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ECHOES
OF
A CENTURY IN INDIA
(1842-1942)



Congregation of Jesus and Mary

SIMLA
July 31st, 1942

RANCHI / CATHOLIC PRESS /

*To Our Mother Foundress
and all our dear Mothers and Sisters
who have laboured for the glory of God
in this Province.*

*We are but one throughout the world so wide :
On Fourvière's hill ; on India's burning plain ;
Amid the flowering orange groves of Spain ;
Where the St. Lawrence rolls his mighty tide,
Beneath the star-set flag that floats out free ;
In English meadows to the sea coast nigh ;
Where the Swiss mountains tower to the sky ;
Where Peter's Dome looks down in majesty.
We are but one in Rule and customs blest,
One in heart's language, understood by each,
One in our hopes, our strivings for one end—
God's ways to learn, that we may others teach.
Jesus and Mary ! Your sweet names we blend,
Oh ! keep us one, we care not for the rest !*

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PREFACE

I very willingly join with the Sisters of Jesus and Mary in thanking God for the blessings He has bestowed on them, and for the work He has enabled them to accomplish in India during the past hundred years.

The Congregation was still in its infancy when the call came for a missionary band for distant India. It was a venture. In the popular imagination India was at that time a land of mystery—a land of serpents and scorpions, of tigers and elephants, of arid plains and vast jungles, and of recurring epidemics of cholera and smallpox. Undeterred by the fewness of their numbers, undaunted by the perils that might attend the Missionaries, the Superiors of the Congregation accepted the Mission and every Sister in the Community of Fourvière, in Lyons, volunteered to answer the call. Without delay, six Sisters and a French Abbé set out for the mission field in Agra, with absolute confidence in God—prepared to *spend themselves and be spent* in the cause of Christ.

In the little book to which this note is meant to be a foreword, Mother St. Teresa, the superior of the little band, gives a most vivid description of the journey to India, and to Agra, which lasted ten months; the account might pass as another chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*. The Sisters braved stormy seas, desert sands, dangerous river passages, rough

roads in bullock carts, often under the rays of a broiling sun.

The spirit of St. Paul sustained them in their sufferings and trials. That spirit they bequeathed to those who would follow them and carry on their work in the days to come. Neither the terrors of the Indian Mutiny nor the destruction of the work they had accomplished could damp the ardour of that spirit. When the danger had passed, they were offered repatriation to their *Belle France*, which remained in their memory as beautiful as ever. They declined the offer; there was something still more beautiful in India: there were ignorant children to be instructed and brought to Christ, orphans to be cared for, and the sick and plague-stricken to be nursed back to health or be ushered into heaven. India was now their home, and there they would remain until called by God to their heavenly country.

The work of the Congregation in India is beyond all praise. They have had trials and disappointments in abundance; they have seen young Sisters—martyrs to duty—pass to God in the bloom of life, but they have never recognized *failure*: in the lexicon of their lives and work no such word exists. As elastic in their spirit as was St. Paul, who could make himself *all to all, in order to gain all to Christ*, they have been able to meet all situations and adapt themselves to all kinds of work without in any way compromising the spirit of their Institute. Their charity never failed to find a solution for every case of distress.

The Foundress of the Congregation, Claudine Thévenet, better known as Mother St. Ignatius, expressed a dying wish that her spiritual children would *love to be unknown and to be accounted as naught*. That too may have been the favour she begged of God on her death-bed—she has not revealed what it was. Be that as it may, the Sisters of Jesus and Mary have kept alive the tradition of humility throughout the long years they have laboured in India. There are many members of the Congregation to-day who could shine in the public eye as educationalists, artists and writers, but they have no wish to appear before the footlights of public opinion; they prefer to impart to others in secret their knowledge and artistic spirit, while they remain unknown themselves.

If this little book is seeing the light of day on the occasion of the centenary of their coming to India, it is not intended to recount their deeds and sacrifices; it is but a small tribute of gratitude to God for the blessings He has bestowed on them, and to the memory of those brave Sisters who have passed away and left behind them a tradition of selfless sacrifice that no religious Congregation dare allow to die. *It is good to keep the secret of the King but honourable to reveal and confess the works of God.*

Feast of the Visitation, 1942

✠ SYLVESTER PATRICK
Archbishop of Delhi-Simla

I

THE BEGINNINGS

IT is just one hundred years since the first Jesus and Mary nuns arrived in India.

Their ship entered Bombay Harbour on the 3rd of June, a First Friday, and they landed on the following day, the First Saturday. Thus Our Lord and His Blessed Mother welcomed to this country the devoted band of six who had crossed the seas to labour for the glory of Their Holy Names. On November 13th of the same year the nuns made their solemn entry into Agra, the mission field appointed to them by Divine Providence.

The Congregation of Jesus and Mary was not originally founded as a Missionary Institute : it was born amid the wrecks of the French Revolution in Lyons, to succour and evangelise the poor of the rising generation, hopeless, godless and abandoned. Nevertheless, its constitutions and ideals rendered it apt for missionary work.

Claudine Thévenet, the Foundress, was born in Lyons in 1774, of a wealthy and honourable family engaged in the silk trade that has made the city famous. Her parents were solidly Christian, pious and very charitable. From her mother in particular Claudine inherited a strong character, with a basis of moral courage that nothing could shake.

Claudine was nineteen when the terrible Revolution of 1793 broke out in France. Her two elder brothers fought in the defence of Lyons against the troops of the Convention, they were denounced when the city fell and thrown into prison. Claudine disguised herself as a peasant woman and, fearless of any consequences for herself, she used to visit them and bring them food. This they shared with an old priest who afterwards heard their last Confession. One day when she arrived at the gate she was hailed by a drunken guard: "Here, citizeness, toast the Republic!" and he held out his dirty glass half filled with wine. It was all she could do to choke back her indignation and disgust, but with a heroic effort she drained the glass and passed inside.

Some time later, after some fruitless attempts to obtain entrance, she was on her way to the prison with a faithful old servant when she came suddenly face to face with a long line of patriots, the flower of the youth of Lyons, marching two by two between their guards to the place of execution. Her heart nearly stopped beating when she saw her brothers among the prisoners. Quietly forcing her way through the accompanying crowd she came close to them. Louis, the elder, whispered to the servant: "Pretend you have dropped something, and take out of my shoe a letter for my mother." Then to his sister he added: "Forgive, Claudie, as we forgive them."

More dead than alive, Claudine followed the mournful procession to the place of execution. Shud-

dering yet strong, she stood while the volley was fired, while the curious crowd melted away, leaving only a few weeping women to creep among the piles of victims, seeking their loved ones. She went with them. Suddenly a sinister sound fell on her ears ; she lifted her eyes but shut them quickly, stifling a cry of horror—the brutal Jacobin soldiers were clubbing the survivors to death with the butts of their muskets !

The memory of that day remained in the girl's mind as an abiding horror. All her life long a twitching of the muscles of her head and neck betrayed what it had cost her to remain so calm, yet she and her noble parents were worthy of her noble brothers : they forgave as the boys had done, and refused to denounce the traitor even when urged to do so.

Always serious-minded, Claudine now turned away from any thought of pleasure and gave herself up to her family and to working among the poor. She and a few friends, filled with pity for the ragged children who roamed the streets uncared-for and untaught, sought for some means to help them.

