

Religious to struggle against it continually and everywhere. What reconciles me here, and somewhat makes up for all I suffer through the painful separation from all I love here below, is my modest, religious little room, 15 x 12 feet. I prefer it by far to my princely suite of rooms at Notre Dame and St. Mary's, which are to me a continual reproach; for they seem to say that if there were any merit in me there would be no need of showing me off before the world by such exterior surroundings, by which I am made before keen eyes an empty-headed and vain man, taking pride in what men of real worth despise.

I have seen many a room in Rome still preserved in the exact state in which the saintly occupants had lived and died. What a burning condemnation of our vanity! I wrote once from Waukesha that I would never occupy again those rooms at Notre Dame if they were not stripped of all unnecessary ornaments: they underwent some little changes; but I repeat the same again. Give me one single, simple room, such as I have here in Paris, or in Rome, and I will enjoy it. Oh! let us try to be, like all true servants of God, modest in our wants, easily satisfied, always afraid to indulge ourselves unnecessarily, never dreaming that we can make ourselves happy otherwise than by a strict imitation of those we admire as living models of humility and modesty in their tastes and habits, of regularity and devotedness in the discharge of their duties, full of respect and veneration for those who hold for them God's own place, and who, day after day, perfect thus their claims upon the esteem and gratitude of their associates for ever.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. LXXXIX.

NOTRE DAME DE STE.-CROIX,
(NEUILLY) PARIS, February 10, 1880.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN CHRIST:

After three long months of painful suspense, your pious prayers, and especially the powerful intercession of our saintly friend, Mr. Dupont—the *Holy Man of Tours*—have obtained, if not yet a complete restoration of our dear and venerated Father Champeau's health, at least such a sensible amelioration as to remove all apprehensions, and to change our sad forebodings into confidence and joyful thanks. We all look upon the event as one little short of an undeniable miracle.

Hitherto, we found it impossible to hold a General Council; and thus we postponed, from week to week, to announce the General Chapter. Finally, we deliberated this afternoon upon this important

subject, and we came to the conclusion to hold it here at the Mother-House, and we fixed its opening for the 18th of April next, on the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, our glorious Patron. In order to secure the blessings of Heaven upon the labors of the solemn assembly, we desire that in all the Houses of the Congregation, the *Veni Creator*, the *Memorare* and the three usual invocations be recited every morning until the end of the Chapter.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XC.

NOTRE DAME DE STE.-CROIX,
(NEUILLY) PARIS, Feb. 28, 1880.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

The dear and venerated *confrère*, whom we thought to have with us for a long time yet, has just rendered his soul to God, and entered, we hope, into the eternal repose which a good life and a holy death deserve. God's will be done, not ours!

Less than a week ago, we still had the hope to see him recover from his illness through the fervent prayers offered for that object, and through the assiduous care bestowed on him. However, after a few days, a sudden relapse, which nothing could overcome, took away our beloved *confrère*, doubtless as a mercy to him and to us. In the death of the good and venerated Father Champeau the Congregation has lost, you will all admit, one of its best and most worthy members. During the forty years he has been a member, his time, his fortune, and his rare talents have been unreservedly devoted to its service; and as the proof of this three-fold devotion he leaves us the most important establishment we have in France as a legacy. We must prove that he has not sacrificed himself for ungrateful companions. This proof we must give to God and to men by following in his footsteps. In our greatest peril he had faith in the success of the Congregation. We will prove our gratitude by imitating his example, even should more serious dangers threaten us in the near future. It was during the Commune that the health of Father Champeau was broken; and if he was not a martyr, he has become a victim.

Yesterday, at 10 o'clock, we asked the Apostolic Benediction for our dying patient. It arrived at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and he received it with great consolation. And now, after a long illness, of which you all know, he died this morning at 10 o'clock, with all the helps of religion, and consoled by the marks of affection and respect of his *confrères*. He leaves them all deeply

touched by the edifying example he gave them in his last moments.

Let all the members of our religious family hasten to offer the suffrages* to which he has a claim, and which he has so well merited. May the Holy Family, whom he has glorified in his writings, receive him into the Eternal Tabernacles!

