenants have long since disappeared, but the examples of fervor they gave are still remembered; and even yet no visitor can wander amid those vast ruins, without feeling

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a profound veneration stealing over him, both toward the hallowed walls themselves, and for the saintly Spirits whose memory seems yet a living presence. Consecrated, from his very infancy, to Her, upon one of whose loveliest festivals he had first opened his eyes to light, and naturally of a pious and meditative turn of mind, we may imagine the lonely and thoughtful boy wandering silently among these venerable ruins, or kneeling unseen in a remote corner, to commune with the glorified Spirits of the holy dead, or to invoke the blessing and the prayers of his Heavenly Mother, that his life might be like unto theirs.

He was still very young, about ten years of age, when his parents sent him to the College of Chateau Gontier, which was the nearest and best founded institution of the western portion of his diocese; and under the care of the excellent professors he found there, the young Cointet made such progress in Science and Virtue, that he had won, before half his humanities were accomplished, the esteem of his teachers, and the respect and love of all his companions of study. To an extraordinary memory he joined a quick and sound judgment, both of which he took care to improve, by a most conscientious assiduity to study. His perseverance and constancy were equally remarkable; whatever he undertook to learn, he pursued until he was thoroughly master of it. In these dispositions he went through the regular college course of eight years, carrying off at each commencement an abundant share of the best prizes.

He left the college to enter the Seminary of St. Vincent, called the Great Seminary of Mans, in September, 1834. He has left no record himself, nor have we any means of judging the motives which led him to choose the sacred, but arduous calling of a priest; if, indeed, there were any especial or unusual motives, beyond the holy aspirations of a deeply pious soul, animated by a zeal to labor for the honor and glory of God, in the most devoted and effectual manner possible. We will not venture to sound the depths of that delicate and

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truly interior soul, or to imagine what might have been the secret communications and inspirations he received from God; but we may easily suppose, that to such a being the world had few attractions, and that it was not difficult for him to turn from it, on its rosy threshold, though its future skies seemed to promise so fair. The voice of God had spoken, and penetrated that generous and devoted heart. Like his Divine Master, he replied at once, "Ecce venis"! and to the latest throb of that same heart, it never for an instant retracted the entire oblation of that moment. Perfectly appreciating the sacred dignity of the holy state he had embraced, he loved and esteemed it far beyond any earthly rank, any human destiny; and all the ambition, and all the prayer of his life, can be expressed in the few words extracted from his written resolutions on leaving the seminary: "*if I can only become a good and worthy Priest!*"

CHAPTER II.

HIS LIFE AT THE SEMINARY, AND HIS ORDINATION.

THE fame of his talents, acquirements, and rare piety had preceded him thither; but as high as expectation was raised it was so far from being disappointed, that, on becoming acquainted with him, all were ready to exclaim, "the half has not been told us!" A daily and continued intercourse with him only deepened this impression, and increased the universal admiration felt for his eminent ability and true piety. The life of a seminary gave a new luster to both, and rendered him the favorite and the model of all the two hundred and seventy-five young Levites then residing at the Great Seminary of Mans.

Without ostentation or desire of applause, but, on the contrary, by nature meek, modest, and reserved, and by grace truly humble, he never knew how to prefer himself to any one,

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nor to indicate that he possessed any superior knowledge, on any subject.

Here again, as at the College, he was honored among the first in all his classes, and was pronounced and considered one of the best Theologians of his course, and selected each year for the public theses, or debates, with which the classes are closed. It was also during this time, that he was persuaded by his Superiors to present himself for the examination of the Bacchalaureate, where he obtained a Diploma of Master of Arts. Much applied, as he was, to Theology, he made plenty of leisure for his exercises of piety, and while he exerted himself, day and night, to obtain the knowledge befitting a priest, it was evident that he desired still more to be a pious and spiritual one. His ideas on this point were very severe, his standard very high, and indeed so rigidly did he judge himself by it, that he became by degrees scrupulous in the extreme. Under this painful visitation, which Divine Providence sometimes sends on the purest souls to purify them still more, the young Abbé insensibly pined away, lost his peace of mind, his health, and, at times, even his hope of salvation. In vain did his intimate friends, and his Superiors offer him consolations, encouragements, and assurances; he received every word with a kind and grateful smile, but nothing seemed to make any impression upon him, and to the profound grief of those who knew how to value him, he seemed fast sinking into despair, while his delicate body, sympathizing with his soul, appeared ready to fall into the grave. Nearly two years of this suffering had the young Levite experienced, at the end of which he had well nigh abandoned all thoughts of entering into the sacred Orders. But fortunately, he had fallen into the hands of one of the wisest Superiors that ever governed the Seminary of Mans, the V. Rev. H. Heurtebige, an accomplished divine, and experienced director of souls. This holy man had discovered in his pupil a sound judgment, and this alone gave him confidence that he should succeed, in the end, in overcoming his apprehensions.

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This painful trial had its origin in two of the best features of his character, for awhile allowed to run to extremes—his solid judgment, and his extreme delicacy of conscience.

Having once entered the Seminary, he gave himself up, wholly, to the contemplation of the awful Ministry he was preparing to assume, and a just appreciation of its sublimity, and its great responsibilities, together with a low and humble opinion of himself, made too deep an impression upon the naturally timid and tender soul of the young Seminarian. He looked up to the elevated dignity of the priesthood with amazement and awe, and could not conceive how he had ever dared to imagine himself called to it. Often would he blush at his past presumption in having entered St. Vincent's Seminary, or dared to dream that one so unworthy as he, could ever be permitted to consecrate the adorable body and blood of Jesus Christ. Gradually that dear hope was entirely resigned, and with a profound sorrow he prepared himself to leave the Seminary, and return to the house of his parents. God, however, who had permitted this heavy trial, to purify a soul upon which he had such designs of grace, and to chasten a heart which he wished entirely to possess, now interfered, by the agency of the saintly Director of his young servant: who, powerfully aided by the Holy Spirit, succeeded in dispelling at once and forever, these gloomy clouds which had, for so long a time, darkened the horizon of this afflicted youth, the predestined priest and missionary of Jesus Christ.

The young Abbé finished his ecclesiastical course with great success, after which he was sent, in capacity of tutor, to a private family of noble extraction. He remained here about a year, usefully occupied, and meanwhile endearing himself to the entire circle that surrounded; not only to his pupils and acquaintances, but even to strangers who saw him only occasionally. "None knew him but to love him, none named him but to praise." His manner had all the charms conferred by good sense, amiability, innocence, piety and talent.

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As the epoch appointed for his ordination drew near, he redoubled his pious exertions to make a worthy preparation for that great step, the mere thought of which had so often made him tremble.

In the year 1839, he was ordained priest, by Mgr. Bouvier, Bishop of Mans. What were his sentiments and holy inspirations at that most solemn period, may be gathered from the "Rule of Life" he wrote during his preparatory retreat, before ordination. Though too long to insert entire, some extracts from it shall be here presented.

"After having seriously reflected before God, I have determined ever to keep myself closely united to the exercises and spirit of the Seminary, upon the principle, that "the soldier of Jesus Christ ought never to lay down his arms when on the field of battle!" Accordingly, I will rise at the latest by five o'clock, every morning, and my first thought shall be to acquire and increase at all times, within my heart, that spirit of sacrifice which was essentially the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and which must be mine. *Sacerdos alter Christus.*

"Having performed my meditation, which I will never allow myself to neglect, I will repair to the church, to fulfill, with the sentiments of faith and love which it demands, the most august of all priestly functions. For my thanksgiving, I will imitate the Shepherds of Bethlehem, addressing my Saviour with the simplicity and artless confidence of a child; a spirit which shall pervade all my actions. Never will I celebrate without due preparation, nor will I ever be remiss in reciting the Divine Office, which I regard as one of my greatest consolations, in which I shall be closely united to Jesus Christ and the entire Church, and in it will I speak to God of all that concerns myself, and the souls confided to my care.

After having accomplished all the duties of the ministry and of charity, I shall devote my time to the study of Dogmatic and Moral Theology.

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"Twice a week I shall devote a portion of my time to the reading of the Holy Scriptures: a portion of the New Testament I will read every day, at my particular Examen.

"My monthly Retreat, I shall carefully observe, devoting the greater part of it to pious reading, and meditation on my Rule of Life, being well convinced, that the tepid and cowardly priest is infinitely unhappy for time as for eternity; and that it requires a multiplicity of holy exercises to preserve the soul in a state of fervor. There is no balancing point.

"My Recreations shall be devoted to visiting the sick, and other works of charity. Whenever I find myself in the vicinity of a church, I shall make a visit to the blessed Sacrament. Alas, who will visit the God of Love, if he is forgotten by those whom he calls his friends? To enkindle devotion in my heart, I shall devote half an hour, each day, to spiritual readings. It is in the writings of the Saints, and not in my own understanding, that I shall find the generous zeal and lively faith which so eminently characterized their lives. For the same intention, I shall say the Rosary. Since an early age I have been consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, and to her care have I confided my chastity. I will study attentively the virtues of this holy Mother, to whom I am strictly bound to have many traits of resemblance, and toward whom I ardently desire to feel all the tenderness of a true child.

