

Religious, Theologians, etc.—has endeavored to secure to the Church in the States; but I rejoice especially at the particular attention that has been paid to the Religious families—to make them what they ought to be, the first and most efficient soldiers of the Cross by a devotedness to duty exemplary to all. Therefore the spirit of obedience, of poverty and purity must shine in each of them more conspicuously than in any other class of society. First of all, Religious must be in the front of all the standard-bearers of the sacred and saving Sign—close observers of their Rules even in the smallest things.

What I write here I mean to carry out fully and enforce, as our best members will gladly expect. As a proof of it, I hereby prescribe:

1st. That the Rules be attentively read at the Spiritual Reading until Easter.

2d. That no Religious be dispensed from any one of them, but by higher authority. *The Rules must be observed.*

3d. That the Vow of Poverty be observed everywhere, in its strictest sense, from the first to the last in each House.

4th. That all visits necessitating an absence at night, all travels and journeys from home be suppressed—unless allowed by the highest authority. Let everyone stay at home, as a Religious, unless duly sent on a special mission or message.

Hard times evidently stare us in the face. Let us all strive to save something to help the suffering members of Christ the winter will send to us everywhere. Let everyone of us try to save and to live economically. I say again: times are hard, and require from us all something more than a silent acknowledgment of the same; devotedness alone, with a sacrificing resolution, will enable us to keep our ground!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our beloved Religious earnestly preparing themselves in prayer around the Crib for a life of regularity, fervor and devotedness, in full accord with the universal expectations of greater efficiency than ever for the edification of all in the Church!

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

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No. CXXIV.

NOTRE DAME, IND., VIGIL OF THE EPIPHANY, 1885.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

When I addressed you my last Circular, on the Octave of the Immaculate Conception, I anticipated your ever-welcome greetings

of the season, and sincerely thanked you in advance for the joy they would bring to me as well as to yourselves. Thus, I thought, the first day of the New Year would find us all square and satisfied with each other on the exhibition of our mutual sentiments on the closing of the year 1884.

But after reading attentively every letter brought to me since a week, and listening alike to the numerous addresses with which I have been honored for so many pleasant quarters, I must confess that my annual account with you does not appear to me to be fairly settled. Much as I wish to deal honestly with everyone, fervently as I have tried to pray for you before the Crib of the Divine Babe, I yet feel, in strict justice, not a little but deeply in debt to every member of the family dealing with me these last twelve months; and, what is worse yet for me, I scarcely see any prospect of covering my actual deficiency for some years to come.

I never weighed more seriously the expressions of your hearts' sentiments and good wishes. Possibly many of you honestly felt that it might be their last New Year's compliments to an aged Father nearing 72! At all events, I found them more touching than on any previous occasion of the kind. Hence my feelings of a large indebtedness to each member of the dear family.

Many beautiful letters have been handed to me during the past few days. I have perused every one of them with the same interest I would have shown the writer in person, and with each of them it was a delightful interview. Indeed, these have been for me grand reception days. What a difference between the Court, State, political and worldly receptions which the cold etiquette of society commands everywhere at this time of the year (often a burden to those who meet) and the cordial outpouring of affectionate sentiments for those we love in God, and in whose behalf we feel so happy to offer our warmest prayers to the Giver of all good gifts! What a precious reality of enjoyments, over and above the poor people of the world!

With a few exceptions, I have seen again or heard from all our beloved Religious with unprecedented pleasure from all quarters; and to each and to all I hasten to return my most sincere acknowledgments with my best wishes. May the Divine Babe bless you all abundantly with an increased love for obedience, poverty and chastity,—for humble simplicity and devotedness to duty. Such will be the chief objects of my daily prayers at the Crib around which we will meet morning and evening to the end of the month. Oh! what a lovely, heavenly *rendezvous*!

When you pause before the Manger and contemplate the beauty of the Divine Infant, remember the touching remark of a saintly and most eloquent Bishop: "That Jesus may come to you, your heart must become the image of His first Tabernacle on earth—the

Immaculate Heart of Mary." To secure this priceless boon, let us all try to commence this new year, which will probably be the last for some of us (possibly for you who read this in the prime of life), as we never did before:

1st. Living by faith, not by nature; not for time, but for eternity; for God, and for Him alone.

2d. With more fervor in the reception of the Sacraments, each time as if it were the last.

3d. Taking more to heart the honor and interests of the Congregation.

4th. Improving ourselves daily in the discharge of our respective duties.

5th. With a faultless regularity in attending every exercise and duty.

I see, with no ordinary pleasure, that all remained at home since the issue of my last Circular, except two, whose travelling dispositions should have been checked by the Heads of their Houses. Oh! what a blessing for a House when a proper Head directs its every member in the ways of the Lord!

To-morrow is the Feast of the Epiphany! What an impressive anniversary for us all! The first call of the Gentiles to the knowledge of the true God! The Wise Men, or Kings, to whom a new star appeared in the East, were our forefathers in the Faith. The Epiphany is eminently our Feast. Two weeks ago we came with the shepherds to the stable, where we found Mary and Joseph, with the Child in the Manger. To-morrow we shall accompany the Kings of the East to Bethlehem, where we shall again meet Mary and Jesus; and, prostrating ourselves before the Divine Infant, and, opening the treasures of our joyful hearts, we shall offer Him our best presents. . . . But, before you rise to leave, listen: an angel speaks—"Return not the way you came!" Return a convert, a saint, an apostle.

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

No. CXXV.

NOTRE DAME, IND., January 7, 1885.

DEAR FRIENDS:

The last of the grand and most impressive solemnities of the season passed away yesterday. But the joys and the lessons they brought cannot be forgotten, except by ungrateful hearts. Ingratitude! I would rather be suspected or charged with anything else than the vile crime which all men hold in contempt, and which drains even the source of Divine grace. God forbid that we should ever be guilty of such a black and unbearable vice!

See the Wise Men starting back for their Eastern homes! Their hearts are full of the deepest gratitude to Heaven. They have seen Jesus and Mary. Will they ever forget the Divine Child and His Holy Mother? Oh, how grateful they feel to God for the immense favor bestowed upon them in preference to so many others who saw the star but did not profit by it! But what must be their astonishment at the indifference of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Bethlehem? They were all expecting the Messiah. They named and pointed out to them the place where He was to be born; and not one, not a single soul followed them to confess and adore Him in Bethlehem! Oh! the mystery, the blindness of the poor human mind! Mary and Joseph have been denied a lodging in Bethlehem, have been driven to a forlorn stable for a night's shelter. Very soon, however, an angel will come from heaven to tell Joseph in the dead of night to take the Child and His Mother and fly immediately into Egypt to save the life of the Saviour.