This is all I am able to write to you to-day. The obsequies will take place next Monday, at 10 o'clock, a. m.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XCI.

NOTRE DAME, May 15, 1880.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

How shall I express my joy on this happy return to our dear home; and above all, my heartfelt thanks for the prayers you have offered with such consoling results! God alone knows how I longed for the same. Let us praise Him who has once more so kindly and so closely united us in His holy service!

At my age I can but feel that I have only a short time to enjoy your company, and to edify myself with the cheering examples of your virtues. I return, I may say, not so much to live, as to end my days among those I love best on earth. For, to tell the truth, in proportion as I always feared to be made too much of in life, I dread the idea of being too soon forsaken after death. Indeed, the daily growing preoccupation of my mind is not to be forgotten, but remembered and prayed for when I can no longer help myself nor others; and I find an unspeakable consolation in the assurance that, once gone from the spot I have loved so long and so tenderly, many a devoted heart will breathe a fervent prayer over my cold remains when prayer alone can relieve a poor suffering soul. Sweet as your welcoming congratulations are to my heart on my return in your midst, I enjoy them especially because they reveal to me a friendship I would vainly seek elsewhere; strong enough to outlive the unavoidable adieus which should be the ruling thought of declining years everywhere, but particularly among Religious.

Of this, the Circular of the Chapter, full and comprehensive as it is, could tell you nothing; and yet, while presenting it to your serious meditation, it was the first thing I wished to mention to our beloved Religious in these United States.

May we all, more than ever, find in each other's edifying example an efficient means of sanctification to the last; and for ever

* For "suffrages" see Rule XLIII, No. 343, for General Officers.

a cause to praise God for having gathered us here, from all parts of the globe, as in a sanctuary opening into heaven! In the transfer of the Mother-House to Notre Dame, none of us will fail to recognize a signal favor from the Holy Father; not a favor, however, to flatter our vanity, but one evidently calculated to impress on our hearts a true and religious gratitude, calling forth our best efforts to acquire that perfection of which we, before all others, must henceforth give the example to the rest of the Congregation.

Here is a duty before which old age might well shrink from any hope of rest; but a soldier of the cross expects to rest only when under the sod. Indeed, a very serious task stands before us to meet the views of Divine Providence. Notre Dame, being now the centre of the Congregation, must be the living embodiment of our Rules in daily practice; everywhere in the Province our Religious must live by their Rules. To be perfected, the work has to be somewhat commenced over again. To bring it to a faultless state, we need no new combinations or devices: we have all we require to make it a complete success—our Rules cover the whole ground. To see to their application and observance throughout, from the first to the last, will be my task. Who does not see that our destinies as a Religious Order entirely rest on this? Who could refuse his co-operation? Here is the secret of success for each and for all—a *good will*. Let us think less of ourselves and more of God and of our neighbor.

Indeed, a serious task has to be performed. At a time when Religious are so fast filling this New World, we must try to compare favorably with each and all, especially in point of real community life—in regular discipline; in obedience and devotedness to duty; in self-abnegation and poverty; in the full observance of our vows, and in a complete proof given every day to the world that we are true to our profession. Again, at a time when all feel so deeply the loss we have sustained in the death of our lamented Father Champeau, it is no small task to prepare successors to those whom age and infirmities may unavoidably remove from active duty.

First of all, it ought to be clearly understood among us that in everything we should be governed, not by private views or self-interest, but by *principles*.

In a community, *principles* alone will maintain order, and with it the letter and the spirit of the Rules against the continual encroachments of time, nationality, and personal inclinations. They alone will save it from the perpetual changes in which even the best will gradually grow weak and inefficient. Where there is no common centre confessedly acknowledged, to which all individual and vital forces naturally converge to form and uphold a power for good, very soon private ambitions will rise up and make a breach here and another there in the protecting walls of