A zealous priest, Abbé André Coindre, formed the pious group into the Association of the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary (1816). Two years later, after the annual General Communion of the Association, July 31st 1818, he suddenly announced in a tone of inspiration : " You must unite and form a community at once, without hesitation or delay ! "

Then turning to Claudine Thévenet, he presented her to her companions as their Superior. She fell on her knees as if crushed, but he exhorted her : " Heaven has chosen you, be faithful to the call."

Father Coindre then drew up an outline of the regulations they were to follow, founded on the Rule of St. Augustin and the Constitutions of St. Ignatius. "To train up souls for Heaven by means of a truly christian education" was to be their ideal and their constant effort, while working unremittingly at their own sanctification.

On the Feast of St. Bruno, October 6th 1818, Claudine left her mother and the home she loved so much and with one companion went to the poor little place they had secured for their orphans. To the end of her life Claudine never forgot the mental anguish of that first night, the doubts and forebodings. But once again she stood firm and immovable. God blessed her sacrifice ; the modest orphanage grew and prospered and was removed to the heights of Fourvière, under the shadow of Our Lady's sanctuary. Then a boarding school for girls of the better classes was opened by request, followed by two or three similar foundations in neighbouring towns.

In February 1823, Claudine and her first companions had the happiness of taking the Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, of receiving a religious name and wearing a religious habit (hitherto they had worn a modest black costume). Claudine chose the

name of Mother St. Ignatius. Her zeal embraced all classes of society, but her preference was always for the poor. She was never so happy as when among the orphans, performing the lowliest services for them and showing them a mother's love. "We must be mothers to the children," she would say, "real mothers, both for soul and body. We must love them all equally, but if we ever have any preference, it should be for the poorest, the most miserable, the most tiresome." At a certain period there was question of giving up for a time one or other of the establishments. Mother St. Ignatius did not hesitate: "Let us give up the boarding school and keep our orphans." From the outset the tradition of the Congregation was established: hard work, devotedness to the children, forgetfulness of self and absolute confidence in God.

The Foundress had a strong character, full of energy, yet full too of sweetness; inflexible when there was question of observing the Rule, she was all kindness and sympathy towards the nuns when they came to her for advice or consolation. She had no moods, she was always the same, calm, dignified, with manners of perfect courtesy. She often exhorted her spiritual daughters to "be ready to bear everything from others and never give others anything to bear from you".

Like the great St. Teresa, she insisted on common sense in those who wished to join her Institute. She wanted its members to sanctify themselves not

by visions or extraordinary penances, unsuited to an active Order, but by strict observance of the Rule for the love of God. She tried to form active, energetic religious, who would devote themselves conscientiously to their duties and the common good. An excellent judge of character, she distributed the employments according to the talents and virtues of each one, and carefully trained those in particular who gave good promise for the future.

In her own home, Claudine had been known as "the little violet". As Mother St. Ignatius humility was her favourite virtue. "She never spoke of herself" was the testimony given of her by her nephew the Marist. She put into practice the maxim insisted on by Père Coindre: "Love to be unknown and counted as naught." So well did she observe it that not one of her writings has come down to us except a few letters to her niece. Moreover, it has been the constant tradition of the Congregation that Mother St. Ignatius prayed that it would always live and work unknown.

Her humility did not in any way weaken her moral courage. She cared little what might befall herself, but where the Congregation was concerned she was adamant. Convinced that Père Coindre had been inspired by God in its foundation, she steadfastly withstood all attempts to change the Rule he had drawn up, or to let the Institute be merged in a somewhat older and better known Order. On these two points she had much to suffer, but she succeeded

in preserving intact the spirit and identity of the Congregation. The Rules and Constitutions approved by the Holy See in 1847 were substantially the same as those prepared by Père Coindre and written out by Mother St. Ignatius' own hand; the same approved by the Bishop of Puy in 1823, and by Mgr. de Pins, Administrator of Lyons, in 1825 and 1838.

The crosses that set God's seal on a foundation were not wanting in her life. One of the greatest of these was the untimely death in 1826 of Père Coindre, the Founder of the Congregation and her unfailing counsellor and friend. She knew too the sorrow of losing members of the community by death or by defection. She lived through the troubled times of the revolution of 1830, and the revolt of the silk-weavers of Lyons in 1834, when the insurgents camped on the Place de Fourvière in front of the Convent, and bullets whizzed through the chapel and past her head. On her very death-bed God allowed a great trial to come upon her. The Chaplain of that time, a holy man yet one whose ideas were different to Père Coindre's, said to her severely before the whole community assembled round her bed: "You have received graces enough to convert a kingdom, what have you done with them? You are an obstacle to the progress of your Congregation. How will you answer God when He asks you an account of everything?" The saintly Mother received this admonition with admirable self-control, begging God with all her heart to pardon her faults, and aban-

doning herself to His infinite mercy, but afterwards she acknowledged that she had nearly burst into tears. She answered the prayers for Extreme Unction with great fervour, then after praying with all her heart she said aloud : " I have asked our good Master a great favour for our dear Congregation, may He grant it to me ! " What was that favour ? We do not know.

Mother St. Ignatius died on the 3rd of February, 1837, a First Friday, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Her last words, pronounced with a tone of conviction, her face aglow with heavenly joy, were " How good God is ! "

Six days after her death her successor was elected, Mother St. Andrew, the first Assistant General and first Novice Mistress, specially trained for these important posts by the Mother Foundress. She had been a member of the Association of the Holy Hearts in 1816, had joined the community at Pierres-Plantées in 1819, and had taken her Vows with Mother St. Ignatius and her companions. She too was a sincere lover of humility, delighting in manual work and in serving her Sisters ; she was obedient, mortified and charitable, with gentle, engaging manners. She knew how to make virtue attractive. She often told her novices : " The love of God is a fire that is kept alight only with the wood of sacrifice and of the love of the Cross ; if we do not feed it with that wood, it dies out." And by her example she led the way.

II

THE CALL TO THE MISSIONS

BARELY four years after the death of the Mother Foundress, there came a call to Fourvière which would have rejoiced her apostolic heart and which she must surely have seconded in Heaven.

Mgr. Borghi, Vicar Apostolic of Tibet and Hindustan and Bishop of Agra, finding his mission work impeded by the lack of Christian education in his vast territory, had resolved to seek nuns in Europe to come to his aid. He appealed through Mgr. Rossat, Vicar General of Gap (France), who called at the Mother House on the 24th of July, 1841, and asked Reverend Mother St. Andrew to accept a mission in the East Indies, informing her of the pressing and attractive proposals made by Bishop Borghi.

He gave our Reverend Mother some idea of the work to be undertaken, and showed her several letters from the worthy Prelate. We give some extracts here —

DEAR REVEREND FATHER,

I come to ask you to find me six European religious, devoted to the education of youth. The only hope of converting India is by means of education. Every other has been attempted and produced only unsatisfactory results.

Education offers a longer road but a surer one. There are numerous poor families who would give us their children if only we could feed them and take entire charge of them. A rich Catholic, a general in the army of the king of the Marathas whose capital is Gwalior, has given me a beautiful house with a large garden, for the purpose of securing a Christian education for a certain number of children.

They would be admitted from the age of five or six ; instructed not only in the truths of our holy religion, but would be taught to work, so as to accustom them to a life of activity, and which would place them in the position of earning an honest livelihood later on.

They could also earn some money during the time they were being educated, which could be set aside and handed to them when they were leaving the establishment. This small sum would defray their initial expenses and so prevent these Christians from returning to their superstitions, which they would be tempted to do if they found themselves destitute.