We feel horrified! The Son of God and His Holy Mother thus treated! thus cruelly persecuted by those He had come to save! Thousands of innocent little children must be immolated to make sure of the death of the Son of Mary!

Such was the hatred of the world against Jesus and Mary eighteen hundred and eighty-five years ago. Has the world changed? The world is the kingdom of Satan. The Saviour, who prayed on the Cross for His murderers, refused to pray for the world. At this very time, when the Divine Babe of Bethlehem from His manger reflects upon all innocent little children such unspeakable charms, the world, as such, kills them,—not in thousands, but in millions; not by the sword, but by the starvation of their immortal souls; depriving them of the word of God, which is the life of man; sealing their minds and hearts against even the utterance of the sacred and saving names of Jesus and Mary. Such is the aim, such the result of the hatred of the world! The means of action may change, the object in view is the same. Not only is the child in our public schools absolutely deprived of every notion of God and saving faith; not only is he raised a blank, an infidel, an atheist, but as soon as his young heart opens to the feeling or the appetite of the senses a deluge of poisonous pamphlets and books and infamous representations surround him, stifling in his soul any sentiment of moral honesty he might have inherited from his parents.

Multitudes of such scholars, much more to be pitied than condemned, have issued during the last twenty-five years from our State institutions. Hence the prohibition to Catholic families to send their children to such nurseries of impiety. But these legions, we must admit, form to-day the bulk of society. How will our young exceptional Catholics move in safety through such a multi-

tude of poisoned bodies? Where is the antidote with which they may be saved? This is the problem, the vital question of the day everywhere.

It is not enough to preserve our innocent little children in the school-room from atheism and immorality. They must be prepared to fight victoriously the frightful battles awaiting them on their entrance into social life. It is not enough for a child to preserve the faith and innocence of baptism. Childhood is the proper time to receive the rudiments, the first and clear lights, with the first and indelible impressions of love and admiration for saving Faith. What an important task for a Religious Body, received in the Church as a teaching Order or Congregation! Yes, undoubtedly, Religious teachers take upon themselves the most important—the all-important—office or duty of training up youth for the battle of life; laying deep in every young soul entrusted to their care the foundations of a Divine and indestructible Faith;—nay, more: the imperishable love of that same Divine Faith, and that to such a degree that they may feel, when leaving the school, prouder of their Faith than of any other object or success obtained in their studies. Hence the twofold, unspeakable advantage, to be found in our Catholic institutions alone—the knowledge and the love of our holy Faith. What a task, I repeat, for Religious teachers of youth! But where shall we find the genius to properly fulfil such a duty?

The Apostles were simple men, and yet they were selected to go and teach all nations. A teacher may know enough, and yet fail in the double, indispensable duty just mentioned.

I repeat it, for fear of a misunderstanding: a child leaving a Catholic school without a special love for the teachings of our Holy Faith is a failure in point of education. But how can a child be brought to love what is scarcely understood? This is not to be accomplished in a day: children must be addressed as children, not as philosophers. If we wish to interest an innocent little child we must speak to its loving heart rather than to its brain.

I once heard of an intelligent, bright little boy, who accompanied his pious mother on Christmas Day to the Crib and knelt down to pray with her before the Divine Babe and His Holy Mother. Very soon the child, looking up at his mother, noticed that she was bathed in tears, and he himself began to cry, and his tears soon flowed as copiously as those of his mother. Finally, throwing his little arms around her neck, and holding her in his loving embrace, he cried out in anguish: "Mamma, what pains you? are you ill?"

"My darling," replied the mother, "this is the Feast of mothers and children. Here is the best of mothers that ever lived, the Holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; here is her Divine Son, who was born of her in a stable, more than eighteen hundred years

ago. The angels in the middle of the night announced His birth to the shepherds, and they came, as you see, to adore Him. He chose to be born of her in a stable, to bring us all with her to heaven. Oh, the lovely Mother! Oh, the lovely Child! Holy Mother of God, pray for my darling Eddie to this his Divine Brother; pray for his dear papa, who loves you so well; pray for me, and when I die, be yourself a mother to my dear child. I present him to you as my dearest offering. When he knows you he will love you." And she bowed deeply with her child in her arms. . . . That child never forgot the scene. The love of his mother increased in his heart every day, and as he could not separate her from the Blessed Mother herself, he soon became a devout client of the Mother of Jesus; and when his mother died he centred on Mary all his affection, and actually lived but for her.

It is there, before the Crib, your little ones will learn how to remain in silence, how to avoid even the least noise, how to move like little angels, for fear of creating the slightest disturbance. The aroma of the Crib will cling to them; they will behave similarly in the class-room, and you shall soon have a model school, opening and closing with the Sign of the Cross—properly made, as our Blessed Mother taught it to Bernadette at Lourdes.

Blessed, indeed, are the Christian children whose mothers have taught them how to love the Mother of Jesus! It is the richest portion of their inheritance. The younger they are sent to us the easier the task of opening their innocent hearts to the love of Mary. They all love their mother; can it then be so difficult to teach them how they honor themselves in honoring their father and mother? Will it not be a delight for them to pray for their beloved parents? How long will it take a zealous teacher to bring them to pray for these parents daily, fervently, lovingly?

The first day a little child, with joined hands, prays for its mother to the Mother of Jesus, the seed is planted; it has fallen on a rich soil; it will grow and bear fruit and abundant harvest. But as it grows it must be protected against all noxious or blighting influences. The dew; the refreshing rain from the sky, must come in due time to develop it and secure its final success.

A child can scarcely realize how much is at stake for him when he begins to study. But he may be easily convinced that one of the surest means to obtain such an enviable result as an exceptional success in his studies is to place them, as so many wonderfully learned men have done, under the special protection of Mary. To secure her maternal blessing, they will readily understand that she must see them devoted to her in everything.

Teachers who earnestly wish to obtain extraordinary success in any study should dedicate it to the Blessed Virgin, and have this fact well known to all their pupils, giving her credit for every

noticeable improvement, and expressing, on the contrary, some apprehension of her displeasure when anything goes wrong. She must be made present, as it were, to each; honored or grieved, as the case may be.