the Rule and authority, to the great detriment of the general interests of the family; before long this usurpation of power will be noticed and create disedification, discontent, and, finally, loss of real esteem and pity. Once crept in, this ruinous disunion will insensibly widen its baneful effects and results, until peace and harmony shall have yielded to discontent and strife; and that, because *principles* have been disregarded and sacrificed to vain and worldly spirits. May this never be the sad story of a single House in our Congregation! The Chapter in Paris, fully appreciating the inevitable results of such irreligious tendencies, did not hesitate in recommending a certain number of expulsions rather than leaving the Community exposed to such poisonous influences. To guard against such a danger, any sensible Religious will feel more than ready to lay down his own will and to take to heart, and cherish, the sacred obligations of his vows, as the only guarantee the Community can enjoy for the blessing and happiness of its members. Does not experience everywhere prove that *holy obedience*, the indispensable basis of a Religious life, is the inexhaustible source of grace and peace, even when it seems hard to weak, narrow, vain and superficial brains?

From what we see, God has blessed this Province more abundantly than any other in the Congregation; hence our greater obligation to stand by *vital principles*, by our vows, to preserve and perfect what Divine Providence has so liberally bestowed. To assist our pious and devoted members, and to seek a continuance of the same heavenly favors in the most complete observance of our Rules, so earnestly recommended in our recent General Chapter, I direct that for three months our Constitutions, Rules and Directory replace all other books every day at meditation, examination of conscience, and spiritual reading.

Likewise, to facilitate the practice of obedience and lessen the burden of authority, I advise to refer, as a rule, to regular Councils the examination of all favors asked of Superiors before they are granted or refused. !

May the holy grace of God enable us all to accomplish our duty religiously, fully, and with a will!

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XCII.

NOTRE DAME, IND., August 16, 1880.

REV. DEAR FATHERS:

The following lines are dictated by nothing else but an imperative sense of duty:

It appears that in this Province some of our Rev. Fathers on

missions, in charge of parishes, scarcely ever send their accounts to the Provincial Administration; asking neither direction nor permission for anything; moving around and acting as though they absolutely belonged to the secular Clergy. Some even seem to ignore so completely their religious obligations, and alike the necessities of the Congregation in its severest trials, as not to have offered a helping hand since the 23d of April of last year. Strangers of all creeds have vied with each other to raise Notre Dame from her ruins, but some of our own Fathers never sent one dollar.

Other Provinces, the recent accounts of which, after a close examination in a Provincial Chapter, have been duly submitted to us for the sanction of the General Council, show a scrupulous observance of the Rule on this important point—the Committee on Finance having examined attentively the books of every pastor, and declared in Council how much had been received and expended in each place, quarterly, 1st, for food; 2d, for clothing; then the annual amounts for both; then the budget of presumed receipts and expenses for the following year. Thus is a pastor constituted on a religious basis in temporal affairs. Of course, in this accounting for receipts and expenses, our Fathers refer only to moneys belonging to themselves, as coming from a regular salary, from honoraries of Masses, baptisms, marriages, burials, or perquisites at large; whatever belongs to the church proper is inscribed on the church books, totally distinct and separate from their own personal accounts. The church receipts and expenses they report to the Ordinaries, from whom alone they solicit authorization for any extra investments they wish to make for the good of the parish or congregation. On their regular salary and perquisites they have a right to live; any surplus left by economy belongs to their Community. Hence, the quarterly, semi-annual and yearly accounts their Superiors are in duty bound to require for the maintenance of religious discipline and order. The surplus thus brought to the Community is required in all Religious Orders, and no liberty is left to any subject in general to dispose of it even partially, without a special permission, *ad hoc*, from the Provincial. I fear there has been disposal of money, evidently the property of the Community, without due permission, which should have alarmed the donor's conscience; but as I have no positive assurance of the same, I abstain from saying any more, save repeating that whatever is lawfully acquired to the Congregation cannot be given out, even in charities, without leave from higher quarters. What shall I say of liquor repeatedly bought by the gallon in some place, while all know it is forbidden even to touch it? Shall I remind some of our own Rev. Fathers that they should not seek for a night's lodging in a Sisters' Establishment?

It is no pleasure, I am sure, for any one of us to see our attention

called to such topics; but to keep silence on dangerous violations of common religious sense would be a sin on my part; and in the end a loss of every claim to ordinary respectability in society. *Dominus dirigat corda vestra, sensus et cogitationes vestras!*

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XCIII.