I beg of you, therefore, to find me six religious, and I wish one or two of these should be English or Irish. If this is not possible, see that one or two know English sufficiently well and speak it properly.

Everything is ready for their reception. All my hopes of evangelical conquest are founded on these religious !

All the Apostolic Vicars of India are of the same opinion and all admit that education alone can overcome the obstinacy of the Indian ! I enclose an appeal to French religious and you may present it, if you consider it fitting, to the Congregations you visit. The mission which I propose has two objects in view : the education of European girls of good family, and the education of Indian girls of the poorer classes.

✠ J. JOSEPH ANTOINE,
Bishop of Agra

The following letter of Bishop Borghi was addressed to the Religious to whom Monsieur Rossat would submit the above proposal :

MY VERY DEAR SISTERS,

Being persuaded that zeal for the salvation of souls and the love of our Divine Master burns in your hearts, I come to offer you a grand opportunity of satisfying your holy desires in this respect. I come to propose to you to make the sacrifice of parents and fatherland and of all you hold most dear ; to take up your abode in India with the sole intention of gaining souls to God.

This country, my dear Sisters, will be your field of battle, especially intended for spiritual triumphs. You alone must be the missionaries among your own sex here. All the means attempted, except education, have almost completely failed, you alone can impart such a benefit to the daughters of India.

Allow me to remind you that millions of souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, your Heavenly Spouse, are being lost for all eternity. You, my dear Sisters, can save some of these by snatching them from the infernal dragon. Would not this happiness alone be the most powerful of reasons for hearts that love God like yours? Would this privilege be purchased at too high a price, even at the cost of every sacrifice? We expect nothing less from the religious of France. They are not less remarkable for their zeal than the clergy of that country. Give us, dear Sisters, of your superabundance and we shall be content.

The Mother General and her Counsellors were now faced with a momentous decision. The Congregation was not specially founded for the foreign missions. On the other hand, its members burned with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The work proposed by Mgr. Borghi—the education of European girls in boarding schools, and of poor native children in orphanages, where they would be taught the means of earning an honest livelihood,

corresponded in a wonderful way with the ideal of our Mother Foundress and the actual work of the Congregation in France. A fervent novena was made, a Council was held, and the unanimous vote of the counsellors accepted the proposal, to the great joy of Mgr. Rossat and Bishop Borghi, and with the sanction of Cardinal de Bonald, Archbishop of Lyons. Henceforth Claudine Thevenet's foundation was to be a missionary Congregation, and to number among its members countless "martyrs of Duty", if not actual martyrs. Mgr. Rossat was delighted with the acceptance of his proposal. He hastened to inform Bishop Borghi, who wrote as follows to Our Reverend Mother St. Andrew:—

AGRA,
20th Nov. 1841.

MADAM,

I thank you most heartily for the charity you have shown us by responding so promptly to my appeal, and for having informed me of the good news.

If our Sisters are not already *en route*, I would request you, not to encourage them (they are already on fire with zeal), but to exhort them to strengthen themselves first of all in prayer and in the practice of every religious virtue, and also to study seriously the English language.

I give to all and each my blessing, and I consider them as so many holy Angels, whom God sends to our help in this infidel land.

From this day forward, without withdrawing them from your affection, you will permit me, Madam, to adopt them all as my daughters, and I promise, as far as lies in my power, to be a Father to them.

I shall share with them the bread that God gives me; and as regards spiritual helps of which they enjoyed so great an abundance in Lyons, I shall see that they do not lack them in Agra.

I love to repeat that the Sisters will do much more good here than we could do. They will be instrumental in the salvation of many.

✠ J. JOSEPH ANTOINE,
Bishop of Agra.

The first colony, chosen with care among the many who longed to devote themselves, consisted of five French nuns and an Irish novice. Mother St. Teresa who was Assistant General and Novice Mistress at Fourvière, was named Superioress of the little band. She was capable, devoted, full of energy, truly humble and a model religious. She had a warm heart, a sense of humour even in the midst of trials, and a wonderful submission to the Will of God. Mother St. Ambrose, kind and gentle, a musician and

the future Directress of the Cathedral choir; Mother St. Paul, a distinguished artist and saintly nun; Mother St. Augustine, a lover of the poor and an excellent administrator, and Mother St. Joachim whose cultured mind and dignified bearing made her devoted zeal doubly attractive, made up the community. Madam St. Vincent de Paul, the novice, was of delicate health but gentle, unselfish and very fervent. Mgr. Rossat made a generous sacrifice of one of his best priests, M. l'Abbé Caffarel, to be Chaplain to the party, to minister to their spiritual wants on the journey and conduct them in safety to their destination. Mgr. Rossat wrote to Fourvière as follows:—

29th November, 1841.

MADAM,

I should be grieved to thwart the designs of God, and on the other hand I have not the courage to refuse your first request. Consequently I yield to your wishes and to the pressing solicitations of the Abbé Caffarel.

I cannot hide the fact that I am making a great sacrifice in giving up this priest, one of the most virtuous and most deserving among the clergy of my diocese. But I realise that it is necessary to have men of his stamp to secure success in such an important undertaking.

I am indeed happy to have part in the good work, so as to enjoy some share in the

merit acquired by these great and generous souls who think only of obedience and devotedness.

I shall accompany by my prayers and my blessing the very dear and interesting little colony.

I am. . . .

✠ LOUIS,
Bishop of Gap.

Before the departure took place, Reverend Mother St. Andrew and Mother St. Teresa resolved to carry out a plan formed some years earlier, in the lifetime of Our Mother Foundress, namely to obtain Papal Approbation of our Congregation and its Constitutions.

Cardinal de Bonald promised to support the petition, but pointed out that the name "Congregation of the Holy Hearts" might easily be confused with that of the Sacred Heart, and advised another choice. After much prayer and discussion, Mother St. Teresa had an inspiration: "Instead of calling ourselves the Congregation of the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, let us be simply the Congregation of Jesus and Mary." This suggestion was unanimously accepted by the Council and formally approved by H.E. the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons.

On the 27th of January 1842, the small band of missionaries bade a touching farewell to their Mother General and their Sisters, entered the Basilica to kneel at the feet of Our Lady of Fourvière and

beg her protection, called on Cardinal de Bonald at Archbishop's House to receive his blessing, then set out for Marseilles in snowy, stormy weather.

The story of their voyage is told in detail in the highly interesting letters written by Mother St. Teresa to Rev. Mother St. Andrew, touching letters full of attachment to the Mother House, of resignation to the will of God and zeal for His glory. The first is dated from Marseilles, January 29th 1842.

III

LETTERS FROM THE TRAVELLERS

FIRST LETTER FROM MOTHER ST. TERESA

REVEREND MOTHER,

We reached Marseilles last evening at nightfall. Were it not for the snow and very bad weather, we should have arrived in the morning, and I should then have been able to give you some news of our travels. We are all safe and well as also Monsieur Rossat and Monsieur Caffarel. We Religious are lodged in two houses of the Sisters of St. Joseph. They could not find accommodation for the six of us in the same establishment. We were sorry to be separated, but this, I daresay, is the prelude to still greater sacrifices which await us.

I have kept with me Mother St. Joachim and Madam St. Vincent de Paul ; Mother St. Ambrose, Mother St. Paul and Mother St. Augustine are together. I do not yet know how they are ; they will be arriving in a carriage presently. We have reason to be grateful for the great kindness we have received from the excellent Religious who have given us hospitality.