Teachers of youth must know thoroughly the various branches of science they have to teach. This is universally admitted; and the qualification is every day becoming more strictly required. The time of common or mediocre teachers is rapidly passing away. Real merit alone, *officially acknowledged*, will admit one to the important functions of a teacher, even in the smallest country school. But even admitting the required proficiency of all our teachers, will their superior personal ability secure all the advantages most undoubtedly needed in, and confidently expected from, our Catholic schools? No: something more than erudition and talent is required in the school-room for the complete education of the future generation. It is not enough to cultivate the intellect, to cram the minds of our youth with such knowledge as can be learned in the public schools. This instruction, or filling up of the mind, is only a part, and a supplementary part, of the great work of *education*. Education, in its proper sense, implies the expansion and cultivation of all the faculties, mental and physical,—the cultivation of the heart as well as the mind; and of these, the formation and enrichment of the heart is undoubtedly the most important of the two. "Give Me thy heart," says our Blessed Lord to each one of those lovely little ones. He asks for nothing more. Teachers, here is your task; here is the command. Above all, and first of all, you must see how you can best implant in those young hearts a real and lasting piety, while storing their tender minds with knowledge suitable to their age and condition. How will you proceed? Experience, always the best of teachers, gives us the best of methods.

Experience proves everywhere that a child's first and strongest love is for his mother. He shares in all her feelings; he is still a part of herself; he lives for her. If anything be asked of him "to please his mother," he will do it. To make her feel happy is his sole ambition. To see her in tears makes him miserable. What a lovely and precious disposition! What attention it deserves! You tell him to pray for his dear mamma: down he goes on his knees, with his little hands joined in the attitude of an angel. You turn his eyes to the sacred image of Mary as to the Mother of Divine Grace, the one, above all, full of graces and blessings for his mother and for himself, who is ever ready to listen to and grant his petitions; and he prays to her as if he stood in person before him. Soon the Mother of Jesus will remind him again and again of his dear mamma. The little Babe in her arms will be to his eyes a charming sight; and to learn that the same Blessed Mother loves all little

children as her own, is for him a source of delight. Now he knows where to apply in behalf of his papa and mamma. His heart, like the Heart of Jesus, is won to the Blessed Mother; and when told that he must try to love his mother at home as the Infant Jesus loved His, how happy will he not feel in her arms or on her knees!

Will such a loving son find it hard to join with the other scholars in saying a little prayer, or reciting a decade of the Rosary, for his dear parents before starting home? Will he not listen attentively on the eve of a feast of Our Blessed Lady to any explanation of it from the pious teacher? And if a novena is begun in the school for any great anniversary, or object, or event, will not these stainless souls delight on such joyful and rich occasions, and hasten to raise, with their guardian angels, their hands and hearts to the throne of God? Thus a class, a whole school, will learn practically how to find Jesus and Mary in Bethlehem, and how to perfect their love for them every day more and more sensibly.

To secure such a happy result, would the Messenger of Mary—*The Ave Maria*—prove a useless means in the hand of a teacher or of some pupils in the school? A proposition to this effect was made last year to our own teachers, but remained unanswered. No one is a prophet at home. I will take good care not to give any of our teachers a second opportunity to slight what other Congregations and teaching bodies so keenly appreciate,—what the Rev. Clergy and the highest dignitaries of the Church so universally and warmly commend, as I myself heard and saw last month in Baltimore. Nevertheless, in my experimenting career, my conviction grows deeper that your successes will be in proportion to your own love for our Blessed Mother. Meditate upon this seriously. Through Mary salvation came to this world: such was, and forever will be, the channel through which the Divine grace is to flow to us. If you do not believe my words, look to the facts and you will see, as I do, that wherever the Blessed Virgin has been duly honored no failure has been recorded, whether of an establishment or of a simple obedience. This is the secret of success everywhere. Do you need a new proof of it? Select two or three of your best pupils in a parochial school, among those most devoted to the Blessed Virgin; give each of them, as a reward, as an acknowledgment of your esteem, a class of half a dozen of A B C beginners for half an hour a day. These young teachers will surprise you by their achievements, and when you return home some of them will beg to accompany you and enter the Novitiate.

I shall not ask again our teachers to take an interest in the spreading of our sweet Messenger of Mary; but I beg of all the members of our dear family to look among their relatives and try if they cannot find a brother or a sister, or other of their acquaintances,



willing to open their doors to the Holy Mother's greetings before the close of this beautiful season of the Holy Infancy. How easily we might have doubled the number of its subscribers! The Blessed Mother would have doubled her favors. But—it would require an effort!

This morning I received a letter from one of our Religious. "Father," writes the poor, afflicted soul, "for God's sake, allow me to go and visit my dying father, who has not approached the Sacraments for twenty years!" Had he been induced to read *The Ave Maria* during the past twenty years he would not inspire such fears at this supreme hour. Last spring I granted the same request, under similar circumstances; but it availed nothing. There is a time for everything.

Indeed, this beautiful season of the Holy Infancy must be particularly precious to religious orders devoted to education. Who could pause, even for five minutes, and look on the sweet, Divine Babe and His Virgin Mother, and remain insensible, unmoved? What a perfume of sanctity, what loveliness, what an unspeakable charm in that lonely crib of Bethlehem! And when you retire the Infant Saviour seems to bid you go and bring from Him a message of love to your class-room for each one of your dear children.

These thirty-eight days of the Holy Infancy are real feast-days for the whole class, especially if there is a crib in the school, as there should be. These are golden days for a pious and zealous teacher. Ere they close, all the children in the school will be perfumed, permeated with the love of Jesus and Mary, and not for a while only, but for life.

Ah! 'tis then, when contemplating such angelic young souls, opening their innocent and glowing hearts to the Divine Child and His Holy Mother, because they had been led on and brought to the Manger by our own Religious, that I wish and thirst to see them multiplied, to share more largely in the salvation of those dear little ones our Blessed Lord loved so tenderly. It is there, at the Crib, that I have formed the resolution to propose a novena for a new increase, a duplication of fervent vocations to our Novitiates, to begin on the day following the reception of these lines. It shall consist in the daily recital of the Litany of the Holy Face, in honor of its saintly founder, Mr. Dupont—the Thaumaturgus of our age. At my last visit I heard him say that not a day passed without a miracle in the very room where we stood, before his oratory of the Holy Face, now a chapel of world-wide renown. I learn that novenas without number are still offered in his honor with the same wonderful results in all directions. I have a boundless confidence in the protection of a friend, such as we never had on earth. Let us all join in the same pious practice, with full faith and fervor

for nine days, immediately after Mass, in honor of Mr. Dupont; repeating with him the pious invocations he loved so well.