NOTRE DAME, August 29, 1880.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

I tremble while writing under such an awful date. The 29th of August is the day of the execution of the wicked Decrees of the 29th of March in France, and to-morrow we may hear of the sad and long looked-for expulsion of our Fathers from Paris, and other places, *in the name of liberty!* Let us pray for the dear birth-place of our Congregation. But if our good will is refused and mocked beyond the waters we must try to make it more than ever efficient in this New World.

The opening of our schools affords us all a precious opportunity by which everyone of us should profit in order to make of this scholastic year an unprecedented success, not so much from a material point of view as for the eternal benefit of the youth entrusted to our care.

Hitherto God has blessed our efforts in many a place, but not equally in all; and where we have succeeded best, alas! what a room left for improvement! To deny it would be an insolence deserving even severer punishment. What I want in this Circular is to bring our whole family to a new and lively sense of our duty on the vital question of Catholic Education.

The daily and universal demand from the Catholic press, and many private high quarters, that Catholic educators should not be satisfied with the mere name of Catholic Institutions, but should more amply prove the real and thorough Catholicity of the education imparted in their schools, cannot be set aside as unfounded. Even what was deemed sufficient a few years ago does not now meet, or answer, the increasing wants of an age remarkable, above all others, for its constant progress in infidelity, materialism and actual enjoyment, all of which cannot be refuted or resisted any longer save by a superior and fuller training in the positive teachings and moral habits of religion, without which Catholic Education is only a name. Understand me well: to-day, more than ever before, Catholic education, as we pretend to give it in our schools, means for our youth a knowledge of Divine truths,

more comprehensive and developed, more visibly sustained by daily Christian practices, cheerfully accepted and faithfully observed by them as an indispensable evidence of their initiation to a Catholic life, of which they may well feel proud all their life, and not ashamed or tired, as so many are when entering upon their duties in society, evidently because their early training never established a foundation upon which anything solid might rest.

Of every child confided to us by Catholic parents we must, first of all, make a practical Catholic for life. This is our first duty; to overlook or discharge it negligently would be a heinous offence to society and a serious sin against God. We know by heart the Divine warning: "Woe to him who does negligently the work of God!" Each time a child is presented and received, a contract is entered upon, with a clear obligation on our side to train that immortal soul for the Court of Heaven. To one assuming such a responsibility, that child shall be, the whole year, an object of constant solicitude; otherwise, there is wanting even a sense of common honesty; with such a charge none but light-minded officers can trifle.

To assist you somewhat in this most important and difficult task, let me draw from personal experience some counsels and suggestions which, if received, in a spirit of humility and true zeal, will not prove entirely useless words:

1st.—When a new scholar is presented, every pains should be taken to obtain from the parents a complete knowledge of the same. This will be a mark of interest as pleasing to parents as useful to those who now step into their place for a proper training of their offsprings. A quarter of an hour thus spent in earnest inquiry into the past, the best and worst dispositions, the acquirements and deficiencies, the temper, the habits, the health, the intended career of the new scholar, the course of studies, etc., etc., the expectations, the fears of interested hearts, their special recommendations, etc., etc., attentively listened to, will form at once between the two parties a link of mutual confidence gratifying to both; when they leave, parents will feel their child has another home, and not a hotel for a night or a week among careless strangers. Here begins the sacred task to make of the new-comer a Christian and a scholar, for both of which God's grace must be solicited, and suitable attention secured from teachers and prefects. For the fulfilment of such a task I refer you to our Rules, which must be studied and scrupulously observed, instead of personal notions and whimsical views, always destructive of all rules and traditions.

2d.—I have just named two things ever precious to real and true Religious. Why are they both so little thought of among us? And yet, is it not evident that, having Rules written for us, we

should consult them and follow them as our safest guides? Our first ambition should be to excel our immediate predecessors by a closer adherence to our Rules. Taking our inspirations from the same Rules would have made traditions a treasure of which all Congregations, duly alive to self-respect, are justly proud everywhere. I trust it will be sufficient to call your attention to the above important points to create an opinion, or rather to revive among you a sense of duty, from which no careless or vain Religious should ever be suffered to depart. Let the Rules prompt and govern everything. Heaven will bless such a lawful and harmonious effort.