"All my actions must be directed toward prayer and meditation. By the grace of God, I fully understand, that without the spirit of prayer, the spirit of compunction, and of ardent desire to be united to God, my ministry will be fruitless. I will approach the sacrament of Penance every fortnight; there, as in all other exercises, I must wage a continual war against nature and spiritual blindness.

"Oh, what great need shall I have, every year, of my Annual Retreat, to renew in me the spirit of my calling,

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Upon no pretext will I dispense myself from it. Never, with God's grace, shall I slight or neglect any principle of Christianity, whether it flatters my inclination or not. Jesus Christ, at the day of judgment, will not ask an account of my evil inclinations, but rather, if I have in all things conformed myself to his example, to those of his Saints, and the advice of my Confessor.

"Provided that I can say to myself, in all my actions, behold the manner in which a St. Francis Assissium, or a St. Vincent de Paul would have acted, or have suffered, then I will be satisfied to imitate them, for I too was created to be a Saint. ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿

"Behold what I solemnly promise to God, on leaving the Retreat at the end of my Deaconship, and the subject of my Meditations through life."

Had these resolutions been confined to the resolving of them, and transcribing them to paper, we should have omitted them entirely, for anybody can write a series of resolutions, but very few can practice them with equal fervor. "Nothing," says a certain adage, "is so common as good Regulations of Life, yet nothing is more rare than a life well regulated." *Rien de si commun que les bons réglemens de vie; et rien de si rare que des vies bien réglées.* But, as the foregoing "Rule of Life" is the very mirror of the saintly life of this worthy priest; indeed so perfectly so, that from reading them alone you may know his character, and be able to point out his distinguishing virtues, without ever having known him personally, the omission of them would leave the work incomplete.

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CHAPTER III.

HIS LIFE AS A SECULAR PRIEST.

IMMEDIATELY after his ordination, the Abbé Cointet was appointed Assistant Priest in Chatillon, one of the largest and most exemplary parishes in the diocese. He spent but four years among this people, which short time was, however, long enough to render him universally beloved, and perfectly appreciated, not only by his Bishop and Pastor, but among his entire flock, by whom he was as tenderly cherished as he was sincerely venerated. We can judge how happy he must have been at Chatillon, when, knowing his ardent zeal, we consider the immense amount of good he had opportunity to do, and actually did do. Those who have known him in America, and witnessed his singular fervor and zeal, at a period of life when mature years may be supposed to have somewhat moderated his fervor and calmed the impetuosity of youthful zeal, can imagine what he must have been at the commencement of his devoted career, and how indefatigable must have been his exertions, how ardent his prayers, when he found himself, for the first time, charged with the care and direction of souls. He not only exhausted, but may be said to have actually consumed himself, in preaching, catechising, hearing confessions, visiting the sick, and exhorting sinners and tepid Christians to penance. Before twelve months had elapsed, he not only knew every family and individual of this large Parish by name, but he knew their several circumstances, he knew all their afflictions, and all their necessities both spiritual and temporal. To supply the former he was most devoted, and to relieve the latter his purse, though not always adequate, was ever open. More than eight hundred yearly communicants had chosen him as their Confessor, for whose salvation he was most anxious. Nothing can be imagined more ingenious and persevering than his efforts and expedients to remove them from the occasions of

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sin; nothing more amiable than his endeavors to instruct, to edify, and to win them, and by making them better to render them also happier. His solicitude was as devoted and unwearied as that of a mother for her children; and so genuine was his affection that, long years after he had left them, he would often be heard to speak in terms of the warmest and most tender love of his dear Catholics of Chatillon, who, on their side, cherished his memory so faithfully, that the mere mention of his name would at any time draw tears from the whole congregation.

Naturally endowed with a rare spirit of order, and completely master of whatever he had to teach and to do, he became daily more and more the Priest of the Parish; and as he was perfectly modest and humble in his deportment, the good Pastor of the Parish daily relinquished to him, more fully, and intrusted to him more entirely, the government of his pious flock. Nothing was lost by it; for, in making the pious and fervent Abbé the soul of his large, spiritual family, he breathed into all its members a new life of faith and devotion. Thus trusted, thus beloved, thus constantly occupied for others, he went about, literally, like his Divine Master, *benefaciendo.* It would be no easy task to express the mingled sentiments of respect, love, and veneration, which the good people of Chatillon entertained toward him; but it would be yet more difficult to depict the profound regrets, and sorrow they felt, when the news was circulated, that their dear Abbé Cointet was soon to leave them for the Foreign Missions. For some time he had deemed it prudent to keep this design secret, to mature it in prayer before God, and to arrange everything for its execution without unnecessary trouble, which would quite certainly arise from without as soon as the affair should become public. Nor was he deceived in his apprehensions. In the first place, his Director objected; then Dr. Bouvier, his Bishop, warmly opposed the design, and would have every idea of the kind entirely abandoned. But the inspiration that prompted this design had

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come from God, and no obstacle could prevent its final fulfillment. He urged his plea at the Altar, and in his daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament; and after nearly a whole year of anxious suspense, he was equally surprised and delighted to find, that both his Pastor and his Bishop, were impressed with the fear of opposing the will of God, in withholding any longer their consent to a design which they, by this time, saw and felt to be inspired by the Holy Ghost. They therefore retracted their refusal, though it was undoubtedly most painful for them to see him depart from a sphere which he so admirably filled, and in which they deemed it almost impossible to replace him without sad detriment to the Parish. He by no means shared these apprehensions. On the contrary, one of his greatest encouragements in his design was the thought, that as soon as he should be removed his place would be occupied by some one who would do much more good than he himself could do; while, however little he might do in the Foreign Mission, it would be a clear gain to the Church, as there might be found no other to do it if he did not.

How our good Abbé happened to turn his eyes toward the Society, of which he was destined to form so illustrious and useful a member, deserves a special notice. The first letter written from Nôtre Dame to his Superiors in France, by Father Sorin, the first missionary of the Society, in this country, was accidentally seen by the Abbé Cointet, who had been, at the Seminary, his most intimate friend. If the pious young priest had not since, frequently, and most positively declared, that it was to the reading of this letter he owed his vocation, that is to say, the knowledge of his vocation, we would not make mention of it here. But it appears, that from this time the thought of Nôtre Dame du Lac was ever present to him, and haunted his mind so much, as to give him no rest until he had fully resolved to consecrate himself to this Mission.

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He left Chatillon, in body, soon after; but in spirit and in affection, he dwelt there to his latest breath. Holy Charity, how long thou endurest in a pure and guileless heart! Nor could it be said, that "out of sight" he was "out of mind" with his former cherished flock. There, his memory has been kept alive, even until the present; and profoundly afflicted they have undoubtedly been, to receive the mournful tidings of his death.

A touching proof of this affectionate remembrance was given a few years since, to one of his Associates, who, on passing through the village of Chatillon, had been urged, even compelled, by the Pastor, to preach. Upon a very short notice, an immense congregation assembled; not only the church, but the street before it, was full of eager listeners, esteeming themselves most happy to behold one who could speak to them of their dear Abbé Cointet; and for more than an hour they were held in breathless attention by the simply recounted narrative of his labors and success, in his distant Mission.

As the future history of Father Cointet will be identified with that of his Society, it will be well to give a short history, or rather a sketch of the foundation and ends of this Institution, which will be done in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ASSOCIATION OF HOLY CROSS.

The wisdom of God's economy in the government of his Church, is nowhere more admirably displayed, than in the establishment and perpetuity of Religious Orders. He, though almighty and omnipresent, does not disdain to make use of human instrumentality for the accomplishment of his

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eternal designs; but, on the contrary, generally selects as his especial agents, those who appear, at first sight, almost ridiculous, by their insignificance when contrasted with the magnitude of the tasks intrusted to them. But God does not always judge as man judges; and He has almost invariably chosen "the weak things to confound the strong, and the things that are not to confound those that are." So true is this, and so universally acknowledged by all holy and interior souls, that when any project, however apparently good, is attended at the beginning by great *éclat*, and encounters no opposition from any quarter, they always feel doubts as to whether it is from God, or from the devil; while on the contrary, an equally pious, but much more humble undertaking, is recognized at once as inspired by God; indeed, the more obscure its beginning, the more unknown its projectors, the more opposition it meets with, and poverty and contempt it struggles against, the more satisfied they become of the genuineness of its claim to a Divine origin.

Which of the great Religious Orders, which in successive ages have been raised up, as bulwarks to his Church, by Him who promised, that "the gates of Hell should never prevail against her," but affords us an illustration of this great truth. Let us take, for example, the Society of Jesus, the glory of the Church, and its right arm against heresy and idolatry; what could be more humble and obscure than its origin? Wisely did the great St. Ignatius found all the security of his confidence in this very fact. The wonderful, and more than human wisdom of its policy might have been of the devil—this alone was no proof; its extraordinary success, taken by itself, would have been no sure token of the authenticity of its claims; but its obscurity, its poverty, its trials, the violent opposition, and even persecutions it encountered, ah! these were marks that it rightfully bore the name of Him whose gospel was preached, and whose Church planted in the same manner, and under the same auspices.

