

J. M. J.

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OF THE

VERY REV. SUPERIOR GENERAL

OF THE

Congregation of the Holy Cross.

ON BOARD "L'AMERIQUE," FEAST OF THE ASCENSION, MAY 18, 1882.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

When I left New York on the 22d ult., I anticipated a prompt journey, as I remarked in my circular of the 20th, relying, however, much more on your fervent prayers than on the pleasant season in which it was undertaken. I was not disappointed: your good wishes and supplications to Heaven smoothed, not only the waves of the sea, but all other elements through which I usually have to pass whenever I have to visit Europe.

This will probably be my shortest voyage; and yet, had it not been for an unavoidable delay of a few hours in Rome, I would have reached New York this afternoon, and Notre Dame in less than 30 days' absence, without hurrying anything, or neglecting any of the duties for which I was called. See the power of prayer, when issued from pure and loving hearts!

I spent but four days in the Eternal City; and to my own surprise and that of many others I obtained, through the kindness of their Eminences, Cardinal Simeoni Prefect of the Propaganda, and Cardinal Jacobini, Secretary of State, an audience of fifteen minutes, at noon, on Sunday, in which I found His Holiness, even more gracious and paternal than four years ago when I was admitted to the Vatican, a week after his elevation. This time I was alone with the great Pontiff standing erect, dignified and majestic, and yet kind and simple. He listened attentively to everything I said; replied in a clear and sonorous voice to every word I spoke, and at the close, with a real and visible effusion of heart, he solemnly blessed everything I had named, and the list was rather long and comprehensive, viz., all the members of our Religious family, with all they have in charge (especially our precious Minims), our benefactors and the pious readers of THE "AVE MARIA," while holding the journal in his venerable hands. Then he took me into his private laboratory to show me something of his own work, and finally dismissed me, more delighted than I can well express. This 2d audience I shall never forget.

Since a long time I had been acquainted with Cardinal Monaco, Vicar of Rome, and Cardinal de Falloux; I visited both, at leisure and great interest. Last, but not least, I paid my homage to the venerated tomb of the saintly Pio Nono, at St. Lorenzo. Oh! what a refreshing sight! what a consolation for me who knew him so well! The crowd of pious worshippers never decreases. On my return to Paris, on Wednesday morning, I found an increase of 23 students in our college since my arrival the week before, making an actual total of 325, which is 75 more than ever before. The spirit of the college is also greatly improved and every way gratifying and promising. The Rev. President is very anxious to open immediately a regular correspondence between his flourishing Institution and Notre Dame in the SCHOLASTIC. Both will gain by it. On Thursday forenoon, I presented our new Provincial to his Eminence Cardinal Guibert, whom I have known for 30 years; we spent with him a most delightful hour. My other visits in Paris were but few, but not useless, as you will soon learn.

On Saturday morning, I left for the sea, in company with the venerable Bishop La Flèche, of Three Rivers, and two Rev. gentlemen. These lines may reach you a few hours sooner than myself; but my heart goes ahead of the message. It never left you. Once more, I thank all, in proportion as they prayed for the success of my trip.

Your devoted

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
SUPERIOR GENERAL.