3d.—Knowing the source from which to derive blessings in general, we now come to the special channels by which that heavenly grace may be distributed upon our individual exertions, viz.: Catechism, Confessions, Communions, Religious Associations, Retreats (Annual and for First Communion), Spiritual Reading daily, for fifteen minutes, immediately before supper, the results of which can scarcely be overrated, if properly appreciated. Here is the time and place to explain regulations, to prevent disorders and kill them in their incipency; to show children that they are objects of real interest, and attach them to the House, etc.

But such a programme, you say, will absorb all our time? What else have you to do? When you have done as much in the saving education of children as St. Joseph Calas Sanctus, whose feast we commemorated a few days ago, I will say you have done enough. To his last breath—at the age of 92 years—his zeal for the education of children knew no bounds.

4th.—To this day, the spiritual children of that glorious Saint continue the work of their Father, long since in heaven. They are everywhere the guardian angels of the poor little ones on earth. They venerate, they faithfully follow the traditions and maxims of their holy Founder. Here is what I want you all to be—the guardian angels of the dear young souls Divine Providence entrusts you with; sparing no pains to sow deep in their minds and in their hearts the seed of eternal salvation, to give them daily proofs of your abiding interest in their welfare; and this, whether directly or indirectly concerned in their happiness. Oh, where a whole house is thus heartily, devotedly, continually striving for the eternal interests of its inmates, God cannot refuse His blessings upon it; it cannot fail to be a success.

5th.—Need I recommend our publications to our own Religious, and warn them once more against non-Catholic and objectionable school books? We all know by this time that this is the chief ground for the complaints alluded to above.

6th.—Religious should show themselves everywhere, before their pupils, perfect models, not only of virtue, but also of *manners*

and *refinement*. It is only where both are united that a power for good is created among children.

We must impart a more Catholic education than we have done hitherto; the amendment must be felt. To this everyone must lend a willing and effective co-operation, instead of looking to the head officer as exclusively responsible. What can the head of a House do alone? He may give the impulse, but that impulse must be felt by all around; the best orders of a General on a battle-field, if not promptly obeyed, will not prevent a disaster.

May we all enter upon our new labors in this religious spirit, and the scholastic year 1880-'81 will soon show what devoted Religious can do for the vital question of the day, when they use the above means to secure the blessing of Heaven. May the grace of God be with you all!

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XCIV.

FEAST OF THE PURITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN,

NOTRE DAME, IND., October 17, 1880.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

The avalanche of letters the Feast of St. Edward has lately brought to his poor client has unavoidably retarded the acknowledgments you are entitled to. But even at this late hour I scarcely know how to reply to such manifestations and undoubted assurances of filial devotedness and fervent prayers. Thirty-nine returns of the same anniversary should have made me familiar with the sentiments of our Religious family; and yet these last outpourings of affectionate feelings surprise me, while they leave me, this time, no thought of returning you anything like adequate and proper thanks. Would to God that I deserved one-half of the esteem and love you so generously profess in my regard! May the glorious Queen we all love with our whole soul, and whose purity permeates our hearts to-day with such a veneration, purify more and more our mutual feelings, and thus make us more worthy of each other, and, above all, more worthy of our Divine Brother's Virgin Mother! But, alas! I fear we only fancy that we love her; and yet who could say how much we owe her for almost forty years? It will never be known in this world. If I have a wish for each and all, in return for so many pious desires, it is this: *that we may at length begin to know and love our Blessed Mother.*

When a child is frightened, to whom does it turn instinctively? Who could say that all is in peace around us? That there is nothing to fear? How easily we deceive ourselves! The elements,

now so terribly disturbing peace and order in Europe, are here, as well, at this very moment. Secret societies now govern the world: they threaten the same dangers *everywhere*; prayer alone can avert their blows from the Church. For a while their opposition may remain latent; but it has already made itself felt. To resist it we need proper weapons, viz., fervor in our piety, superior merit in our class-rooms, devotedness and zeal in the discharge of duty, and a character above suspicion in all our Religious.