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These reflections are extremely consoling to the Religious of the Holy Cross, for reasons which will be appreciated by the reader of the few following pages.

In the year 1834, there lived in the city of MANS, France, a holy and devoted priest, Professor of Divinity in the Great Seminary, and Canon of the Cathedral of that city. The Abbé MOREAU added to profound learning, a singular eloquence, and boundless zeal. For a number of years he had been in the habit of preaching Retreats, in different places, from time to time; and so powerful and efficacious were these exhortations, that the most astonishing success followed him everywhere, and soon gave him the reputation, now solidly established, of being one of the first preachers of France. Perceiving the immense good he was already accomplishing, though laboring single-handed, his Bishop, Mgr. Bouvier, having in view the greater glory of God, and good of the Church, authorized him to form a society of auxiliary priests to co-operate with him in preaching Retreats through the Diocese. He accordingly associated with himself, four pious and devoted clergymen, with whom he lived a regular community life in the Seminary, for over a year.

About this time, or a few years previously, a community of a different kind had been founded in the same Diocese, by the Very Rev. Mr. Dujarier, one of the venerable survivors of the Revolution. It consisted of a band of devoted men, mostly young, who, without aspiring to the ecclesiastical state, yet, animated by a true zeal to labor for God's glory and the salvation of souls, had formed themselves into a Religious Community, under the title of the Brothers of St. Joseph, consecrating themselves to the Christian education of youth, and having no higher aim, than to imitate the humble and hidden life of their holy patron. The trials of this little band, during the first years of its existence, would, if related, edify the reader, and inspire him with a lively faith and confidence in the hand of Providence; but the limits of this little Memoir will not admit them. Our object is only to give a

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synopsis of the Association of Holy Cross, of which the Brothers, ultimately, formed a part.

Worn with years and increasing infirmities, the venerable founder felt himself unable to form for his young Society, a written code of discipline; nor did he conceal from them, that he would be able to govern them but a short time longer; and that it was his most ardent desire to see, while he yet lived, a worthy successor chosen to fill his place. He stated the same to his Bishop, and offered to resign his charge into his Lordship's hands, that he might in turn confide it to the priest whom he might deem called, by God, to that undertaking. The choice both of Mgr. Bouvier and of the Brothers of St. Joseph, fell upon the Abbé Moreau, and the venerable Mr. Dujarier warmly approved of it. Recognizing the finger of God in this matter, and feeling strongly attracted toward this devoted little Community, whose admirable vocation his pious and zealous heart could not fail to appreciate, the Abbé Moreau hesitated not to accept of this new charge, imposed on him alike by obedience and charity.

On the 31st of August, 1835, Mgr. Bouvier, assisted by his Vicar-General, Mr. Dujarier, and the Abbé Moreau, repaired solemnly to the Chapel of the Novitiate, where all the Community were assembled. Then the venerable founder, resting one hand upon the altar, and the other upon the staff which supported his feeble frame, resigned his precious charge into the hands of his Bishop, beseeching him, in the most dignified and touching manner, to free him from a responsibility too heavy for his declining years, and to confide it to the saintly priest, whom God had pointed out as the future Director and Superior of the Brotherhood. Amid the irrepressible sighs and sobs of the assembly, the Bishop replied in the following terms. "Reverend and worthy sir, I remember well, that at the time, when you first proposed to establish this Brotherhood, you consulted me, and I was the first to encourage you to this enterprise, in which I foresaw great advantages for the cause of religion. I consent, to-day,

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to the request you have made, but only from the consideration of your declining health and increasing years, which demand this sacrifice; for I could never consent, if you were full of vigor as I have seen you in olden times. For the rest I cannot but approve of the choice you have made, in the Abbé Moreau, who merits entirely your confidence."

Mr. Dujarier, having quite recovered his composure during the answer of the Bishop, replied immediately, with as much presence of mind as deep feeling, "Rev. Mr. Moreau, I beseech you to accept the conduct of my little Congregation, the care of which I have just resigned into the hands of my Bishop, on account of my many infirmities. I confide them entirely to your paternal care, fully persuaded that you will be to them, henceforth, a true guide and Father. Yes, most willingly do I intrust to you, my dear Children! Accept them as the greatest treasure I possess, and as a deposit of which you will render an account to Jesus Christ. I desire that they should henceforth regard you as their Father, and that they manifest toward you all the respect, submission, and attachment they owe you, in that character." Such were the last words of authority addressed by the venerable founder to his beloved sons; and their subsequent obedience, and tender attachment to their second Father, has proved how deep an impression was then made on their hearts.

Several years after, this holy and venerable priest, after divesting himself of his pastoral functions, retired to Holy Cross, where the community were by that time established, and died in the arms of his former children.

Mr. Moreau entered upon this new duty with all the ardor of his zealous and devoted soul. He wrote rules for his pious charge, gave them Retreats, and created a spirit of order and strict discipline, until then unknown, because it had been simply impossible.

The idea arose naturally in Mr. Moreau's mind, of uniting in one association the two little communities which Providence had thus placed under his direction. This idea was carried into

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execution, and shortly they formed but one society, composed, like many other religious orders, of priests and lay-brothers; which society took the name of "The Association of the Holy Cross," a name of bright omen, and peculiar appropriateness, since to impress the Cross deeper upon men's hearts in lands where it is already recognized as an external symbol, and to plant it in the foreign soil of countries whose inhabitants had never before been sheltered by its saving shadow, was to be the great object of their lives, though as yet the extent of the mission intrusted to them by God was not even suspected by the most zealous of their number. Until this time they had each continued their original functions; the priests in preaching Retreats through the Diocese; and the Brothers the care of their humble schools. Their success in this employment, suggested to the mind of Mr. Moreau the plan of establishing a College, or School for the higher classes; to be directed by the priests of Holy Cross, assisted by the Brothers. The task of educating the young to piety, virtue, and politeness, as well as in science and art, is one very evidently appropriate to Religious. Like preaching the Gospel, it is a work so clearly and manifestly to the glory of God, that no argument is necessary to prove it so. These considerations induced the Abbé Moreau to found the College of Holy Cross, in the city of Mans, in the year 1836.

About this time several pious and devoted females of the humbler class of society, offered themselves, from a motive of holy charity and zeal, to conduct the work of the establishment, and to serve these good priests and Brothers, as the holy women of the Gospel did our Saviour and his disciples; thereby lessening the expenses of the establishment, and also securing to themselves the privilege of being under the spiritual guidance of Father Moreau, who was universally venerated for his wisdom and sanctity. God willed it that this event should inspire our worthy founder with the idea of establishing as a third branch of the association, a Sisterhood, to cooperate with the two former branches, in all their pious labors,

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and to labor themselves in a particular manner for the benefit of the youth of their own sex; the whole association thus forming a united and most efficient body, able to act in concert upon all classes of society. As soon as this intention became known, subjects soon presented themselves, and were sent by Mr. Moreau to make their novitiate at the monastery of the Good Shepherd in Mans, founded by himself a few years before, and now numbering 350 inmates, still under his direction and administration. There, under the training of the saintly Superioress, Mother Mary of St. Dorithei, Juet, they made a fervent and regular novitiate, and were, one year afterward, admitted to the religious profession under the name of "Sisters of the Holy Cross," and the patronage of *Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows.* Soon after, separate buildings were erected for them at the establishment of Holy Cross; taking possession of which they commenced their novitiate, and assumed the charge of the linen, etc. etc. of the whole Institution.

The elegant grounds in the eastern suburbs of the city of Mans, where the Mother House now stands, were happily obtained by Mr. Moreau soon after he began to entertain the design of forming the Society on its present basis. Since that period God has showered down blessings upon him and his devoted associates. The Mother House has grown to be a magnificent establishment, containing about four hundred Religious, under the ordinary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; and the College connected with it is rapidly rising to a high degree of importance.

We cannot better make known the intentions of the pious founder of the Association of the Holy Cross; nor the admirable spirit of union which he wished should reign among the three branches, mutually dependent on each other, than by presenting to the public the following extract from a Circular, addressed by V. Rev. Father Moreau to the whole Association, but particularly to the Brothers.

"On the eve of attaining the end which I proposed to myself in changing your novitiate to Holy Cross, and on the

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creation of the magnificent establishment which has sprung from it, I feel the necessity of exposing to you, by writing, the plan of government definitely adopted; also an abridgment of your duties, and to inform you at the same time, of what I have done in return for the confidence you have reposed in me.

"Far the thought of attributing to me the merit of this work, truly providential, which has been placed under my direction. After God, sole author of all good, it is to the devotedness of the zealous priests who labor with me, and to you, is due the work which, to the great astonishment of all, is to day seen at Holy Cross. I have only been a simple instrument, which, the Lord will soon break, in order to substitute others more worthy whom he has destined to develop, or at least consolidate all that I have commenced; therefore, in the midst of the most painful trials I have not despaired, either in Providence or in your fidelity, in following the divine vocation with which it has inspired you. I rely on the apostolic spirit of the virtuous priests who have so generously shared my labors. On the concurrence of all the members of your Institute, and on the charity of the faithful, and the five years of experience just passed, sufficiently demonstrate that I will not be deceived in my hopes.