Tomorrow Father Caffarel will say Mass in the church of Notre Dame de la Garde ; we shall assist and place ourselves under her powerful protection and receive her Divine Son in Holy Communion.

How we shall pray for all those who are dear to us in Fourvière !

You will be pleased, dear Reverend Mother, to learn about our last visit to Cardinal de Bonald. He received us with the greatest benevolence, and whilst giving us a letter for Monsignor Borghi, he desired me to tell him also that he would do all he could for the Mission ; he gave us some fifteen relics, and told Father Maxime to attach the authentic.

We did not take away any relic of our dear little St. Clementine (whose bones are enshrined in the Sanctuary at Fourvière). When it will be possible for you to send us a relic of her, we shall be happy to have it. I think that that good saint should be greatly honoured in the Congregation, but please send the verification at the same time so that we may be able to place the relic with the others in our chapel at Agra !

We shall occupy a cabin with six berths as desired. How many times each hour our minds and our hearts are carried back to Fourvière, and you, dear Reverend Mother, have undoubtedly followed us in spirit all the way. We can see from the windows of the room we occupy the vast expanse of water—that sea which is to carry us so far away !

Adieu, my dear Reverend Mother ; when you receive this letter we shall already be on the boat. Adieu, adieu for God, for Jesus and Mary !

20 *LETTERS FROM THE TRAVELLERS*

Accept the respectful wishes and the assurance of the undying affection of your Missionary daughters.

Your most grateful and deeply attached child,

M. St. Theresa

SECOND LETTER FROM MARSEILLES

1st February 1842.

We are going aboard ! At 5 o'clock this evening we shall leave the port. The vessel which is to carry us away from France is named the "Sesostris".

The Bishop of Nancy, another Bishop, and four or five priests will be with us as far as Alexandria, as also a lady and her daughter—these are the only women on the boat.

We have a large cabin to ourselves and are very pleased. Monsieur Caffarel is alone, and he and the doctor of the ship are not far from us.

We shall travel by stages and reach Leghorn at 6 o'clock in the morning on the 3rd. At midday we shall start for Civitâ Vecchia, which we hope to reach on the 4th March at 6 a.m. and at noon again set off for Naples ! After a halt of six hours there, we shall make for Malta, arriving there on the 7th February. There we shall be obliged to transship ; we are due at Alexandria on the 14th. Thence we go to Cairo, ascending the Nile in small boats. We are told that

for fifteen francs we can get one to ourselves. From Cairo we shall travel in caravans across the desert as far as Suez, where we shall take an English vessel bound for Calcutta. This, dear Reverend Mother, is the itinerary of our voyage. You will be better able to follow us in spirit. I shall write to you from all the stopping places. The weather is delightful, nevertheless it is almost as cold as it is at Lyons ; there is frost every morning.

We were very fortunate in finding some good religious here in Marseilles who are most kind to all of us.

Will you, dear Reverend Mother, tell all our dear Mothers and Sisters, our dear Novices and children that their remembrance is deeply graven on our hearts, and let my niece, Marie St. Clementine, know that she occupies a special little corner in my heart. And you, dear Reverend Mother, you know the place in my affection which you shall ever occupy.

Your most respectful daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.

THIRD LETTER FROM MOTHER ST. TERESA

LEGHORN,
3rd February 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

Our boat is stopping and I hasten to write to you.

22 LETTERS FROM THE TRAVELLERS

The beginning of our sea voyage has been fairly satisfactory. Unfortunately we have all had an attack of sea-sickness with the exception of Madam St. Vincent de Paul ! I was not very bad, but Mother St. Ambrose and Mother St. Paul have suffered a great deal.

Everyone is extremely attentive to our needs, and Monsignor de Janson full of kindness in our regard. He even came to see us in our cabin with the Bishop of East Oceania. He is going to buy a Missal for us here and give it as a present.

We have not had Mass on board and neither shall we, I fear. *Fiat !* The Papal Consul for Sicily is on the Vessel. He will speak about us to Cardinal Franconi, with whom he is intimately acquainted, and he will also recommend us to the Holy Father himself.

Do not feel uneasy about us, dear Reverend Mother, the good God takes care of us. I feel sure you are all praying for us and I hope the good Chaplain does not forget us in Holy Mass. We beg of him to give us a tiny memento.

Father Caffarel is most attentive to us and the Bishops are friendly with him. All the passengers respect and appreciate the kind Father, and it would be impossible to relate all the acts of kindness we have received from the Abbé Rossat. He made me write to Cardinal Franconi to announce our departure ; the Papal Consul will take my letter to him.

Adieu, my dear and very dear Reverend Mother.

FOURTH LETTER

CIVITA VECCHIA,
4th February 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

It is from an hotel from Civit  Vecchia I write to you. We arrived here at 7 a.m. and had the happiness of assisting at Mass and receiving Holy Communion.

Last night was very stormy ; the waves dashed over the deck and the vessel rocked so much that some of the nuns were very sick, particularly Mother St. Ambrose. Our little St. Vincent de Paul has not yet succumbed to the *mal-de-mer* ! I, myself, feel ashamed for keeping so well when I see those around me so ill. I have been ill only one hour at most, as also Monsieur Caffarel.

I feel most uneasy about Mother St. Ambrose, and I shall consider myself fortunate if I get her as far as Agra ! She suffers terribly. Pray for her, please, dear Reverend Mother.

Monsignor de Forbin-Janson has just left us for Rome. He will speak to the Holy Father about us as well as to Cardinal Franconi. He asked for our names. The Papal Consul has been most gracious towards us and gave us a letter of introduction

to the Papal Nuncio at Naples, in which he recommends us to his kindness and requests him to let us have the use of his carriage so that we can more easily visit all the churches of the town.

Everyone is interested in us, so be at ease about us, dear Reverend Mother.

How many times our thoughts travel back to our dear Fourvière. Please remember us affectionately to all our dear Mothers and Sisters, our dear Novices and dear children. Our kind regards to the Chaplain.

Monsieur Caffarel desires to be remembered to Monsieur Pousset.

Adieu, etc.

M. ST. TERESA

FIFTH LETTER

ISLAND OF MALTA,
8th February 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

Here we are at Malta since yesterday, but we shall stay only a few hours more in port.

Although the sea does not seem to agree with us, with the exception of Madam St. Vincent de Paul, we are fairly well. We are just going off to Mass and Holy Communion, of which we were deprived on Sunday last, and which we shall not

enjoy again as long as we are on the sea. The Holy Father allows Mass to be said only when there are two priests on board, or when the ship is at anchor, and this will scarcely happen during our voyage. The two Bishops have left the boat. The Bishop of Nancy took our letter for Cardinal Franconi.

The Papal Consul has also left us. He was very friendly and advised Father Caffarel to write to the Holy Father to beg His Holiness to bless our voyage and our Mission. The Bishop of Nancy will take the letter.

After having had cold weather up to now, we are enjoying delightful spring time to-day. The fields are covered with daisies and the green trees are refreshing to behold, but what cheers our hearts more than all else is the piety of the good Maltese. They are full of respect towards priests and towards all who are consecrated to God. When we go along the streets, the women approach to kiss our rosaries and our hands.

The very soldiers have given us tokens of respect and regard ; a whole platoon before whom we passed, saluted us !

The womenfolk dress most modestly, and wear a silk mantilla like a veil—one would almost take them for religious.