Who will secure all this? The Blessed Virgin—if we know how to interest her in our labors. St. Edward himself looked to her in all his wants; almost all the other Saints did the same. Why not we? You may say that I have always the same remedy for all sorts of evils. So it should be, since it has never failed. I speak from experience, and I say: Try it in earnest, and you will thank me in heaven.

Indifference towards our Blessed Mother would mean complete idiocy in me, or something worse than idiocy; she has marked too many days of my life with the indelible imprints of her maternal love ever to leave me insensible.

But a mother's heart is always moved more sensibly by the tears of her child than by its joys; we have all learned this at home, and every day confirms our convictions. My holy Patron's Feast I celebrated this year, I may say, between two coffins, or the burials of my two oldest and best friends in the country, with the grave fear of actually hearing of the expulsion of our Fathers from France. Next day brought the sad news of the sudden death, from apoplexy, of our dear and saintly Father P. Chappé, in France.

Thus our short-lived joys are often preceded and marred and followed by cruel sorrows, continually reminding us that we journey through a valley of tears. Even in these personal afflictions here below we find a soothing balm in raising our hearts to the sweet Mother of Consolation. But when the crushing thought of a national persecution surges before the eyes of our mind, we feel our only natural refuge is the Heart of the Mother of the Afflicted.

I fear we are on the eve of trying days, too severe for common virtue;—days of relaxation and pride, shaking even the elements of faith and dissolving ordinary religious sentiments as fire melts the snow. O Blessed Mother! To whom shall we turn to stay the impending storm, if not to thee? Never did we need, as much as now, to *live by faith*, so as to make of our life an incessant prayer. "Walk before Me, and be perfect," said the Lord to Abraham. Here is the secret of all progress in perfection. I bring it here to your attention because of a late occurrence in the chapel where I noticed some unnecessary noise which should have been prevented even by the least sentiment of faith, or rather by more attention to the sacredness of the place. As Religious, we spend daily consid-

erable time before the Tabernacle; these precious visits alone should amply suffice to keep the fire of faith burning in our hearts day and night. But to make them profitable we must, even before reaching the door, recollect ourselves, and then enter and walk and kneel, or stand or sit *noiselessly*—as we certainly would, did we see with our own eyes angels prostrate in adoration, as we believe them to be, around the altar. To honor and propitiate our Blessed Lord, to please His Holy Mother, to imitate the saints, to join with the angelical adorers, let us try to collect ourselves there in deep faith, and show that we realize where we stand or kneel or move, ever fearing to fail in reverence and to disturb anyone around.

* In conclusion, let me assure you that while I thank God with all my heart for the very flattering prospects of our schools this fall, I never felt as keenly as I now do the necessity for all our teachers to spare no pains to improve themselves in their studies as well as in their religious spirit, in order to become *able and superior teachers*, and thus materially raise the educational character and standard of their respective houses. May God grant us a universal renewal of fervor and zeal, and this scholastic year will be one of unprecedented success and satisfaction!

Let each establishment keep scrupulous minutes of its daily receipts and expenses; and forward its Quarterly Accounts in due time and form. Strict economy, perfect regularity, unceasing recourse to God, to our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph will secure all we need.

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XCV.

NOTRE DAME, CHRISTMAS EVE, 1880.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

Hitherto, at this holy season of the year, I have usually waited until I had received the joyous expressions of your good wishes before returning you my acknowledgments, with the assurance of my own sentiments of affection and devotedness. But as there is no binding rule to keep me behind and last, when the promptings of my heart would bring me forward in the observance of a laudable custom of Christian society, I beg this time to appear first and wish every member of our beloved religious family a most happy Christmas and New Year.

The reason of my anticipating this year your well-known declarations of filial regards you will readily appreciate when I say that, since we began to exist as a Religious Order, we perhaps never needed as much as we do now to find among ourselves the consola-

tions and the strengthening virtue which true friendship and real union of souls alone can procure.