"The important work confided to me is not at its term; it yet demands many sacrifices and many labors—for I am not ignorant of all that has to be done to form subjects to the religous life—to give the instructions such as the wants of the age exact, notwithstanding, I have a firm confidence that the same God who commenced the work will conduct it to its perfection, provided you hold constantly to a perfect life, namely, a life of abnegation, regular, exact, social, interior, edifying and laborious—a life perfect in its intentions, seeking God in all things—aiming only at heaven—aspiring to the happiness of possessing Jesus—of belonging only to him and his blessed Mother, making use of all interests, goods or rights for the sole honor of our Divine Master, and the salvation of souls; a

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life of abnegation in all employments and exercises, never acting save by the will of a Superior—life regular and exact, by a constant and universal fidelity to the rules and constitutions of the Society—observing them in the spirit of love and not of fear—by the light of faith and not through human motives—a life social by humility, in meekly bearing or charitably supporting others—accomplishing to the letter the maxim of the pious author of the Imitation of mutually supporting, consoling, aiding, instructing and admonishing one another—life edifying by modesty, the forgetfulness of self, religious gravity—avoiding in conversation all criticisms, raillery, and above all, levity—life of labor, a life interior and elevated to God by the habitual practice of the acts of faith, hope and charity—by the example of Jesus Christ, whom we are particularly bound to imitate in our conduct—for we must above all lead a life hidden in our Lord, if we would not ruin the work of the Holy Cross. Now this perfect life, which cannot be too strongly recommended, will retrace the entire life of the Saviour—the *way of the Cross*, this life of abnegation—his life subject to the miseries of our humanity, even to infamy, sufferings and death; this regular life—his life conformable to the will of his Father; this social life—his life common with the blessed Virgin, Saint Joseph and his Apostles; this life edifying and laborious, his exemplary life in the midst of the world, his labors and his cross; in short, this interior life, his hidden life at Nazareth, so full of instruction, so calculated to excite a just dread of all exterior ministry. Oh, what prodigies of grace will be produced in your community if you thus succeed in retracing the life of Jesus Christ!

"Associated to the apostleship of the Priests of the Holy Cross by the services you render them in the divers employments which you fill near them in the Colleges, or by the instruction of the children in your proper schools, sent in quality of primary instructors not only through France but in Africa and America, united to the zeal and prayers of the sisters, sustained in the extension of your Institute by the

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association which bears its name and which the Sovereign Pontiff has encouraged and enriched by many indulgences, what source of benedictions, of success and of merit for you, my dear sons in Jesus Christ, and what a beautiful, what a glorious mission is yours if you but render yourselves worthy of it by a faithful imitation of the hidden, and public life of our Lord.

"Assuredly, so many different works, to which your Congregation is, more or less, devoted, contain many elements of dissolution; and to consider them only with the eyes of human reason, it would be difficult to explain how they could commence, organize, develop, and sympathize, until the present; having so few pecuniary resources, in the midst of political circumstances so unfavorable, with characters so different, and in spite of the opposition of many who vainly endeavored to destroy that which was apparently undertaken in so imprudent a manner.

"But the same spirit which guided the mysterious chariot, seen by Ezekiel, that spirit which moved the symbolic animals of forms so varied, without ever stopping in their path, or retracing their steps, tending always to the same end, although by ways which seemed most opposite, this same spirit seems also to have breathed on the divers instruments of the work of Holy Cross, since, notwithstanding the difference of talents and characters, the disparity of means, the diversity of vocations and employments, a same spirit animates almost all the members, namely: zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, by a community of efforts, tending more and more to a union of hearts, which makes the bond of strength; for in a great work of charity, as in a palace of which the foundations had been laid for a magnificent building, whose dome will crown the whole, it is not one man who builds, nor one stone, nor a single piece of wood, which composes it; but each workman constitutes his part, each stone is fashioned according to the place for which it is destined, and each piece of wood arranged and disposed in a

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manner to contribute to the beauty and strength of the edifice. Union, then, is the powerful lever with which we can move, direct, and sanctify the entire world.

"Why, in effect, have the political powers, which agitate society, so much power in their revolutions? Is it not because they know how to unite, and to hold but one end in view? Now, would it not be shameful, for you and me, not to do the good for God and eternity, that the children of the age do of evil for the world, and the short day of this life? Ah, we know not, we disciples of a God who died for the salvation of souls, all that we would be able to do to save them, in uniting ourselves to Jesus Christ by the spirit of our rules and constitutions. It is this touching mystery of religious union which the Saviour has revealed to us in the Gospel, when, in order to explain the incorporation of all the faithful in his divine person, by which he is our head, and we his members, making with him but one body, animated by the same spirit, and living but one life, he said, that we must remain united in him, in a manner to make but one, as the branches attached to the trunk, supported by the same root, and nourished by the same sap, make with it but one tree.

"Read that beautiful parable, in the fifteenth chapter of St. John, and you will there see united, all the motives capable of engaging you to tighten the cords which bind together the works of Holy Cross — that of honor; since it is your care to avoid the opprobrium of sterility, and to procure for us the glory of a happy fecundity: for as the *branch, of itself, cannot bear fruit unless it be united to the vine, so also we are barren unless we are united with Jesus Christ, who is the vine of which we are the branches* — that of fear; since, if we detach ourselves from this mystic vine, and create divisions among ourselves, we expose to ruin the work of God, and merit the chastisements of his eternal justice.

"Here then, to Priest, Brother, or Sister, who by words or actions, would effect the separation of establishments which God has pleased to unite under the same general authority,

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as a striking representation of the hierarchy of blessed spirits, where, from all the choir of Angels, there results three Orders, subordinate one to the other, and as a sensible imitation of the Holy Family, where Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, although of conditions so different, made but one by the union of thoughts and uniformity of conduct.

"In order to cement this union, and this imitation of the Holy Family, I have consecrated, and consecrate again as much as in me, the Priests to the sacred heart of Jesus, Pastor of souls; the Brothers to the heart of St. Joseph, their Patron; and the Sisters to the heart of Mary, pierced with the sword of grief.

"Behold, my dear children in Jesus Christ, the plan of government which it is the will of God should be followed in the administration of Our Lady of Holy Cross. I bless Providence for having associated me to the beautiful devotedness which animates you for the Christian education of youth. To second, more successfully, the designs of heaven in this important enterprise, we have opened the College of the Holy Cross. Become Fathers of families, we have vowed to these children, confided to our care, our lives and affections, and we have a recompense for our labors in seeing their happiness, in witnessing their progress."

Such is a brief sketch of an important Religious Society of the nineteenth century: embodying, by the grace of God, the spirit of the ancient Holy Order, so regulated as to suit the exigencies of the age. It has commanded the approbation and admiration of men of the most exalted piety and learning in France and in Italy.

The late Bishop of Vincennes, having several times applied for Brothers of St. Joseph, for his western diocese, his request was finally granted, and on the 5th of August, 1842, Father Sorin, first coadjutor in establishing the society in France, sailed for America, with six Brothers.

The zeal and devotion of this pious [illegible]e caused him to regard, as a signal favor from heaven, their landing on the

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13th of September, the Eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. A simple event, apparently; but the eye of faith often sees a glorious perspective in events trifling and seemingly without meaning; they are as the first sounds in a perfect chord attuned to melody. What more simple to an untutored ear, than the sound of the key-note in C? yet to the amateur of music it recalls one of the most delightful of Beethoven's symphonies; and to the ear of a Mozart what a gush of melody does it bring from the unseen, unheard world?

"The Eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross!" Was it not, then, the eve, above all others, for the little Community of the Holy Cross to land on the shores of that continent of which possession was taken under the shadow of the Cross? The old world had much to unlearn, ere she could understand the wisdom of this sign; with her it had been the mark of ignominy, but it came to the New World with no such associations. Mysterious and sublime were the lessons it taught the children of the forest—time passed, and the red-men disappeared. And now, in the midst of the wealth, refinement, and prosperity of our day, came the little Colony of the Holy Cross, to plant the standard in the West; to assist those who already labored in the vineyard, so large and so neglected.

The Eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross! The lover of nature looked abroad on the harmonious arrangement of land, water and sky, which from Greenwood Cemetery forms so charming a picture, and, as the last rays of the setting sun threw their finishing touches over the whole landscape, thought that earth could give no more beautiful picture: and the members of the Holy Cross, standing on the deck of the little vessel entering New York bay, thought—but let Father Sorin, in his first letter to France, say what they thought.

"NEW YORK, *September* 14*th*, 1842.

"BELOVED FATHER,—Let us bless God—let us bless his holy Mother: we have arrived in New York full of life, health, and joy. Our good Brothers have not yet entered the city;

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they were obliged to pass last night in quarantine. But our good God permitted me to land yesterday evening, 13th of September, the Eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. With what happiness, my Father, did I salute and embrace this dear land of America, after which we have so ardently sighed. And what an increase of consolation to land on the eve of so beautiful a day! It is, then, in the name of the Holy Cross, of the Blessed Virgin, and St. Joseph, that we have taken possession of it. My God, what a happy coincidence! What joy for a poor priest of the Holy Cross, who must love nothing more in the world than the Cross, to be able to say his first Mass in America on the Feast of the Exaltation of that sacred symbol! What a delicious day it is here—how beautiful is the American sky! Ah, yes, my Father, here is the portion of my inheritance; here will I dwell all the days of my life."