As the Quarante Ore was on yesterday, we had the privilege of assisting at Benediction, where we noticed all these black-veiled women prostrate before

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Our Lord ! They presented a very touching sight. Add to this, the piety of the men, the harmony of their voices blending with one of the most beautiful organs, the majestic beauty of the church (the loveliest we have ever seen), and you will form some idea of our admiration.

The entire pavement of this church, of the Knights of St. John, is in mosaic of most beautiful marble, representing various subjects, so well imitated and so well shaded that Mother St. Paul thought at first that they were paintings. The walls of the nave and those of the side chapels are decorated with architectural ornaments in stone and gilt. A wonderful group, fashioned from one block of white marble, represents the Baptism of Our Lord ; it is larger than life size. The High Altar is made of different coloured marbles, there are gradents sufficient to accommodate thirty large silver candlesticks. The dome is decorated with lovely frescoes representing a number of pious subjects.

Imagine you see all that, dear Reverend Mother, and you will have a faint idea of the reality and of our feelings in seeing God so honoured in a manner less unworthy of His Majesty.

If Monsieur Caffarel had been as impressed as we were by the masterpieces we saw, we should have spent at least half a day admiring all these in detail, but he is anything but a lover of art and this distresses Mother St. Paul !

The Sacristan, noticing that we were deeply intent on admiring the church, offered to show us the tombs of the Knights of Malta and we eagerly accepted his offer. Each tomb is in marble and represents the recumbent figure of a knight whose remains lie buried beneath. Some are clothed in religious habits, others as warriors from head to toe. We noticed one figure in bronze with hands joined as if saying the "Benedicite". In the vault there is a little chapel of the Crucifixion and the statues are likewise carved in marble and have the most admirable expression.

I do not know if we can have confession here, we are still with our absolution received in Fourvière, — which must have been a good one ! — and if we cannot have it renewed here, who knows but it might have to last until we reach Agra !

We are living, I know not how, although it be for God and for God alone. But the feeling of seasickness caused by the movement of the vessel, and to which we cannot become accustomed, absolutely prevents us from making meditation or from saying our prayers. We even neglect the Rule-imposed silence because we try to distract our minds from seasickness (which overpowers us) by indulging in conversation ! Pray much for us, therefore, my dear Reverend Mother.

We say our Office walking or rather staggering about on deck where we spend the greater part of the day, as we feel less sick there in the open air than down in our cabin.

Pray for us, dear Reverend Mother, so that our souls, deprived of nourishment, may not become more ill than our bodies.

But, in spite of our aches and pains, we are merry. Mother St. Ambrose, who suffers most, nevertheless tries to amuse us and laughs with us at her own moans and groans and at the pathetic tone in which she asks for any service.

I shall write to you again from Alexandria, which place we shall have left probably by the time you receive this letter, as it will leave here only next week. How many times a day our mind, and especially our heart, takes us back to Fourvière ! We follow you to the different places we know so well ; to the different community exercises where we used to be united with all of you, with our Mothers, our Sisters, our dear Novices and children. We think of you constantly. We are, and shall always be, one in Jesus and Mary until we meet in Heaven. Goodbye, dear Reverend Mother, goodbye once more for God, and for Him alone.

M. ST. TERESA, R.J.M.

*LETTER FROM OUR REVEREND MOTHER
ST. ANDREW TO MOTHER ST. TERESA.*

LYONS,
25th February 1842.

I do not know whether you have written from Naples ; while awaiting your letter from Malta we

were feeling rather uneasy ; at last we have received it and we thank God for His protection.

You must be anxious for news of Fourvière. Everything is going much as usual excepting that our little Sister Novice M. St. Martin is much worse—in fact there is no hope for her recovery.

I went to Mass last Sunday for the first time since your departure. You will easily understand the sorrow I experienced on seeing you all leave Fourvière, and having to hide my feelings told on my health and I was obliged to take to bed. I thought God intended calling me out of this world, but He has allowed me to remain on still. Must we not thank Him for all He sends ? Do not be uneasy, for I am quite well now. Often during my illness I was in spirit with my dear daughters. I long for you to reach your destination and to hear the good news of your safe arrival.

We are very sorry to know that you are suffering so much from sea-sickness. We beg God to help and guard you, and your fathers, mothers, sisters, children, friends and acquaintances all unite with us in praying for the same blessing.

The separation seems but to strengthen the bonds of charity which unite us. How sweet it is to love one another in God, and for God ! How abundantly God recompenses the sacrifices made for Him ! O my dear good Mother St. Teresa, my dear daughters, St. Ambrose, St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Joachim,

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St. Vincent de Paul, when I think of you all, the charity of Our Lord straitens my heart. I claim the honour of being godmother to the first girl you baptise ; and the Chaplain to be godfather to the first boy, and he asks you to give him the name of Louis Xavier.

Do not fail to give us details about everything that concerns you. Your manner of life, your food, and all that relates to your Mission.

Our building is getting on. They are putting down the flooring, the tiles and the staircase. Our Novitiate is very fervent ; our good little Novices are very edifying. Mother St. Clementine is well, her courage and generosity are admirable in the hour of sacrifice.

Your brother is very pleased to have news of you and was delighted to have a letter from you. He is more edifying than I am but then I have lost six daughters at one stroke ! It was like opening all my veins ! You must forgive me and pray for me.

Adieu, my dear daughters, my beloved children. May the charity of Jesus and Mary be the sacred bond which will unite us until we meet in Heaven.

Your Mother in Jesus and Mary
MARIE ST. ANDREW

SIXTH LETTER

ALEXANDRIA,
15th February.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

For fear I should not find sufficient time to write from Alexandria, where we are due to arrive to-morrow the 15th February (and that is later than we ought to have reached the place, owing to the bad weather we experienced before the island of Syra) I am beginning my letter today on the boat. The day is fine and the sea calm ; nevertheless you will see by my writing that the boat still rocks. Since writing to you from Malta we have had some terrible hours. On the eve of our arrival at Syra the angry waves rose like mountains and reached the deck. The tossing of the vessel was such that we could not take a step without clutching on to supports. Naturally we were all sea-sick, but we did not feel afraid. The good God is with us and leads us and this thought reassures us.

Mother St. Ambrose is still suffering the most. She never leaves her berth but, God be praised ! in spite of all our trials we are not without consolation. Our kind Father Caffarel with all his simplicity has influenced one of the officers of the ship. Not only has he made his confession, but he intends resigning at Easter and completing his studies under Father Maxime, and becoming a Missionary. He is a man of about thirty, well educated, modest and reserved,

very much liked and respected by all the other officers. Father Caffarel conquered him by his moderation and especially by his humility. We must pray much for him because if he became a Missionary he would do great good. He is thinking of calling on you at Fourvière.

During the fortnight we have been on this boat we have been treated with great respect and have not heard an unbecoming word. The Commandant has given us a first class cabin although we had only second class tickets. It is a handsome room with sofas and mirrors and every convenience. We are beginning to get accustomed to life at sea, and our existence is not quite so material. Yesterday we began to make our meditation and our examen and to say our Office and rosary in common. We have not had Holy Mass since Tuesday ; perhaps we shall have that happiness tomorrow if we do not arrive in port too late. God's will be done !

We had hoped to do a lot of work on board and thanks to our *mal-de-mer* we have done next to nothing.

Here we are at Alexandria, overwhelmed by tokens of affection on the part of the Bishop, and of the French and Tuscan Consuls, and of the most distinguished personages of the town.