Times are disturbed to such a degree that peace, more than ever before, seems to be promised exclusively to men of good will. Who could have foreseen, twelve months ago, what has since become an accomplished fact, sad and deplorable as it appears to every Christian soul? While we meet here in this New World but with kindness and charity among so many creeds and nationalities, we know that in our Catholic native land, in the very centre of Christian civilization—in Paris—our beloved Fathers are actually dispersed, and not allowed any longer to live together under the roof which but recently sheltered the Mother-House of the Congregation.

Oh! let every one of them know and realize how deeply we sympathize with them in this uncalled-for and wicked persecution, and how our hearts bleed for them. We feel confident that the unjust trials, to which they are hourly subjected, will only reveal to ourselves and to the world their beautiful character as true Religious, and therefore increase, if possible, our esteem and affection towards them. At the chosen hour of Divine Providence they will come out victorious "and rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Jesus."

Whether the present expulsion of Religious in France continues, or ends in another bloody *Commune* we understand that our great duty is to pray more fervently than ever for the successful final issue, not alone of our own Congregation, but of the Catholic cause all over Europe, from the dreadful and far-reaching storm that threatens, on so many points, all our most precious interests. To propitiate Heaven towards the Congregation through these troublous times all the members of the Holy Cross family shall recite on their knees, daily, after the reading of the Scriptures at the Particular Examen, three times the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father, etc., with our three invocations, until peace is restored. What else shall we do to secure a favorable hearing of our petitions in heaven?

At all times and everywhere, but especially at the beginning of a new year—which may be the last for more than one of us—it will not be amiss to consider seriously, in a spirit of faith: 1st, *How we observe the Rule*. Do we reflect that Heaven blesses, and that our associates esteem and love, *only* the strict and zealous observer of the Rule? Have we yet to learn that the want of a scrupulous fidelity to the Rule begets scandal and contempt? 2d, *How we fulfil our obedience*. This second point should be, for some at least, as momentous as terrifying. Personal carelessness has caused, and may cause again, deplorable, ruinous disasters: fires, heavy and sudden losses; establishments sunk in debts; others lost to public

confidence, and then irremediably abandoned; looseness and irregularities of all kinds, in lieu of discipline and order, the only guarantee of success; such are the consequences of an obedience half fulfilled. When shall we learn that officers are to stand or fall here, as in the world, by their energy and success, or the absence of either? and every other Religious, by the exemplary fulfilment of all that is covered by obedience; or the disorder created by its loose and irregular discharge? 3d, *What sort of Religious we are.* What response from the inner Community? From our own conscience? From God? Shall we allow this year to begin, and continue, and end, as so many others before? Will not each of us say: No! no! no: this time I begin earnestly, before God, a new life. I will redeem the past; I will be a Religious, or die in the attempt? May God bless our resolve!

E. SORIN, C. S. C.,
Superior-General.

No. XCVI.

NOTRE DAME, IND., January 17, 1881.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

Although I thanked you already, and in advance, for your pious wishes of the season, I feel almost obliged to renew my thanks; for I had not anticipated such a number of exquisite epistles, every one of which I have read with more than ordinary gratification. Each one was to me, I may say, a most delightful interview with the writer of such beautiful sentiments. May God return you all an hundredfold every blessing you ask for me! This is not, however, the only reason of this new Circular; I have another, to which I wish to call your serious attention, after long consideration and humble prayers to our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, and especially to the Divine Infant.

You will agree with me, I am sure, and acknowledge that we owe not a little, but more than we can ever express, to the Holy Mother of God. Can we say that we have all adequately shown our gratitude for what she has done for each one of us? I, for one, cannot; but I sincerely and most earnestly wish I could. More than one of you, certainly, will join with me and say and feel the same. Nothing would delight us more than a sure means to procure her glory. Here is one: We have it in our power, both as a Religious body and as individual members of the family of the Holy Cross, to glorify our Blessed Mother, to make her known and loved all over the New World—in a word, to erect to her sweet name a monument of gratitude such as single personal efforts could hardly accomplish anywhere. This is what I come to offer