The little colony reached Vincennes about the middle of October: here, two of the Brothers took charge of a school, and Father Sorin, accompanied by the others, repaired to St. Peter's, about thirty miles from Vincennes, where his intention was to open a school, a novitiate, and attend the spiritual wants of the Catholics, widely scattered through that portion of the country. Writing to France in December of the same year, Father Sorin says, "I would like to have a little more time to give you fuller details than I am able to do to-day; but you will at least have in this sign of life a proof of my tender recollection of you. Oh, if you knew how sweet it is, in the bosom of these vast forests, to meditate on the memory of friends in France! I have, notwithstanding, many ways of diverting my attention, in my present position.

"Charged with three congregations, of which the families are so dispersed that one alone would be sufficient to occupy a Missionary; at the same time I must form a regular Novitiate, with elements who do not understand each other, and

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frequently I do not understand them myself; for we have now three German Postulants, two of whom do not speak a word of English—it has been almost necessary to make the exercises in three languages at the same time; or have the Holy Spirit renew for us the miracle of Pentecost. Happily, the pious dispositions with which they are animated, evince that He, in effect, speaks to their hearts, when I can only speak to their ears. Last Sunday we had the ceremony of taking the Habit. Our little chapel was crowded to excess—never was such a ceremony witnessed in this part of the country. Yesterday I baptized a little girl—my first American; to-morrow shall baptize another, and in a few weeks two adults. You see, that if the Mission has its fatigues, it has also its consolations and joys—but joys which have scarcely a name in the language of the world.

"Shall I tell you that we have here the most sanguine hopes for our establishment; but we have not as yet a dollar. Yet God will come to our aid; it is impossible for us to remain much longer in our present situation. We hope to have Sisters of the Holy Cross, so anxiously expected, that, notwithstanding we are well beloved, they would willingly exchange six Brothers for two Sisters. Ah, if we had Priests, four would find enough to do on reaching us!"

In another letter he writes—"We reached the 12th of February without experiencing a severe American winter; for this we have to thank God. Had the season been rigorous I do not know how we would have passed it; our houses are far from being comfortable; for my part I have a little room with three doors and two windows, without counting the other openings. But for ten days past we have felt that it is indeed winter, even when near the fire; sometimes we have scarcely been able to remain at table, and at noon-day the water has been frozen in our glasses—but this is nothing; on leaving the refectory every one appears gay and cheerful; next year, perhaps, we will be better lodged. If Providence sends us a

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resource of some sort or another, we hope to build ourselves a brick house. We love to confide to God the care of all that is necessary for us.

"Now, my Father, permit me to recall to your memory the promise of sending an assistant Priest. The day of his arrival will be an epoch in the country, as well as in our annals.

"Two more Brothers would be extremely useful to us; one a good Shoemaker. After this I shall demand nothing more, although I feel that a few Sisters, were they but two, would be exceedingly advantageous to us; provided one of them learned the language of the country, I could find them subjects here, and in a short time we would have two flourishing schools.

"Behold, in a few words, our wants and our hopes! Now, my Father, I submit myself, in advance, with entire resignation, to all which you will determine. I believe, I am able to say, before God, that I desire nothing save the accomplishment of his holy will; the more I reflect, the more am I convinced that Heaven has particular designs of mercy on our work. What can I say to those who may be called to concur in the same? That probably they will have much to suffer; but let them not be frightened at crosses; they have their charms that render them very precious: they will not be as unhappy as they might fear. For my part, I have not yet thought of complaining. I am happy, happier than ever; here I find more pleasure than anywhere else, notwithstanding I have always lived happily. Our good Brothers are equally joyful. From this moment, then, I consent to live here alone, all my life, if such be the will of Heaven. Yielding, cheerfully, all the consolations I might experience in having a Brother-Priest from our Community.

"Until this time we have been able to live without much expense, having from France almost every thing necessary; and on this subject I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to our many kind benefactors. We have subsisted until the

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present time on the fruits of their generous charity. Here every-thing is enormously high, with the exception of bread and meat. But in a house like ours, where all things are to be purchased, food forms not the sixth part of the expenses."

Providence did not design Father Sorin to remain alone, neither had it designed St. Peter's as the site for the establishment of the new Community. We have already learned from the preceding extracts, the great poverty they enjoyed, and their firm hopes of success.

At this period the Bishop of Vincennes offered Father Sorin a more desirable location, in the northern part of Indiana, about thirty miles south of Lake Michigan. This section had been secured years before, by the proto-priest of the United States, Rev. Father Badin ; his efforts, however, had only been crowned by the erection of a little log church, and a poorer log house. But the situation is one of extreme beauty — not grandeur — for northern Indiana can claim nothing of the sublime, or grand in her scenery. Yet the monotony of her low land and prairies is frequently diversified, and the character of the beautiful given it by clear, placid, little lakes, surrounded by gently undulating plains. The farm in question contained two of these pleasant lakes, to which Indian tradition had attached many a tale of enchantment.

Dedicating this spot to "Nôtre-Dame-du-Lac," Father Sorin selected a charming little island, in the largest lake, as the site for two Novitiates — one for the Priests he hoped to train for his new Mission, and the other for the Brothers. A beautiful situation was also chosen, on the banks of the lake, for the future college; then, with firm confidence in Divine Providence, he spent the winter in collecting the scattered Catholics of the neighborhood into a regular congregation, in forming his Novitiate of the Brothers, and attending the temporal wants of his little colony.

At this period, the aid so long and earnestly desired by this devoted Missionary, was furnished in the person of his former beloved friend, the young Abbé Cointet, who, having

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offered himself to the V. Rev. Father Moreau, Rector of the Association, for the express purpose of the American Mission, had sailed from France in the spring of 1843, accompanied by two other Clergymen, several Brothers, and four Sisters. They arrived at Nôtre Dame du Lac in the month of July, but not without undergoing many trials, and escaping many dangers, as may be seen by the letter of Father Cointet, given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM FATHER COINTET, ON HIS ARRIVAL IN AMERICA — HIS DEVOTION ON THE MISSION — HIS LOVE OF POVERTY, AND HIS ZEAL FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD.

"NEW YORK, *July* 16*th*, 1843.

"MY REV. FATHER — On the 6th of June we sailed from France, full of joy, and dreaming only of the beautiful Mission before us. The day after Pentecost, the weather became very bad; about midnight we were aroused from our slumbers by the noise of a violent tempest, which continued with unabated fury during the night, and the succeeding forty-eight hours. All contributed to our alarm and terror; the piercing cries of our sailors, who regarded us as the harbingers of shipwreck; the violence of winds and waves, and the incessant creaking of our little vessel. Oh, how often during those critical moments, did we think of Holy Cross! I recalled the history of St. Liguori's Missionaries, saying to myself, 'Ah, if our Father knew the state to which we are reduced, how would he hasten, as did St. Liguori, to implore, with earnest supplication, aid from Heaven for his dear family;' could it be, that this little Colony, so anxiously desired; that these virtuous Sisters; that our beautiful statue of Mary,

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should all be engulfed in the waves, at the moment of leaving port? Notwithstanding these reflections; notwithstanding the motives of hope which the good Brother, Eloi, gave us, we regarded ourselves as victims, devoted to death. Often did it appear, that the weather-beaten vessel, leaking in all parts, was on the point of sinking forever. One time, among many others, after having given Mr. M——, the kiss of peace, and asked the aid of his prayers, if he should reach Heaven before me, I bowed my head to await the watery grave that seemed our portion. But in spite of the mingled feelings, inseparable to so awful a situation, I was entirely resigned to the will of God. One thing, only, troubled the peace of my soul; this was, the view of so many heretics and sinners, purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ, the greater part of whom would appear without preparation, before the judgment seat of God."

Happily, the death to which the young Priest resigned himself, was not to be found on the ocean-wave; but ere he reached his Western Mission, his life was again in danger. On arriving in Detroit, he met with an accident which threatened most serious consequences. The Episcopal residence in that city is adorned with a lower and an upper verandah; in walking across the latter, Father Cointet, believing himself on the lower, made a false step, which precipitated him with violence, on the pavement below. His life was considered in danger for a few days, but after a tedious confinement of several weeks, he recovered, and proceeded to Nôtre Dame. In giving him his blessing, and bidding him adieu, the Bishop said, "Go, Mr. Cointet, it certainly seems, from what has passed, that you have a vocation for Indiana."

One may readily imagine the holy joy experienced in the meeting of the two devoted Missionaries, on the shores of Our Lady's Lake. The Rev. Father Sorin received his youthful confrère with all the warmth that the recollection of their early friendship in France could inspire, and with all the ten-

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derness of a Father—for the vicissitudes of his life in America, more than difference in age, had made him many years the senior; and Father Cointet, joyfully remitted to his authority the care of the little Colony he had brought from France, feeling, as only a Religious can, how much greater is the happiness of obeying than commanding.

After a fervent Novitiate of one year, he made his solemn religious profession as Member of the Holy Cross.