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

No. CXXVI.

NOTRE DAME, FEAST OF ST. AGNES, 1885.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

I forgot last week to call your attention to something which, I trust, is ever present to your minds, but which is of itself so serious that I can have no rest until I know that you have all taken proper measures to avoid the disastrous consequences an oversight or a forgetfulness might bring again on the Congregation. I mean fire—that dreadful calamity with which we are threatened day and night, and against which none should be more cautiously guarded by incessant vigilance and prayer than ourselves, after the terrible experiences we have had of its ruinous visitations.

Never had we read of so many fires as we find daily recorded in the press since the first of January. What a warning! Two hundred and seventy-three in twenty-one days! Lives and property swept away every day and night by the merciless element of which we ourselves may become victims again at any moment unless, by continual vigilance and prayer, as I have stated, we escape from this terrible scourge, from an appalling wreck, from a horrible death.

A new warning will not suffice to restore peace to my mind. I must have an assurance from the Local Administration of each House that every possible precaution has been taken, and that every means has been duly provided to successfully meet an emergency we may have to face any day or night, without a moment's notice.

Let the Local Council meet, and conscientiously examine the case, and report to me without delay. Then, but not before, I will rest in peace, knowing that we have all done, and are doing, our duty to save ourselves from all accidents and all responsibilities of this kind.

Your unfeigned thanks for my last message encourage me to add a few lines, as a postscript of some importance, on the same subject.

I am delighted to see the joy with which the novena to the Holy Man of Tours has been commenced, and the fervor with which it is continued. But when I remember what this extraordinary Thaumaturgus said to me one day, in his own house; namely, "that I would see, before my death, the Congregation of the Holy Cross prosper as I had not seen it yet," I feel such confidence in

applying to him now, that the cause of his Beatification is introduced, that, instead of a single novena, I want a second one, to open on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin,—and even a third one to commence on the 25th of March. Numbers of miraculous cures at Lourdes are effected, not at the first or the second, but at the third immersion in the miraculous bath. As a rule, perseverance alone secures success.

In the next novena, with the intention for which we are now so fervently praying to our saintly friend and protector—the increase and sanctification of our Novitiates—shall be added another, namely, the full success, in the sense recently explained, of all our establishments; and in the third one, another again, perhaps the most important of all, shall be added to the other two already mentioned—the personal sanctification of each member of our dear Congregation.

Yesterday morning I learned, with agreeable surprise and heartfelt gratitude, that the Rev. Father Murphy, S. J., had procured in five years 400 subscribers to *The Ave Maria*; another priest in San Francisco takes 270 copies every week; and a devoted Sister of Charity procured 50 subscribers last year, where she was then teaching, and 20 more in the new mission to which she was removed. Are not such facts worthy of our meditation? Will they go unrewarded? Indeed they have been already rewarded. To me such facts are worth volumes.

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

No. CXXVII.

NOTRE DAME, IND., February 13, 1885.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

In reply to the numerous inquiries already received from Religious unable to fast through the approaching season of penance, I would beg to state that, by all possible means, the spirit of prayer and mortification should be not only preserved, but increased and perfected during Lent in the entire Congregation, and especially among those who, for sufficient reasons, will be dispensed from fasting by their immediate Superiors. Age, duties, infirmities, etc., may require from local authority a dispensation, which, while releasing from the obligation of the material fast, leaves on the soul a strict obligation to make up for it by some other means. As a rule, let the Way of the Cross or the Litany of the Saints be a substitute for the regular fast of the holy season.

But Lent must be for every Christian a time of reform and improvement in virtue. Religious should rank first in this general

saving movement. Whatever obstacle we may have discovered to prevent our progress towards perfection should be considered as our enemy—one we must reduce and starve. From here I see one not a model of regularity, but rather indolent, seeking for ease and comfort, 'indulging sometimes in half an hour's additional sleep; another, also, not an example of obedience and devotedness, but fond of doing his own will; another, again, whom you cannot approach but with gloved hands, somewhat touchy, not exactly proud or haughty, but a little vain and easily provoked, sensitive, unequal in temper; and again another, who has yet to learn what poverty means. Here is your enemy, your deadly foe, whose defeat you must achieve before Easter; otherwise, be content to live and die a nominal Religious.

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

No. CXXVIII.

ON BOARD "LA NORMANDIE," April 12, 1885.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

During my recent and brief sojourn in Rome one thing impressed me so forcibly that it actually monopolized most of my time and attention, from my arrival to my departure. It was a surprise, as wholly unexpected as important even at first sight.

Scarcely had I reached the Eternal City when I received, from a well-known and most worthy cloistered Community in France, a long and elaborate request; and a few hours later an urgent solicitation, from my best friends in Rome, to the very same effect. Although both originated from the same source—the reading of *The Ave Maria*—there was no sign whatever of concerted action; and yet in the same breath, as it were, both strongly pleaded the same cause.

The more I considered and weighed in silence this striking coincidence, the more inclined I felt to recognize in it, not a simple chance, which I never admit in anything, but a real *monitum*, well worth a serious consideration.

From both sides I was earnestly urged to avail myself of this new visit *ad Limina Apostolorum*, to give my attention to a wonderful association, now more than ever rapidly spreading over the globe, that of *Our Lady, or Mother, of Good Counsel*.

I was not a stranger to it; for, besides what had appeared in *The Ave Maria*, I had been daily reciting, since more than two years, the Litany of Our Lady of Good Counsel, of whom I had in my room a beautiful chromo, signed by Leo XIII. But all this was personal and private.



OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL.

In presence of such sudden and simultaneous entreaties, I began earnestly to study the subject, to inquire into its actual importance and investigate its possible results. After a few days of meditation and prayer, I commenced to wonder how and why I had not sooner understood something of the rich beauty of a devotion so ancient in the Church (centred in Genazzano since 1467, and known in Scutari, in High Albania, since the 4th century), so warmly recommended by a number of illustrious Popes, and especially by Pio Nono, who went in pilgrimage to Genazzano, in August, 1864, when, after a long and fervent prayer to the beloved Mother of Good Counsel, he presented her with a rich diadem—*éclatant de pierres précieuses du plus haut prix*. His first Mass had been celebrated before an image of this glorious Madonna of Genazzano; and since that day he never ceased to pray to and love her with his whole heart. Leo XIII shares in the same veneration. No wonder, indeed, if such a devotion, so beautiful in itself and resting on innumerable prodigies of divine grace, has reached the extreme limits of the world; and yet, I never thought of taking any step to propagate it. But now that light had entered into my mind I resolved to repair, if possible, my long and inexcusable indifference.

