

OF THE

VERY REVEREND SUPERIOR-GENERAL

OF THE

Congregation of the Holy Cross.

Notre Dame, Indiana, Feast of the Purification, 1870.

We, Edward Sorin, Superior-General of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, after due consideration and prayer, make known to all the members of the Congregation the following prescriptions:

Whereas we intend to assemble a General Chapter as soon as peace and order shall have been re-established in Europe, we deem it one of our important duties to be prepared to present for its examination whatever is most needed for the welfare of the Congregation. Now, among our needs, the urgency of which is felt by all, we must name that of an elaborate and suitable plan of studies for all our Houses; and also that of a better defined Rule for each officer, teacher, or prefect in the Congregation. We are all constituted in obedience, and, therefore, each one must know, when he receives an *obedience*, what it exactly means and implies, both as to duties and privileges; what is required by it and what means are given to fulfil it; we mean that from the first officer to the last, in a House, everyone is *responsible* to the extent of his obedience, and must bear the consequences of it before the Community; everyone must acknowledge the hierarchy of powers, not only in theory, but in daily practice; obey his superior officers in order to be supported by them whenever occasion requires it. We need a rule for each and every office, ignoring nothing pertaining to it, a straightforward direction for every religious of sense and good will. Then, but not before, it will be comparatively easy to lay the blame and locate the praise at proper doors; then superiors will be able to appreciate the respective worth of those under their charge.

All this, we trust, shall soon be secured to the Congregation; as a means to hasten it, we have come to the following resolutions, viz:

1. The Rev. N. H. Gillespie is hereby nominated Prefect General of Studies for the Congregation, in the full sense of the XXV Constitution, and is enjoined to enter immediately upon his office, conformably to the same Constitution, and to the 16th of our Rules, and to report to us with the shortest possible delay. We want a plan of studies in keeping with the progress and the demands of our age, and as an earnest of the importance we attach to this charge, the Provincial Council shall designate for our approbation, two able members to assist Rev. Father Gillespie, and form with him a permanent committee, to meet at least twice a week until the final sanction of its labors in the General Chapter.

2. As we have not the pretension to know better than those personally concerned what amendments should be made in the present Rules governing our teaching community; in order to embody in the new edition all such amendments, which experience may have found necessary, we direct that in each Province and Vicariate, the Provincial or Vicar, in his council, examine, one by one, all the Rules alluded to, and send a conscientious report of every change to be made in the same. Such reports are to be forwarded to us before the 25th of March. As the Provincial Council deliberates upon a Rule, let the religious who has it to fulfil be sent for and heard on the subject. Where such means shall have been employed in honest sincerity, it would be a matter of surprise if our revised Rules do not meet our wants. Then Superiors will have something to enforce, and no one will be admitted to justify his neglect by saying that our Rules were never made to be taken literally.

E. SORIN.

P. S.—We learn this moment by a letter from our Very Reverend Assistant-General in France the sudden death of Bro. Alexis and also that of Bro. Edward. Both were professed. Until farther details may reach us, we commend those precious souls to the fervent prayers and suffrages of the Congregation.

E. S.