From that time he may be said to have had no other affair in life, no thought or desire, save the conversion of sinners, the planting of churches; in a word, the salvation of souls. His zeal never failed; his charity was inexhaustible; and nothing could be more touching than the patience and mildness he displayed in instructing and persuading some ignorant or prejudiced mind; nothing more admirable than the clearness and simplicity with which he addressed them in his sermons; nothing more heavenly and consoling than his words of encouragement to the dying, or of consolation to the suffering.

Self seemed to be, in him, forgotten, annihilated; no fatigue was too great, no labor too severe for him. God's interests were his only consideration, and to secure these, by the salvation of a single soul, he would, at any time, have willingly offered up his life.

A little incident will illustrate this. On one of his Missionary tours, he arrived, early in the day, at one of our western villages, where he intended remaining a day or two. It was early in the spring, the weather was stormy and inclement, and the roads almost impassable. The good Priest, in walking from the cars to the house, where he usually lodged, was informed that about three miles from the village a young child was dying, who, although the son of Catholic parents, had never received Baptism. "A child dying without Baptism! Where! Show me the road!" In vain was it represented to him that the storm was terrible, that the roads were so bad as to be almost untraveled; in vain was he

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entreated to at least take some nourishment—but he heeded nothing. From the moment he heard that a soul, created to love and enjoy God, was in danger of losing, forever, his blissful vision, the worthy Priest seemed insensible to anything else.

On being shown the direction he was to take, he proceeded without pausing a moment, and had the consolation of finding the child still living; he administered the Sacrament, and it survived but a few hours. The parents, in their deep affliction, never thought to offer any dinner to the poor Missionary, and after doing all in his power to console them, he returned about night to the village, cold, weary, and hungry, but almost unconscious of all these in the joy and consolation which replenished his pious soul.

The activity of his mind was so great, that he frequently performed the work of two or three persons. Although filling a professor's chair in the college of Nôtre Dame, his labors in the Mission were indefatigable. Inspired by the grace of God, all obstacles seemed removed from his path. Soon after his arrival at Nôtre Dame, while the English language was yet strange to his ear, and still stranger to his tongue, he was called upon to administer the last sacraments to a dying woman in an adjoining village. On reaching the house he found it crowded with Protestants. After administering the holy consolations of religion to the poor sufferer, he turned toward the persons assembled, and without the slightest difficulty gave the most social and touching explanation of these rites of the Church. Many present, deeply penetrated with the beauty and unction of the discourse, asked each other how it was possible such an instruction could be given by one who scarcely spoke a word of English. Yet so it was—and even at the present time some of those who heard him on that occasion cannot speak of it without emotion.

His delight was to hunt up the Catholics, scattered on the confines of civilization, as Indiana then was. All who are familiar with life in the West, know with what rapidity the

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scene changes, from the native solitude of the forest to the busy, bustling noise of a growing city — that ere the smoke of the Indian wigwam vanishes into the air, the smoke of the locomotive takes its place. It was to the sons of the forest, the remnant of the red race passing from the plains of Indiana, and to the advanced guard of civilization, the poor Irish laborers of the railroad, that he delighted to break the bread of life. Teaching them by word and example that Heaven alone is the country for which all are created.

He never permitted his duties or profession to interfere with his missionary labors. Arranging his classes for an absence of twenty-four or forty-eight hours, he would kneel with the simplicity of a child to receive his Superior's blessing, then joyfully start on the Mission. Now riding at nightfall over a wide extent of country to gain some Indian wigwam, or seated in a shanty, by the side of an unfinished railroad, hearing the confessions of the poor Irish women, explaining the Catechism to a crowd of the wild, ragged little children who formed a circle round him, or collecting the men at close of day, as they returned from their hard toil, taught them their duties as citizens and Christians. How often have shanties on the railroads of Michigan and Indiana, by his presence, been converted into holy temples— where the poor laborers, strengthened by the blessed Sacrament, and the consoling voice of the Priest, became new beings. Ah, who can tell the value of one Mass! That "greatest of all actions that can be performed on earth. It is not the invocation merely, but, dare I use the word, the evocation of the Eternal. He becomes present on the altar in flesh and blood, before whom angels bow and devils tremble." ✡ And oh, how exceedingly great was the joy of the young missionary in offering up this sublime Eucharistic sacrifice in the midst of an American forest.

✡ Loss and Gain.

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If this good Priest thus eagerly sought the honor and glory of God, by enriching others with spiritual wealth, he was no less eager to contribute to the glory of his Divine Master, by the strictest practice of evangelical poverty. Voluntary poverty he cherished as a most precious jewel from Heaven, and when, owing to the scanty resources of their new establishment, wants and the privation of the most common necessaries of life had to be borne, he regarded them as signal blessings from God.

For some years the wardrobe of Father Cointet and his Superior was considered very full when they possessed a *pair of boots* and *a hat*, as property in common. The boots he adroitly managed not to wear until they had passed through the stages of *good* and *indifferent*, but the hat could not be so easily managed, there being no alternative except to replace the ecclesiastical square cap by the beaver, when on the Mission. Accordingly, if Father Cointet was recognized riding or walking off with a hat on his head, it was known to the members of the little community that the Superior was at home.

It would be too long here to recount all the little artifices he used to deprive himself, without attracting notice, of everything not absolutely necessary. And, oh, how worthy of admiration and imitation is such a state! Having nothing, yet possessing all. How great in abnegation, how rich in poverty!

His mortifications and austerities are known to God, for whom alone they are performed, and who alone can reward them. On the earth but not of it, he enjoys a foretaste of the joys of Heaven by the privation of all things terrestrial.

And here his zeal for the house of God must not be forgotten. Perfectly conversant with Theology, and intimately acquainted with the minutest point of the Church ritual, it grieved his tender piety to see the slightest rubric omitted or carelessly observed, and the strict spirit of poverty he so

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rigidly observed toward himself, found no place in his heart when the honor of the house of God was concerned.

Truly it might be said, that zeal for its honor had consumed him. Not a festival of the ecclesiastical year approached but his heart felt deeply the influence of the mystery or event commemorated. His Superior possessed in him a worthy co-laborer, with whose assistance the imposing feasts of the Church were celebrated in the church of Notre Dame in a style that would carry the beholder back to the Catholic portion of Europe. Every benediction of the Church, all her sacramental forms, all the rubrics of her ceremonies, were to his lively faith so many gleams of that Heaven toward which all his desires tended; and with earnest zeal he sought to inspire the young Seminarians of the Novitiate of St. Aloysius with the same sentiments.

CHAPTER VI.

FATHER COINTET IS SENT TO NEW ORLEANS — RETURNS TO NOTRE DAME — HIS DEATH.

In the spring of 1849, Father Cointet was sent to New Orleans, as local Superior of an establishment of the Order, which had lately been founded in that city; there he soon had the consolation of seeing a most flourishing Orphan Asylum, and Manual Labor Schools for boys and girls. His efforts were highly prosperous, and his field for doing good very great; there also he was spared the difficulty of speaking a foreign language. The Catholics of the city came forward most generously to aid the new establishments, and as far as pecuniary matters were concerned, the Rev. Father met with but little trouble in his new office.

Under his judicious and careful government the schools flourished finely, and everything wore the most flattering

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aspect. Yet, when the voice of his Superior recalled him, after an absence of two years, to Nötre Dame, he left New Orleans with a joy that could not be concealed; nothing being more congenial to his heart than the thought of resuming his missionary labors in the North.

On his return to Indiana he was intrusted with the care of five congregations — Goshen and Laporte in Indiana, and Milan, Berrien, and Bertrand, in the southern part of Michigan. In the last-named village he also acted in the capacity of Chaplain and Confessor for the Sisters of the Order who are there established. Nothwithstanding all his life in America was but a chapter of zealous labors, yet the last year of his life, particularly, fills with astonishment and admiration all who reflect upon it. Charged with the congregations already mentioned, and the Chaplainship of a community of twenty-eight Religious, he left not a single portion of his duty unaccomplished at any one of the places.

He carefully collected the statistics of each congregation, recording with accuracy all births, marriages, deaths, the number of regular communicants, etc., so that his successors knew not which most to admire, the carefully exact manner with which the business affairs of the congregations had been conducted, or the spirit of regularity infused into his parishioners during so short a time. In all the congregations he established the Confraternity of the Scapular, collected the children, and at stated times prepared all who were of a proper age to receive Holy Communion.

Nor at the same time did he neglect his duty as Chaplain at St. Mary's Bertrand.

Every Friday he devoted to the Confessional at St. Mary's. One of his favorite devotions was the way of the Cross. And this he always endeavored to perform in public on every Friday afternoon for the community at Bertrand.

Never allowing himself more than a night's repose, he would again start for one of his congregations.

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These incessant labors were too much for his delicate constitution, already weakened by a chronic disease, of long standing. Notwithstanding his feeble health, a sick call was never neglected; and often, with the fever coursing through his veins, has he risen from his bed, mounted his horse, and traveled many miles through the winter's storm, or summer's heat, to visit the sick, or the dying.

But such excessive labors could not last; he was finally a martyr to them, for the sickness of which he died was brought on by the fatigues endured on a new Mission.