On the 25th of March, the Feast of the Annunciation, I applied for and received in due form an extensive Latin Brief, establishing the Pious Union of Our Lady, or Mother, of Good Counsel, at Notre Dame, Indiana, as a new central seat of admission for all the faithful who would wish to join it, and share in its abundant privileges and blessings. The following day our worthy Bishop gladly sanctioned it.

Whoever will read attentively the accompanying and comprehensive sketch of the association will readily understand why I hasten to return home and offer a chance to our beloved Religious, and many other fervent souls, to become regular members of this admirable Pious Union. While I deeply regret the loss of so many years of unpardonable inactivity, or *far niente*, my only consolation is in my firm resolution to spare no pains, as long as I live, to spread it throughout the New World, convinced as I am that I could not confer a greater blessing upon our Christian families than by drawing their attention and raising their eyes and hearts to this heavenly Seat of Wisdom, where, above all, we find united the solicitude of a tender Mother with all the lights and graces we need to secure our everlasting interests. Who will pause and fail to see its serious importance?

In an age like ours, when the worst enemies of our holy Faith—secret societies, a most dangerous press, an immoral literature, an increasing thirst after riches, the burning fever of gratifying degrading appetites, and many other similar agencies—combine to weaken and obliterate the first and best instincts of a Christian

heart. When surrounded and oppressed by so many conspiring deadly foes, where will the God-fearing soul turn for help? Where will youth and manhood and old age fly for salvation from danger and ruin? Do I exaggerate anything? No: but only single out a few from among the countless perils still increasing, with the undeniable result of gradually doing away with the spirit of faith, which alone can save society. *Saving counsels must be expected from above.* This admits of no reasonable doubt: the deepest and clearest-sighted minds of the day see the danger and confess it. The question arises alike from all quarters: Where is the remedy?

Ah! if the Star of the Sea is so earnestly and anxiously looked to on this boundless ocean with humble and fervent prayer to shine upon and guide a frail bark safe from one shore to the other, how much more should she not fix the constant attention of wise and honest travellers, whose every step she offers to direct through the dark paths of life, provided her guidance be accepted and followed?

Here, indeed, on the ever moving waves of the sea, one may feel very keenly the serious risks of a long voyage. But is it on the deep waters alone that man's life is exposed to danger? In one sense, a Christian soul is, we might say, safer on the ocean than in our largest cities. Here, though but a mere speck in the boundless space, in whatever direction you turn your eyes, you see the marvellous works of God as they came from His Hands—fresh and undefiled, singing and re-echoing the praises of the infinite power and wisdom of their Creator: *Cœli enarrant gloriam Dei, et opera manuum ejus annunciat firmamentum.* An immensity above, with its myriad of bright stars reflected by another immensity below as in a clear and spotless mirror, forcing upon your mind the grandeurs of God as no other standpoint on earth could ever afford; while on the most brilliant centres of civilization and progress, alas! one often feels ashamed of what he sees; for whatever glory attaches to such evidences of man's genius in the fine arts, a pure soul has frequently to repeat, after the prophet: *"Averte oculos meos, ne videant vanitatem!"* Here, among the vast and pure elements which encompass and permeate, as it were, your soul and body, you pray and adore and praise God in close union with all creation. But on land,—yes, in the finest walks of society, how often do not the most renowned masterpieces of immortalized artists, in painting and sculpture especially, reveal a snare, a trap of the evil spirit ever seeking for some immortal soul he may destroy! Sad, indeed, is man's condition upon earth if he rejects the heavenly Guide offered him as a light through the dark and dangerous paths he has to follow to the last, especially when his own restless heart continually reminds him that his worst enemy lies hidden in his own breast.

Truly, the life of man upon earth is a warfare, an unceasing struggle: *Vita hominis militia super terram*. To such countless perils, from within and without, no one will sooner fall a victim than he who apprehends nothing. *Vigilate!* To watch is the first condition of safety. St. Paul himself, enumerating the perils to which he was exposed, in his II Epistle to the Cor., chap. ii, makes a list of twenty-eight such sources from which he suffered: perils everywhere. If such a saint found no rest anywhere, what else but perils should we look for?

Late as I come, at the eleventh hour, I feel that I bring with Our Lady of Good Counsel a remedy to many an evil, a preventive or a cure of many a suffering, a relief, a source of joy to a multitude of troubled hearts, a precious light to countless souls blinded by passions and sin. Unless I am deceived as I never was in my life, this miraculous and heaven-born association, the most comprehensive, as they say, and most beautiful of all in its origin and results, will make among us, as wherever it was received, an epoch; it will create a new era, not only in the home and family, but in each member, in each office and employment. The rich and the poor, the aged and the young, the quiet and troubled soul, all conditions and ranks will feel its marvellous effects in proportion to their confidence in its prodigious virtue. Who has not to deplore in the past some regrettable loss or failure? some act of blindness or folly? some imprudence in words or deeds, damaging to character and standing in society? What brings up everywhere so many sad and humiliating reminiscences? Lack of wisdom—want of better knowledge, of proper counsel. Oh! what misery a proper counsel would have saved us from! But here dawns a new day. The night is over, and whoever open his eyes sees the light. Behold a counsellor who knows all our wants; a Mother who feels for us as no other ever felt; a power who can save us from all danger and loss as no human being could ever promise or afford.

Wealthy business-men, rich companies and firms have their lawyers to protect their vast interests. With what readiness and delight would not such an offer be accepted, if believed in, at such quarters? But where is the Christian who could for a moment even question the veracity, the full reliability of the present declaration: "Who knows our wants, and feels for them, and can satisfy them as the Mother of God given us for a Mother"? For it is of her Jesus Himself said to each of us, in the person of the one He loved: *Eccce Mater tua*—"Behold thy Mother!" Could any Christian feel any longer unconcerned, indifferent? One day St. Gertrude saw the Blessed Virgin covered with a large mantle, under which had fled for protection a multitude of wild beasts, attracted by her caresses. The Saint understood from this that our Blessed Mother takes care, not alone of the little lambs, as her Divine Son, or of pure souls



like His own, but even of the greatest sinners, to change them into lambs and followers of the meek Shepherd; and therefore no sinner, however deeply sunk in the mire of iniquity, should ever despair, nor even question a moment the clemency of Mary, whose holy name will no sooner be invoked in prayer than the protecting mantle will cover and save the poor sinner from endless misery. If such is the tender love of Mary for sinners and enemies, what will it be for those who, like St. John, take her for a Mother "and receive her unto their own"?