I could write pages and give you many details, but I am afraid I cannot find the time today. Mother St. Vincent de Paul will write a full account

later on. They would like to keep us in Alexandria, and we are leaving for Cairo in a few minutes.

Please write to us soon, so that we may have news of you on our arrival in Agra. We are sad at not being able to hear anything about our dear Fourvière. The carriage is awaiting us. I have only just time to repeat that I shall always remain

Your most respectfully attached daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.

SEVENTH LETTER

SUEZ,
26th February, 1942.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

You must have already received a letter from Alexandria, begun on the boat and completed at the moment of our departure. I had hoped Mother St. Vincent de Paul would have given you more details about our journey, but she has been suffering from her heart trouble, and I feared the strain would be too much for her, so I made her give up her diary for the present. She will complete it later on and I shall post it on to you from India.

In the meantime I shall tell you something about our trip up the Nile, of our arrival in Cairo, the crossing of the desert, and our embarkation at Suez on the Red Sea.

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This will be the last letter you will have from me until our arrival in India.

On getting off the boat at Alexandria we were welcomed by a crowd of ragged Arabs ; filthy women in tatters, wearing blue veils on their heads and part of the material covering their faces from the eyes downwards. These poor creatures looked like ghosts. A number of donkeys led by small Arab boys were at the landing stage to meet the travellers. The owners of these beasts fought as to who should lead us off in cavalcade. Fortunately, the Portalis, one of the notable families of the town, sent their carriage to meet us and so we escaped the donkey boys ! The young officer of the " Dante " about whom I wrote to you asked this family to be kind to us, and they were full of attentions.

In the afternoon we paid a visit to the Bishop who was expecting six religious from France, and he thought we were those destined for his diocese. Great was his disappointment when he learned that we were en route for India. This good Bishop was full of kindness in our regard ; he gave us crucifixes, rosary beads from Jerusalem, a piece of stone from the Holy Sepulchre, a relic of the true Cross from his pectoral cross. On the following morning he advanced the hour of his mass for us, and offered us breakfast afterwards.

The Tuscan Consul, the Bey du Pacha, Monsieur Galice, all gave us a thousand tokens of kindness ; in a word, we found real friends in Alexandria.

All would have wished to keep us in the town which has no educational establishments, so that the young girls, even those belonging to good families, scarcely know how to read, although they and their mothers generally speak four languages—French, Italian, Arabic, and Greek. The Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul are expected in May, but they may not be numerous enough, so the Bishop might ask you for some subjects, and for this it would be well to have Italian taught to the Novices. I am so sorry I have forgotten the little I knew.

After a day and a half spent at Alexandria we travelled by boat up a canal as far as Aftel, where we got on a steam-boat to ascend the Nile to Cairo. It would be impossible to describe the villages we passed on the way; certainly I do not think savages could be more badly housed. The dwellings are made of earth and joined together pell-mell. A large hole serves as door, other smaller holes, large enough for a pigeon to pass through, serve as windows. Men, women, and children live in company with sheep, goats, etc. A wretched piece of blue linen flung over the shoulder and tied round the waist constitutes the usual costume of the people—men and women.

Poor creatures! our hearts were moved on seeing their destitution, and particularly on learning that they were all Mohammedans!

After two days' journey we reached Cairo, where we had the happiness of hearing Mass and receiving

Holy Communion in the church of the French Fathers — the only Catholic church in the town.

These good Fathers were most kind. We dined at their place with the Bishop of Java, who is spending some time here. On Saturday evening, the 19th of February, we started our journey across the desert mounted on donkeys. Unfortunately we reached Cairo the day after the departure of the conveyance that runs between Cairo and Suez, so we had to content ourselves with three donkeys, and three chairs with awnings each slung between two donkeys. Thus we proceeded on our way, conducted by Arabs.

Father Caffarel was mounted on an ass; Madam St. Vincent de Paul, who had learned to ride, on another; and I, who had never before sat in the saddle, ventured to mount the third! In spite of my awkwardness I managed to keep on for six miles! Our little caravan was a sight to see. The other three nuns were in the chairs.

The first night and part of Sunday everything went off splendidly. We met four wild asses of a kind which no one has ever been able to catch or even to shoot. How they manage to live in a place without vegetation one cannot tell. Their existence is considered inexplicable, so they are styled the "Devil's asses". On arriving at the second halting place, in the midst of the desert, we met an Italian who was returning from Agra and who had seen Monsigneur Borghi. He told us that His Lordship was making

preparations for our arrival, and that he had written to the Bishop of Bombay, so that, should we land there, he should advise us to travel from Bombay to Agra overland, instead of going to Calcutta by sea. This made us change our plans.

Once again we set out and had scarcely done an hour's travel when we were overtaken by a terrible storm. The rain fell in torrents and we had to continue our march for two long hours before reaching a shelter. And what a shelter it was, when we did reach it—a kind of caravanserai already full of Arabs and other travellers, as drenched as ourselves and that to the very bone! The rain having abated, we started afresh. We were obliged to go three miles in order to reach a suitable lodging house. It was 8 p.m. and the rain began to pour again. You can just imagine how uneasy I was, fearing the Sisters' health would be endangered. It was cold too, and each one felt as if she were in an icy bath!

Our poor Sister M. St. Vincent de Paul was in great danger—overcome with fatigue and perished with cold, she was no longer able to guide her mount. Suddenly the good Father Caffarel who, although drenched himself, continually urged on the guides and counted the travellers, discovered that one was missing! It was Madam St. Vincent de Paul whose donkey was taking her far away from us and she was unconscious! Father Caffarel ran towards her and helped her to dismount, making her walk quickly so as to get the blood to circulate.

At midnight we arrived at an inn which was already full, and were it not for the charity of an Italian gentleman who gave us his room, we should have had to remain all night in our wet clothes and find seats only on the floor. It was not without difficulty that this good man got us a fire which dried our garments, and restored us somewhat.

We rested as best we could, and at daybreak continued our march. Under the beautiful sun the dampness of our clothing soon disappeared and we felt ever so much better.

In my anxiety over the health of our party, I promised the Blessed Virgin that, if Father Caffarel and we arrived safe and sound at our destination, I would ask you to have a Mass of thanksgiving said at Fourvière, and I know you will, dear Reverend Mother. By rights we should all have been ill, yet we are in perfect health and this must be owing to Our Lady's protection.

We are at Suez now in the house of the French Consul. He would not hear of our putting up at the hotel. We shall probably embark to-morrow, the 28th inst.

We met some Lazarist Fathers here. This morning an altar was put up in the drawing-room and Mass offered—there is no Catholic church in Suez. We received Holy Communion and prayed fervently. The inhabitants of Suez are nearly all Mohammedans.

Father Caffarel cannot write to you to-day, but he desires me to offer you his respectful regards, as also to the Chaplain. He is very good to us and is much esteemed everywhere. We thank God he is with us on our travels. It is very trying to have no news of those who are dear to us. Please write soon.

The expenses of our journey are very much greater than we expected. We were obliged to borrow 5,000 francs at Alexandria, but I fear this amount will not be sufficient. Alas ! we are costing more than we are worth.

We are about to leave Africa and we are still wearing our winter garments and even our big cloaks ! If this continues, the heat of India will not oblige us to change our costume. Agra is only three degrees nearer the Equator than Suez !

In a short while we shall go aboard, not a steamship but a sailing vessel belonging to the Consul and which he has advised us to accept. With Father Caffarel we shall be masters of the boat as the Consul's men are in charge of it.