On the evening of the 13th of September, 1854, he returned from one of his Congregations to Nôtre Dame, heated, weary and sick. The following day his symptoms appeared serious, and a physician was immediately called; but skillful treatment, and careful nursing, were equally vain. After a week of intense suffering he died, in the prime of life, and in the midst of his labors.

In sickness, as in health, he was a model to all; a true type of a perfect Religious. Not a word of complaint escaped his lips, although his sufferings were most excruciating. At all times his greatest anxiety was the fear of giving pain or trouble to others. In life and death self was absorbed and forgotten in charity. He "taught us how to live — and oh, too high the price of knowledge, taught us how to die."

Not until the eve of his death (September 19th), did he ever suspect any real danger, and always spoke of recovering for the sake of his Missions. When informed, by his Superior, of his situation, he appeared much surprised, but entirely resigned. That evening he received the last Sacrament of the Church, and the night was spent by him in the most earnest and fervent preparation for death.

Oh, how beautiful are the last hours of a true Religious; one whose life, under the mild yoke of holy obedience, has been but a preparation for that last end. To him death has no terrors, the grave no gloom: the announcement that life

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is closing, is sweet to his ear — it is but the prelude of that voice from the other world, gently whispering —

> "Thy mansion is ready, prepared is thy dome —
> My dove, my beautiful one, come home."

So passed Father Cointet from time to eternity, on the morning of September 19th. How could the approach of the hour of death be sad or terrifying to one who had, in the spirit and letter, faithfully observed the Regulation of Life proposed on leaving the Seminary at Le Mans; but it was with a heart desolated by grief, that the venerable Superior offered the *Adorable Sacrifice* of the Altar, on that morning, for the soul so early taken, so venerated and beloved.

The mournful intelligence spread instantly, and when the great bell of the church sent forth its mournful tones, in all the Community not a tearless eye could be found, or a heart that was not penetrated with grief.

His death occurred at a period when the hand of our loving Lord pressed, in mercy, heavily upon the Community of the Holy Cross. Already, one Priest, several of the Brothers of St. Joseph, and four Sisters, had been carried off by the epidemic which raged so fatally in the western states, during the fall of 1854. Many others were dangerously ill; it was consequently deemed necessary to bury Father Cointet on the evening of the day of his death; his grave was prepared in the little Cemetery of the Society, and the setting sun shed his golden beams on the young Seminarians and Priests of the Holy Cross, as they solemnly chanted the burial service for the dead, so early lost — so well beloved — their guide — their friend — their brother — now silently resting in the closed coffin.

The sun had disappeared, and the shades of evening had fallen, dark and gloomy, as the procession left the Cemetery with hearts filled with grief, yet strengthened by the faith which whispered of the joy of the disembodied spirit. To it,

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may we not conclude, was given the happiness of beholding, from a higher sphere, the scenes of its early labors and sufferings? To mark the spot it found a wilderness, now adorned with noble temples of science and religion? We cannot feel it is presumption to say so. Not only the death, but the life also of Father Cointet, had been that of a Saint.

Holy writers tell us, that the saints are made up of six things: obedience to the commands and precepts of the Church; strong and loving instincts for the interest of Jesus, the glory of God, and the salvation of souls; the love of Mary; an intense love of sufferings and voluntary austerities, accompanied by severe interior trials.

All these were fully exemplified in the life of Father Cointet. Although but thirty-eight years of age, he had accomplished much for the honor and glory of God. He found "Nôtre Dame" a wilderness, and eleven years after, when death called him home, he left a Community of more than one hundred Religious; and in forming these souls to know and serve God, alone, he had ever been his Superior's most faithful coadjutor.

We have before spoken of his zeal for the house of God; in his sight, the slightest Church ceremony was precious, as in it his tender piety saw an act of love to the God he adored; and this same feeling of love would have caused him, willingly, to forfeit his life for the salvation of any one of the poor laborers in his Congregations. Here was the secret of his zeal for the Mission. To him it was a daily, hourly, constant thought, that the God of love had died to save all souls. This was the meditation of his life, and naught cared he for weather, or distance, or time, or health, when one of those souls, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, was in danger of perishing. It was this strong and loving instinct for the glory of God, which caused him to devote every moment, he could spare from other duties, to the instruction of children; and it was this love for the interest of Jesus which taught him the manner of loving our Immaculate Mother — how to

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place at her feet all the gifts of the mind and body—to give her a devotion far exceeding all that a child could bear its natural mother. It was this deep interest in the affairs of Jesus which gave to his whole appearance an air of joy, remarked even by strangers.

A lady, a convert to our holy faith, speaking on one occasion to the writer of these pages, of the great difficulty she had, before her conversion, and even after, to believe that Religious could really be happy, observed that her doubts on this subject were always weakened at the sight of Father Cointet; for his very step—his countenance more than his words—evinced a joy and happiness that she could not understand. It was evident, that the Rule of Life he so carefully laid down, on leaving the Seminary, he strictly, and to the letter, observed. To this Rule he never failed, at every annual Retreat, to add something. The following are the Resolutions of some of the past years of his life.

"1845.—Nothing but the most pressing emergency shall ever cause me to omit my morning Meditation. While traveling on the Mission, I shall mentally review my sermons, devoting the remainder of my time to prayer; being well persuaded that more good can be effected by prayer than by all exterior actions. In this manner I shall supply for all the regular exercises of the Community that I shall have to omit.

"Every morning I will propose to myself a certain number of mortifications, and spiritual communions, ever keeping a guard upon my eyes; and frequently saluting my Angel guardian. All these little practices I esteem most highly.

"I must at all times be well persuaded that I can never suffer enough; and that I must speak but little of all I do.

"During the celebration of the mysteries of the Mass, I shall remember that Jesus Christ will be my judge.

"September 5th, 1846.—I must accustom myself to fulfill with great perfection, all my ordinary exercises.

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"August 14th, 1847.—I shall never dissent from the command of my Superior before having interiorly consulted God (Consulto suppliciter Domino).

"August 14th, 1848.—Before reciting the Breviary I shall repeat an act of contrition.

"July 15th, 1849.—I shall be careful to make with holy piety the sign of the cross, and to practice the resolution of 1845.

"August 14th, 1850.—I must pay more attention to my exterior, and to that lesson of the Council of Trent (Nihil nisi grace moderatum ac religione planere præ se ferant).

"August 14th, 1854.—1st. I shall, as far as health will permit, rise at the hour appointed, whether at home or on the Mission.

" 2d. I shall say morning prayers and make my meditation according to rule.

" 3d. I shall go to Confession once a week at least.

" 4th. I shall make an examination of conscience at noon and at night; after which I shall read and prepare my examination for the following day.

" 5th. That I neither buy nor receive anything without acquainting my Superior; and should he demand it, shall give up cheerfully.

" 6th. That I go whersoever I am commanded, and without making remonstrances as to health or circumstances.

" 7th. That I endeavor to keep myself united to God by ejaculatory prayers, whether on my road or in the administration of duties.

" 8th. That I be more vigilant in the administration of the Sacraments, and never to run over the formula of any one of them hastily.

" 9th. That I never put away any of my penitents without absolution, except for the better good of the person.

" 10th. To be regardless of friendship or high standing, thereby proposing to myself the greater honor and glory of God in all my actions."

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Few of those devoted to the service of God escape the shafts of slander and persecution. Yet during his short life, Father Cointet was pre-eminently among those few. Wherever he went, the young and the old, Catholic and Protestant, evinced their esteem and love for him. The first on the list of those who generously came forward, after his death, to offer the Rev. Superior a subscription for the erection of a suitable monument for this worthy Priest, was a Protestant physician of South Bend. His generosity has been imitated by a few. It is to be hoped that by the liberality of the faithful a small chapel may be built over the remains of the pious Missionary, in which Mass will be said once a month for all benefactors of the work. No one who knew him in life could refuse to perpetuate his memory, and testify their gratitude and affection by contributing to this chapel.

In the meantime his remains rest in the Cemetery of Nôtre Dame. There a cross, placed on a little mound above his grave, throws its shadow over the dead — true type of the Redeemer's ever-shielding love.

AFTER the preceding pages had been prepared for the press, another of the friends of Father Cointet, begged the privilege of adding a leaf or two of his own recollection of that devoted man, to what has been here so well and truly written concerning him. And this not without a certain sense of the apparent presumption which might be supposed to actuate one whose path lies through the dusty and soiling scenes of secular life, in attempting to estimate, though ever so roughly, and at ever so remote a point of view, so elevated and unearthly a character. The attempt might seem, indeed, like the presumption of some plowman who should affect to discourse learnedly on the integration of differential equations, or enter into a serious discussion of Kepler's Laws. To this may be added the difficulty which doubtless every writer of similar biographical sketches has felt when he has

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endeavored to clothe his conceptions in language. Never do words seem so miserably recreant to their office, such mockeries and vain shadows of the real and substantial. The explanation of this probably is, that our knowledge of the great and happy dead is not the sum of sharply defined ideas residing in the cold intellect, but has rather come to us in the shape of intuitions and feelings of the sublime, like those which overpower the soul alive to the loftiest inspirations of the physical world, when it is, for the first time, confronted with the awful majesty and beauty of Mont Blanc, or the seeming infinity of old Ocean. Or it is analogous to that instinctive judgment whereby we pronounce at first sight upon the presence or absence of good-breeding and refinement in a stranger, when we would find it impossible to assign any intelligible reason for the decision.