I know some good souls who will love to say with me: "Sweet and dearest Mother! what a consolation for me to see the Mother of my God coming, with her Divine Son Himself, to rescue me from all dangers! Alas! I am blind, and she offers me a mother's loving hand to guide me through this pathless wilderness to the gate of heaven! Weak and exhausted from so many falls and wounds, she raises me and promises to support me, through all obstacles and hardships, upon the saving arm of her divine charity. All she wants of me is an attentive readiness to follow the every movement of her unfailing direction. Dearest Mother! How shall I ever be able to acknowledge such a gratuitous and boundless love! To thee, and to thee alone, I promise to look as a child for every step and every act of mine. From this day forward be thou my light, my support and my guide! To my last, I will cleave to thee as a child to its mother! In all my doubts, difficulties, troubles and pains to thee will I turn with unmeasured confidence and an ever-increasing gratefulness. Let no false friend, no terrestrial interest or ambition of this world, let no bent of a vitiated nature be listened to any more: O my Mother! O my Sovereign! *Sonet vox tua in auribus meis! Trahe me post te, et curremus in odorem unguentorum tuorum!*"

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

No. CXXIX.

NOTRE DAME, IND., July 18, 1885.

REV. FATHERS AND DEAR BROTHERS IN JESUS CHRIST:

After such a beautiful and successful Retreat, I am sure you all feel happy, and more than ever desirous to show your gratitude to God, especially by a fixed resolve to live by our holy Rules, and as far as lies in each one's power, to draw the most abundant blessings upon our dear Congregation.

Let, then, everyone commence this new year (possibly the last for some of us) *with a will* to make his own obedience a rich mine of merits. Let us all finally prove that we understand the

the full extent of our obligations, and that we have made up our minds to live, not as nominal, but as real, model religious, zealous for our daily advancement in perfection, zealous for the complete fulfilment of our personal duties, and equally zealous for the interests and the good name of our precious and promising family, already so abundantly blessed. As a proof of it, let everyone try his best, by prayer or action, to procure some vocations, pupils, etc.

The entreaties and thanks I have lately received from a number of our best Religious concerning the alarming abuse of cigars, and the stopping of this scandalous evil, leave no doubt in my mind that it will never re-appear among us. You may see yourselves how urgent it was to prohibit their use "in virtue of holy obedience." The very day after the closing of the Retreat showed, to the painful disappointment of many, that nothing short of it would stop the evil. Again, you may judge yourselves of the gravity of the case, and of the obligation in which I was placed to put an end to it; we have, at least, one hundred Religious in the Province using cigars, which means a daily expense of from 5 to 15, or even 20 cents for each one, or, on an average, an expense of 10 cents *per day*, or from \$30 to \$40 *per annum*, or a total yearly expense of over \$3,000! I never realized it—nor did you yourselves—before my serious attention was drawn to this daily-increasing unnecessary expenditure. Who could approve of my taking such a responsibility on my conscience when I know that common tobacco is even less injurious to health? I feel no small relief in the joy our best members show in the cure of this threatening abuse. Should anyone still believe that he cannot do without cigars, let him apply to myself for a dispensation.

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

No. CXXX.

NOTRE DAME, IND., July 23, 1885.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

One of our greatest consolations, from the day of our Profession in our dear Congregation to the last of our existence here below, is undoubtedly the assurance that hundreds of holy Masses, Communions, and Ways of the Cross shall be offered to God in our behalf as soon as our death shall be known to the faithful members of our Religious family. Where is the Christian in the world who can depend on the same blessing? Indeed we are privileged above many others. This is secured by our Constitutions to each and to all; hence, we depend upon it confidently.

Again, we have here a privileged altar unique in this New

World; and all our Rev. Fathers, wherever they are, enjoy, three times a week, the blessing of a privileged altar.

Now, considering that one of our most consoling duties is to secure to all our beloved Religious the full extent of these precious favors granted us by the Holy See, and even to remove all possible delay in the enjoyment of the same when we die; considering that we have among ourselves, without appealing to anyone outside of the Congregation, ample means to secure these precious consolations; considering that our own Rev. Fathers, who feel by right most affectionately for the deceased members of their family, and who frequently, as is the case in our colleges, have scarcely any intentions of Masses, should therefore be requested, first of all, to say the Masses prescribed by our Rules, instead of waiting elsewhere sometimes whole weeks, because of absence or previous promises; considering, also, the distance of some of our missions, which can scarcely be reached by mail in less than four or five days, I have come to the following conclusion which, I feel confident, all will approve as the best means to secure promptly and most advantageously the blessings we are entitled to by our Constitutions.

Our Rev. Father Granger, Assistant-General, shall take upon himself, as soon as informed of the demise of any one of our Religious, to divide among the Rev. Fathers of the Province all the Masses to which the number of our Houses gives a right to the deceased; these holy Masses to be said immediately; every House sending, on receipt of the obituary notice, the two dollars prescribed for the two Masses; the Brothers and Sisters remitting the same to his Reverence, without fail. As I come nearer every day to our beloved departed ones, I naturally feel more concerned in their lot. Who among us will be first benefited by these regulations? It is God's secret. But we all know "that it is a wholesome thought to pray for the dead," and what we do for them, shall, in Divine Justice, be done to us.

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

No. CXXXI.

NOTRE DAME, IND., Aug. 25, 1885.

REV. FATHERS AND BELOVED CHILDREN IN JESUS CHRIST:

We find in the Office of this day—Feast of St. Louis, King of France—a lesson which, though very brief in the text, is worth a volume for us, as a family of Religious teachers. Here are the words with which it opens: "Louis IX, King of France, having lost his father very early, was trained up under his saintly mother Blanche's most holy discipline—in *Blanchæ matris sanctissima*

*disciplina educatus*”—from which words we may infer, with all historians, that to his mother, next to God, the Church owes this great Saint, the model of all kings. Such was his own conviction as long as he lived; nor will it ever change. Through all eternity he will thank God, who gave him such a mother. What a lesson for each of us! She trained him for a perishable crown, in which, through the light of faith, she made him see the imperishable one, of which the dazzling and everlasting brilliancy could not be compared by any means with the passing splendor of the first.