Adieu, dear Reverend Mother, it is from afar I say good-bye ! but my heart is very near to you and will always be very intimately and very respectfully yours in Jesus and Mary.

The most obedient and affectionate of your daughters,

M. ST. TERESA.

EIGHTH LETTER

ADEN,

10th May 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

For more than two months you have had no news from us, and probably you think we are already at Agra ! Not at all ! We are only half way there. God has permitted this delay, and blessed be His Holy Will.

You must have received my letter from Suez dated the 26th February, in which I told you we had taken a sailing vessel belonging to the French Consul of that town who had shown us great kindness. He pressed us to take his boat preferably to a steamship, first of all for the sake of economy as the price of the passage on the latter for each person from Suez to Bombay is 1,500 francs ! and secondly, because we should be by ourselves, etc. etc.

Would to God we had not followed his interested advice and accepted his offer, for had we taken the steamship we should be at Agra now ! We understood from him that we should be delayed about a fortnight.and his vessel took fifteen days to take us as far as Jedda. There we took another boat for Aden and we hoped to catch the steamship in April which stops there after leaving Suez. The winds were contrary and we took twenty days to do the journey which is usually accomplished in ten, and we reached Aden on the 2nd May, five hours after the

ship left for Bombay. The next ship will reach here only in a month's time.

So as not to remain on here in one of the hottest places on earth, we have decided to try another sailing vessel bound for Bombay.

We have had many trials and especially during the forty-two days on the second boat! The day after we took ship, Father Caffarel was prostrate with sea-sickness and high fever, accompanied by very serious symptoms.

Imagine my frame of mind as I had nothing to give him but half putrid water, and being alone with Arabs who by signs made us understand that his case was hopeless, and that he would die on the journey.

In my hour of trial I turned to our Blessed Mother and dedicated our patient to Our Lady of Fourvière. I made a promise to ask you to have Mass offered up if his cure was granted and to have a picture painted by Mother St. Paul and placed as a votive offering in the chapel. Scarcely had we made this promise than Father Caffarel began to feel better; the fever began to abate and the following day his temperature was normal.

You can just imagine, dear Reverend Mother, what I felt during the three days that Father was so ill. I had constantly before my mind the awful prospect, not only of his dying without corporal or spiritual helps of any kind, but of seeing his mortal remains cast into the sea, and we deprived of his assistance

and guidance, continuing the journey alone. God had pity on us, but we were not yet at the end of our miseries.

Again we found ourselves retarded by several days and our provisions were exhausted. Had not the Captain of our ship come to our rescue by giving us some rice, which took the place of bread, and some fish which the sailors caught, I do not know what would have become of us. When we reached Aden we had no fresh water left.

Nevertheless, in spite of these privations and under a burning sun, our health is as good as when we were at Fourvière.

We were pleased to find some religious of the order of Servites and they gave us hospitality. Their house is made of palm mats, as are also the greater number of houses in the town. These mats are just like those small baskets in which you have seen figs packed and sold in Europe; they are sewn together and fastened to branches and reeds. The church is made of exactly the same material and resembles a wretched hut although it has cost 4,000 francs to construct it. For the past two years Aden has belonged to England and improvements are bound to follow. It has a population of about 500 Catholics, the greater number of whom are Irish and belong to the army. There are many Protestants here also, and likewise Mohammedans, Jews, idolaters, etc. etc. The natives are generally almost black or brown, and wear scant clothing.

Oh! how we pity these poor people! How many children could be instructed in the Faith if some nuns came here.

We find at Aden, that the English officials are full of deference and kindness in our regard. Several of these, although they are Protestants, offered to put us up in their bungalows, but naturally we preferred to stay with the poor Servite Fathers.

I hope to write to you, dear Reverend Mother, on arriving in Bombay. They tell us that we may be obliged to stop there for awhile on account of the heavy rains or Monsoons, which last 3 months and make the roads in India impracticable. God's Holy Will be done! Our Agra is for us the "*Promised Land*". God seems to keep us in the desert like the Israelites of old! Would that I had the patience of the Patriarch Moses! I am, however, far from possessing anything near it.

Pray for me, dear Reverend Mother, and pray for this poor little Agra community. Alas! we understand only too well that one rarely sanctifies oneself by much travel, and neither does one acquire the religious spirit. I see now how important was the advice of Pere Maxime, to send only fervent and prayerful religious to the Missions. We have been deprived of Holy Mass from Saturday in Passion Week until Ascension Thursday, and consequently of Holy Communion also. *Fiat!* However hard the Will of God may seem, I submit to it—not without suffering, but still His Will be done!

In spite of the difficulties we have encountered, God gives me grace not to have the slightest regret for having left all I hold most dear on earth to follow the sublime vocation to which God has deigned to call me, and all the others are of the same mind as myself.

How often we think of Fourvière, and I suppose we are not forgotten there especially before the Altar. How are the dear Novices? I am sure they pray for their old Mother. I presume Mother St. Liguori and Mother St. Irénée have made profession; and that others have taken the habit. I would love to learn on my arrival at Agra that Mother St. Martin is quite cured, as also the other invalids at Puy.

I do not forget the dear children of the Boarding School and those of the *Providence*; I count much on their prayers.

I ask you, dear Reverend Mother, to offer my respects to the Chaplain and I beg of him to remember the poor "Asiatics" in the Holy Sacrifice, that God may forgive us our sins and lead us at last into the *Promised Land* which we have so much difficulty in reaching.

If our Sisters have kept good health and have escaped those violent headaches caused by the excessive heat of the East, it is due, after God, to the precautions taken by the good Sister Maurice; the mustard she supplied has been most useful to each and all, excepting myself, as I have not suffered from headache.

I do not know if you remember hearing that a Marist Father and a Brother Felix died from the effects of these violent headaches ? I daresay if they had taken the same means to avoid or avert these as we have done, they would not have succumbed.

As this letter will reach you through the Consul, I profit of this occasion to send you some pages of Madam St. Vincent de Paul's diary. This little Sister has done much good during the few days we have spent here — she persuaded four young English girls to approach the Sacraments, which evidently they had neglected, and they carried out her wishes ; again a young woman of forty, who since her marriage had given up the Catholic religion and acted as a Protestant, has asked to be reconciled to the Church and is going to Confession to-day.

As we can neither speak nor understand English, we can do nothing yet. Let those who are destined to follow us work hard and study that language ; but even English won't suffice — we shall have to learn Hindustani also ! It is very difficult, they say, but God will help us over that difficulty I hope.

At Agra I think we shall probably be able to wear our costume such as it is — we do not feel the heat too oppressive here where the temperature is higher. You know, dear Reverend Mother, that I wish to preserve uniformity and unity in all things, and although we may be at the other extremity of the globe, we shall always be one in spirit.

With profound respect I remain the most deeply attached and most obedient of your daughters,

M. ST. TERESA.

MOTHER ST. TERESA TO THE NOVICES

ADEN,

11th May, 1842.

Well, my dear children, it is a very long time since I spoke to you, and you probably think your old Mother has forgotten her little flock ! Do not think that : the bonds that unite us are indissoluble, for are we not all one family in Jesus and Mary ? We shall meet again in Eternity, my dear children. Let us be very close to Jesus and to Mary in Heaven and, to attain that happiness, let each of us be another Jesus, another Mary. Let us live Their life. No matter what it costs, let us strive every day to conquer our natural tendencies, to cultivate the spirit of faith that will make of us worthy and fervent spouses of our good Jesus, Who alone can make us worthy of the sublime vocation to which we have the honour of being called. Now is the favourable time for you. Ah ! make the best use of the precious time of your novitiate !