Not, then, to convey to the reader any adequate impression of what Father Cointet was in all relations, and particularly in that highest and most sacred relation, to the proper fulfillment of which he devoted all his energies of mind, and soul, and body, but rather as the offering of a simple flower to deck the early tomb of a departed friend and father, does the writer essay these few additional pages.

Of Father Cointet's superior gift of mind, and ripe scholarship, the writer of the foregoing narrative has not spoken too highly. His familiarity with Greek was remarkable. One of the finest intellects of Great Britain has said — and it is no flippant judgment thrown off to round a sentence — that "none but a man of singular talent can attain the power of reading Greek fluently at sight," while he adds, that "modern languages are learned inevitably by simple efforts of memory." Farther on in his essay he remarks, that "very few persons ever *do* arrive at any tolerable skill in the Greek language." Father Cointet's knowledge of this difficult language was precise and appreciative. He was fully at home in the highest and rarest of the classic authors, but neither his tastes nor his principles led him to linger around

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the fane of heathen eloquence, poetry, and philosophy. While recognizing the immense services which the great Stagyrite, ages after his death, had rendered to Christian philosophy and theology, and admiring all that is sublime and worthy of a Christian in Plato, his heart and his intellect turned with far deeper pleasure and avidity to those nobler masters of Christian eloquence and song, who thundered from the pulpit of St. Sophia, who discoursed a sublime and heavenly philosophy in the Schools of Athens, after Athens had been won to Christ, and who on the distant shores of Asia drew from the Grecian lyre what might indeed be called the music of the spheres. Our lamented Father was strongly of opinion that the classical course of our colleges should at least contain an amount of selections from the Greek and Latin fathers equal to those drawn from the pagan authors. He regarded the golden-mouthed orator of Constantinople, even as respects style, to be fully equal to Demosthenes or Eschines. He could see no reason why youthful taste could not be as well formed by the exquisite poetry of St. Gregory, of Nazianee, as by that of Homer or Pindar. He had, so to speak, little patience with the mind which could not slake to the full its thirst for philosophy at the deep and clear fount of the genius of St. Clement, of Alexandria. Whatever may be thought of these views, it is certain that he shared them with a goodly number of the flower of the French clergy, who have taken decided ground against the prevalent method of instruction in the classics, and who are laboring with a lofty zeal and energy, to enthrone St. Augustine and St. Cyprian, Prudentius and Lactantius, St. Basil and St. Chrysostom, in the academical chairs of the polytheistic authors of Greece and Rome.

As a Latinist, Father Cointet likewise excelled. Were it consistent with the purpose of these brief mementos, to present such productions to the reader, doubtless some of his poetical effusions, in the Latin language, written for delivery at the little College festivals, held from time to time in the

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University of Nôtre Dame, composed, as they probably were, during the intervals of severe and harassing missionary duty, in some rude log-hut, on the bleak, uncultivated prairie, or amid the deep silence of primeval woods, would be perused with no little surprise at the harmony of versification, the wealth of poetic diction, and the beauty of sentiment which they display.

In the pulpit, our good Father was fervent and effective. Some of his sermons, in vindication of Catholic dogma, which it was the writer's good fortune to hear, were specimens of a clear, cogent, and masterly logic, and evinced a large and accurate acquaintance with the whole compass of sacred learning. Never will the writer forget one of these, on the claims of the Catholic Church to the veneration and obedience of mankind. It was eloquent, profound, and fertile in its original and most felicitous illustrations. Father Cointet had an excellent knowledge of English, which he wrote and spoke with the least possible dash of foreign idiom. He had also a very respectable acquaintance with the German language, in which he was able to preach and hear confessions.

But it was in performing, or assisting at the solemn functions of religious service, in chanting the praises of the Most High, in the grand old offices of the Catholic Church, and in celebrating, amid the imposing and splendid pomp prescribed by the Ritual, the tremendous and infinitely meritorious Sacrifice of the New Law, that his soul seemed to expand, and break from its tabernacle of flesh, to meet its God in the brightness of his coming. On such occasions, he appeared to be lifted up into the heavenly world above, and to have lost all consciousness of the existence of this "dim spot" of earth. His citizenship and conversation were then more especially in heaven. The inner eye of his soul saw only the white-robed host that encompass the throne of that sacred Humanity taken up into God, and exalted far above all powers and principalities, and every name that is named. Perhaps those who loved him well, who had come under the more than mesmeric

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influence of his holy life and precepts, now that he is buried out of their sight, though yet living, as they hope, to intercede for them, whom on earth he so gently led in the way of his Master's commandments, might be tempted to exaggerate the extent of the reign in him of that divine life which seemed to them to have, even here, overmastered and trampled upon the old Adam. Something, however, must be pardoned to the depth and strength of those affections — the most beautiful and purest of earth — which bind the heart to a spiritual Father, and a soldier of Christ, who having battled bravely in the fight of faith, has now laid down to his longest night's sleep, but in whose case not even the well-sustained belief in his bright reward and joy ecstatic, can do more than assuage the sense of sore bereavement, and the fond regrets that hover around his new-made grave.

What shall be said of him, as the indefatigable, ardent and heroic Missionary? Emphatically, in this capacity, did he express the significance of the Roman poet's phrase, "totus in illis," or rather, fulfill the injunction of the Apostle: "Give thyself WHOLLY to these things." To his great avocation of saving souls, every other consideration was made to yield; every other pursuit became secondary and insignificant; and every power of body, or accomplishment of mind, was rendered completely and exclusively subservient. To travel on foot over large districts of country, carrying with him the necessary materials for the celebration of the Divine Sacrifice; to lie down at night on the floor of the squalid hut, or smoky wigwam, exposed to inconveniences which those accustomed to the orderly appointments of cultivated life little dream of; to find in every time, and place, and circumstance, an opportunity for doing, or saying something, for the advancement of the work he had in hand; to exert, so to speak, a holy contrivance and ingenuity to attract the minds of the tepid, and the sinful, to spiritual concerns; to be avaricious, in short, of souls, and, as one greedy of gain, count over the coins stamped with the image and superscription of his Master,

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which he had won for Him; never satisfied with the results of his Stewardship — these were his labor and joy all the day long. The book in which he kept a record of his "days and works," hasty jottings down in Latin, presents a vivid and affecting picture of his every-day life as a Missioner. Now. it was some lone widow, who had breathed out her soul to God, in a poor hovel, cheered and fortified with the Sacraments from his hands, and a troop of desolate orphans, fell to Father Cointet's lot to provide for as best he might: now, he is wandering along the wild banks of the Yellow river, rejoicing in the simple, touching piety, and wondrous faith of his dear artless Indians, who become, in his eyes, God's nobility, possessed of a genealogy and an escutcheon before which the distinctions of wordly race and family, that cause poor humanity to swell and boast, sink into infinitessimal and abject littleness: now, he has baptized a dying infant, stolen, so to say, for God, and his heart fills with glee and exultation, as if he had suddenly recovered a princely estate which had been wrongfully withheld from the Lord he loved and served: anon, he is spending happy and sunny days among the shanties of an Irish hamlet, along the uncompleted railroad, where grim and remorseless cholera is stalking about, causing all, but the Soldier-Missioner, to flee in terror before his approach.

It was in the midst of a similar epidemic, in which he was gladly, and perhaps with an excess of zeal, exercising his Ministry of Charity, that he contracted the germs of that painful disease, which, after a few days of intense suffering, brought him to his beautiful repose, in the sleep of peace. Who, that watched at his bedside during those weary days of anguish, can forget that sweet smile of resignation and patience which played continually, like mild October sunshine, upon his gentle features? Who, that was present when his loving spirit took its flight, could fail to feel what eloquence and power there is in a holy death? And then, as his obsequies were celebrated in the church of the Sacred Heart of

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Jesus, where he had so often offered the Divine mysteries, with deep and entranced devotion, and the solemn services for the dead were interrupted by the sobs of the officiating clergy, and as they laid him in the Community Cemetery, on the margin of one of those miniature lakes, whose tiny waves had once before hushed to rest the saintly De Seille, who, among the attendants, did not depart with impressions stored up in his heart, which not all the waters of the Lethe can wash away? And to which of his co-laborers, in the great work to which he consecrated his every hour, does there not seem to issue, from his lowly grave, a voice which says:

"On, champions blest, in Jesus' name,
Short be your strife, your triumph full,
Till every heart have caught your flame,
And, lightened of the world's misrule,
Ye soar, those elder saints to meet,
Gathered, long since, at Jesus' feet:
No world of passions to destroy,
Your pains and struggles o'er,
Your task all praise and joy."

THE END.

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LIFE

OF THE

REV. F. COINTET,

PRIEST AND MISSIONARY

OF THE

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS.

by
Mother Angela
Eliza Gillespie.

CINCINNATI:

JOHN P. WALSH,

NO. 170 SYCAMORE STREET.

1855.

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