Such is the training God Himself entrusts to us of every child He brings to our schools. Oh, the precious trust! How beautiful and admirable, if properly discharged! but how fearful in its consequences if negligently fulfilled! Parents must answer for their children as long as they keep them at home; but when we have received them into our schools the responsibility of their education rests with us. Now, the question is, what is that responsibility? Is it simply to make them good scholars in reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, mathematics, etc.? They could have learned all this as well in the public schools. This is a part, but not all we bind ourselves to, when we receive them.

Now, more strictly than ever before, the obvious meaning of said contract is that whenever we admit a child into our parochial schools we bind ourselves thoroughly to train that innocent little favorite of Christ, first of all, in the knowledge of the elements of Christianity, and alike into the daily practice of Christian virtues. Hence the primary duty which should supersede all others, among the sacred obligations of a conscientious and honest teacher of Christian youth, to teach Catechism and daily prayers in a manner both efficient and interesting to every child in the class. Here is, above all, the apostolate of the devoted and able teacher who appreciates the grandeur and beauty of the mission received from above. If no good can be effected without efforts and pains, nay, even sacrifices, who could expect to realize full success in such an important undertaking without a will that knows no pain, or a boundless devotedness, until the end is reached? Here is a soul created after the image and likeness of God, not the child of an emperor or of a king of this world, but far above all terrestrial dignities that shine to-day and to-morrow will lie in the darkness of the tomb; a child of God, I say, for whose salvation and endless happiness the Son of God Himself died the death of the Cross, and for whom a throne is already erected in the celestial court; whose glorious destiny is to sing forever the praises of God with the blessed spirits in heaven. In the eyes of the flesh, that little child may look insignificant; but in the light of faith how different does he appear, assisted and presented by his Guardian Angel! O teachers of youth, be not deceived by appearances; by the poverty

of the garments he wears; look at him again, and you will soon recognize in him one of those our Blessed Lord called to Himself, even when His disciples would remove them from Him: "At that hour the disciples came to Jesus, saying: 'Who, thinkest Thou, is the greater in the kingdom of Heaven?' And Jesus, calling unto Him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said: 'Amen, I say to you: unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of Heaven; and he that shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a mill-stone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. See that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you that their angels in heaven always see the Face of My Father who is in heaven. It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.'" (St. Matthew, chap. xviii.) "And they brought to Him young children that He might touch and bless them; and the disciples rebuked them that brought them, whom, when Jesus saw, He was much displeased, and said to them: 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen, amen, I say to you: whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it.' And embracing them, and laying His Hands upon them, He blessed them." (St. Mark, x.) Hence the veneration the child is held in ever since. Hence the joy with which a true Religious receives an obedience to go and teach little children, the beloved favorites of Jesus Himself.

When a king entrusts any one in his kingdom with the education of the heir to the crown, the act of such a choice or preferment is looked upon as one of the most signal favors he could bestow; and to justify it no pains will be deemed too great by the one so highly honored. Oh! religious and devoted teachers, what a lesson and consolation for you in your noble task! In a vast kingdom, among millions, one or two may chance to be selected for the education and training of a prince, and the task will not be an easy one. But you, each one of you personally, will receive your appointment from the King of kings; for a dozen, thirty or more, of those immortal souls, whose destinies for life and for eternity will be placed, chiefly and almost exclusively, in your hands. What a splendid honor! But, at the same time, what a dreadful responsibility!

The vocation of a Religious to teach young children can scarcely be overestimated. I have always feared, on the contrary, that its importance might not be sufficiently appreciated by some. Let us all pray humbly and fervently to God and to Our Lady of Good

Counsel that we may more and more fully realize, day after day, the beauty and the momentous responsibility of our holy mission as teachers of God's precious ones.

What we have said of our teachers in parochial schools manifestly applies even more strictly to our Boarding Establishments, as our control over boarders is more absolute than over day-scholars. Again, in our Colleges and Academies students are to be trained for higher circles in society, where they are naturally expected to exercise a greater influence, if properly fitted for the important posts or offices they will soon occupy. Most of them, indeed, will soon be active leaders in commerce or politics, according to their acquirements in sciences or the standing of their families. Therefore, if every scholar in our humblest schools justly calls for our best efforts, to fit him for the battles he shall have to fight through life, especially when we know that he shall meet almost at every step, ten against one, the atheistical products of public schools,—what should not be our care and solicitude in training up the future leaders of those endless and unavoidable encounters on which all that is to secure the triumph of God's eternal truth over error, and of morality over degrading vice, chiefly depends? Let us all bear in mind, constantly and vividly, that the time has come to fight the battle of the Lord by a most careful training discipline of every young soldier entrusted to our skill and devotedness. The war is declared and open—the most dangerous ever known to Christianity. To look upon it with indifference would be a shameful surrender. Whatever may be the multitude of our opponents, “if God is with us, *quis contra nos?*” Let us arm every young heart seeking for help under our glorious standard of the Cross with the imperishable shield of the knowledge and love of truth and practice of virtue, and they will pass unhurt and victorious through the fiery battle-field of life—“*In hoc signo vinces!*”

The above lines, as every one may see, at the opening of our schools and the beginning of a year which is to close with a General Chapter,\* while it is expected to be marked by several other important events, should not be received as a matter of form, but as a Circular of an especial and grave character. It will come to every House and every member of the family as a timely warning that the new scholastic year should be spent everywhere and by everyone with an unprecedented attention to Rules and duties, as each character is to be more minutely studied and reported for the searching examination of the highest authorities at the close of the year. Hence the evident necessity of every Head of a House

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\* The chief object of the next General Chapter will be to raise the standard of our schools at any cost, even of any establishment that could not be supplied with superior teachers.

to see to its perfect regularity, from the weekly meeting of the Council of Administration to the *minutiae* of the rising and retiring of each and of all. Quarterly accounts shall be rigidly exacted, even of solitary missionaries. Should any one be found, after a conscientious examination and warning, unfit for the post or office first assigned, let such a one be reported to proper quarters for removal.

The war against our holy Faith is not here mentioned as a commonplace fact or event, but as a *reality* to which it is high time to call your attention. The persecution is not the bloody and savage effort of old; but under its mild aspect and friendly appearances it strikes at the very foundation of religion everywhere, especially in the school-room, where it succeeds in destroying or preventing faith from every heart and soul. Hence the new legions of young atheists deluging society. Such a flood of infidelity, spreading as it does its devastations in all directions, threatens, evidently, more deplorable results than any local sanguinary persecution ever known. Appalling as the evil of the day in reality is, we see no remedy to its progress but in our schools. In view of such calamities, who among us will fail to see the vital importance of the service or help we are called on to render society at large?

Would to God that all our teachers would comprehend this vital question! Every sacrifice necessary to secure its success would be too gladly accepted and offered. Then we would see in every classroom what is always admired wherever it is found, namely, a teacher respected, esteemed and loved by a whole class of happy children, in perfect order and silence, attentive to every word of their teacher, moving in and out like little spirits, without the least noise; polite and courteous to every visitor; reading out in such clear voice that you hear every syllable they utter; in a word, behaving themselves within the walls of the school as in the vestibule of the church. Is this the result of the fear of the rod? No, by no means: but the clear evidence of a superior mind in the chair; of an accomplished teacher whose ability has fairly won and monopolizes the best feelings of the entire class.

Need I repeat again what has been so often recommended to those in charge of an establishment? (1) to remain at home, and permit no absence; (2) to see that every class be taught, not only regularly, but efficiently, to the satisfaction of all and to the honor of our Congregation; (3) to secure to every teaching member time and means for continual improvement in what is to be taught; (4) to dress strictly according to Rule; (5) to observe economy and shun all unnecessary expenses.

In all our Houses the school must be opened with the holy Mass, if possible, and a sermon by the Rev. Pastor.

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

No. VI.\*

REV. FATHERS AND DEAR BROTHERS IN JESUS CHRIST:

It is once more my painful duty to solicit your prayers and usual suffrages for one of our beloved members—Brother Peter—who died in France, on the 15th ult., from a stroke of apoplexy. His death was quite sudden. Fortunately, he had been at Communion the morning previous, and, better yet, his long religious life had been, as all who knew him best unanimously say, an attentive and earnest preparation for that supreme hour: a warning for us all. He was sixty-six years old, and one of the first who entered with Brother Vincent at Ruillé—the birthplace of the Congregation. Only one member of those early days now remains. Let all try to hasten, by their fervent prayers, the admission of the dear departed soul into heaven.

In a few days I must leave you again for Europe. On the 30th inst. I shall, *D. v.*, take the boat at New York for Brest. How long I may be gone is more than I can now state with any certainty. One thing, however, I will positively say: I will not delay my return one week, or even one day, unnecessarily. This question of a prompt return rests in a great measure upon yourselves. You may hasten it, I think, in two ways—by your prayers, and by your material assistance in procuring the means to save the honor of our Congregation; for however much I would prefer to keep an absolute silence on the subject, I am in duty bound to reveal to you a wrong which you must aid me to redress. Here it is: In consequence of several heavy losses which I mentioned to you two years ago, the Congregation in France is for the present unable to meet its liabilities. To repudiate the debt on the plea that we here did not contract it, would be tacitly to consent to an injustice by the Congregation towards its *bona fide* creditors. Such a course on our part, able as we are, would dishonor us, and would meet its condemnation in the noble and fatherly act of our illustrious Holy Father, who on his return from Gaëta assumed the whole debt of state left him by the infamous triumvirate who had caused the Revolution of 1848.

Thanks to Heaven, we have abundant means to save justice and honor, if we unite together with a will. From France came the first resources in men and money to establish us here: it is simply just that some return should be made from among us to our elder Brothers in France in the hour of their need. It may turn out to be but a loan; at least this is my honest belief; but should it prove otherwise, I feel confident that even then every Religious here would cheerfully consent to suffer a little in order to relieve from

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\* This Circular was unintentionally omitted from its proper place—page 81



embarrassment and injurious imputations the first portion of our own Religious family, now severely visited, but yet with a bright future, if timely and duly assisted. This spirit of mutual assistance is essentially Christian; but on this score the Religious is not unfrequently put to the blush by the commonest member of secret societies; for such is the first avowed object of all benevolent associations,—mutual aid among brethren. If nothing else, an ordinary sense of honor would make them charitable towards each other. Among merchants such facts are of daily occurrence. They rescue each other from ruin. Could we feel justified in an ungodly state of insensibility? Why should we not be as ready to help each other as Freemasons, Odd-Fellows, etc?

With God's grace, we will all understand better our obligations. We will rather postpone for a time even the most desirable improvements or personal gratifications. As for myself, I must consider the liquidation of what is due in justice my first duty. If possible, I shall prevent any one from losing a cent by the Congregation. To this end I am willing to sacrifice personal comfort and ease and rest, and to stay away under the yoke until the work is done. To leave France again before I have satisfied our creditors' just claims, and thus relieved our Houses there from annoyance and apprehensions, is more than I would have courage to do.

You now see plainly how to help me to return among you soon—pray and act. I therefore direct that in all our Houses the Council of Administration meet on receipt of this Circular to examine how far they can help the General Administration, and immediately inform the Provincial of the amount they can remit him within thirty days. I will consider it not only a duty fulfilled, but a personal favor to myself; indeed I could not help considering a deaf ear to such an appeal as an evidence of little love for the Congregation. Furthermore, I wish all the members of Holy Cross in the New World to be apprised of what has been done by each House in these difficulties. I repeat it: a common effort of good will may save all. Understand me: to save the Congregation in France, is to save us here! Which of us would consent, when he could prevent it, to see his Congregation dishonored in the eyes of Rome and of all Europe? Would it not blast all our hopes in this country? Rather should we confine ourselves to stricter economy for awhile, and secure the merit of having saved—what is more precious than the life of the Congregation—its honor.

E. SORIN.

N. B.—Before leaving, I wish to record here, for the information of all, that I positively prescribe the ringing of the big bell every night in the year, at least as long as I live. I consider it a magnificent interpreter of our best sentiments of love, gratitude and devot-

edness towards our glorious Patroness, and, at the same time, like a touching appeal to all Christian hearts around to consecrate themselves once more to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. It is a delight for thousands in the County of St. Joseph. Every inhabitant is rejoiced to hear that splendid voice at night. Every soul seems to repeat: *Sonet vox tua in auribus meis, vox enim tua dulcis*—"May thy voice sound in my ears, for it is sweet, indeed!"—*Canticles*.