Alas ! although we have left the world, the world and its spirit pursue us everywhere, even in our

solitude ! During this journey we realise more and more how this spirit is contrary to our holy vocation, and yet we are obliged to come in contact with worldly minded people. God grant we may do them some little good.

We have received several visits from Protestants —English people of very good social standing, and all have been most kind, and have given us every mark of honour and politeness. When we went out of the house yesterday, we heard the military band playing French airs by the order of their commandant and they wound up with the National Anthem, "*God Save the Queen !*"

Pray much for us ; it will be a great act of charity if you do. I cannot forget you before God.

Your affectionate,

MARIE ST. TERESA

IV

INDIA AT LAST

NINTH LETTER

BOMBAY,
15th June, 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

Thanks be to God, we have reached Bombay ! We left Aden on the 11th May. I think I already mentioned in my last letter to you that the English inhabitants of Aden treated us as if we were their own relatives or intimate friends. The first Magistrates of the town sent their own palanquins to convey us to the quay, and they themselves accompanied us right on to the ship. There they examined the Captain's provisions and, as they found the water was not good and neither was the wine, they had a sufficient quantity of fresh water and a case of excellent wine brought on board—and paid the expenses ! May God reward them.

We had a pleasant journey to Bombay. However, we were to have yet another trial. When we were two days at sea, Madam St. Vincent de Paul got fever and a bad cough ! No other remedies to be had but those supplied by good Sister Maurice. A mustard plaster cured the cough, but the fever continued all the time we were on the boat, that is twenty days. But, God be praised ! she is quite well now.

We entered Bombay harbour on the 3rd June, Feast of the Sacred Heart and First Friday of the month, and landed in the town the following day, the First Saturday ! Could we have landed at a more auspicious time ? The Bishop of Bombay received us most kindly. His diocese adjoins that of Agra, and the two Bishops are very intimate.

For the past two months Monsignor Borghi has written on our account each week to the Bishop of Bombay ! He begged him to take care of us, to provide for all our needs, and to keep us at Bombay until he was informed of our arrival there, his intention being to advise us as to which route to take for Agra. Consequently we must stay on for at least three weeks. It requires all that time to get a reply to a letter.

The letter from Monsignor Borghi which we found waiting us here was dated in March. Our good Bishop is really most paternal. He tells us that the house in Agra is ready to receive us and that it is furnished, and he hopes to see us arriving very shortly. Since that letter was written three months have elapsed. He has had no news of us all that time—so you can imagine how uneasy he has been.

The Bishop treats us, not as a father, but as a *Mother*. He has lodged us in a pleasant dwelling near the Episcopal Palace. He interests himself in all that concerns us, our food and our health. He even sent us crockery and cutlery, and some furniture from his own apartments. His Lordship comes to

visit us frequently, and he examines our provisions fearing lest we should want for anything. It is useless for us to tell him that we want to be treated with less consideration—for after all we are missionaries—Monsignor will not even listen to us on this point.

This dear good Bishop wishes to have an educational establishment in his pastoral town later on. He intends showing us the site destined for the building and he hopes God will give us many subjects so that you will be able to send him some. He particularly wishes to have nuns from Europe. Therefore, dear Reverend Mother, prepare missionaries for India, we have only just landed and they would like to keep us here. The Bishop of Bombay says that the Bishop of Agra may be thankful that we are the *first* colony of religious to arrive for his diocese, for, if we had happened to be the *second* batch, he (His Lordship of Bombay) would stop us and keep us for his own city. The population of Bombay is, I think, something like some hundred thousands or millions, and there is not a single Catholic educational establishment for girls.

I do not know if I am mistaken, but I am inclined to think our Congregation is destined to become a Missionary Congregation !

You know how ardently they desired to keep us at Alexandria ; and here, in Bombay, we are offered an establishment and God alone knows what is in reserve for the future ! He had His designs in conducting us to Bombay, and he evidently wished our

Congregation to be known here, where without doubt, we shall soon be established.

The diocese is as vast as that of Agra and counts a great number of important towns ; all are without houses of education for youth. A priest, whom we met yesterday, told us that here in Bombay alone there are at least two hundred Irish Catholic children, pensioned by Government as children of soldiers who have died on service, and who are being brought up in Protestant Schools because there are no Catholic institutions in the diocese !

Try, dear Reverend Mother, to prepare some subjects ; the harvest is great—very great.

We have met two young American girls who have been in India for some years, and who wish to become religious. They have been recommended to us by the Bishop ; he has directed them since they made their first Holy Communion. Their father is governor of some American town and he is a widower. On leaving Bombay, he confided his daughters to an aunt and she has brought them up. It is almost decided that they will accompany us to Agra. A young English girl also, a convert about sixteen years old, and who speaks four languages ; English, Portuguese, Marathi and Hindustani, is eager to come with us too, but nothing has been decided definitely about her yet.

I hope, dear Reverend Mother, that you will be able to engage an English Professor for any of the

religious whom you intend sending out here. Our experience proves that it is impossible to learn that language during the journey, and it is very necessary.

The ecclesiastic whom I met yesterday said that, if you were to send four hundred religious, all would find a place in India. Let us then pray that God may send us many good subjects.

Two Jesuits called on us ; they had been to see you before they sailed for India. With what pleasure we received news of you ! But unfortunately they could give us no details about our dear Fourvière.

On Sunday we assisted at Benediction in the principal church of the town. They had excellent music ; organ and other instruments accompanied the singing and there were some fine voices. We were in the loft and by ourselves. The people were anxious to see us, but the Bishop guarded us as the apple of his eye !

Under his protecting care we live in great solitude ; no one is allowed to visit us without his permission. This excellent Bishop belongs to the order of Carmel and he has been Master of Novices and Sub-Prior in the Monastery in Italy, his native land, before being sent out to India fourteen years ago. He has been Bishop of Bombay for the past three years and Superior of the Carmelite Fathers in charge of this Mission.

We find a collection of various religions in this city, each with its priests and its temples. There

are Catholics, Protestants, Mohammedans, pagans—varying according to caste. These latter are rarely converted to Christianity. There is a chance for some small boys learning something of our Holy Faith, in schools conducted by the priests. The girls have no one to care for them!

We have been greatly touched by the down-trodden appearance of the poor Pariahs—the outcasts of Hindu society. They walk along the edge of the roads, with heads bent down, not daring to raise their eyes until we have passed.

The native Christians look on us with veneration. One evening, during one of the walks which His Lordship allowed us to take, a priest led us into a cocoa-nut plantation, where there was a native Christian's hut. This poor man was charmed by the honour we paid him in visiting his humble abode and thanked us several times for our kindness in his regard.

Adieu, dear Reverend Mother,
Your most devotedly attached and respectful daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.

* * *

TENTH LETTER

CALCUTTA,
7th August, 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

You must have received my letter from Bombay dated 15th June. Two days after posting it, I received

a letter from our good Bishop. I enclose a copy, for I feel sure your maternal heart will feel comforted on reading it. Some days later we received a second letter from His Lordship in which he advised us (on account of the continual rains which at this season render journeys by road almost impossible) to embark for Calcutta, and from there to travel to Agra up the Ganges !

We set out again on the 5th July—this time on a good English ship. Fresh trials awaited us. God had preserved us from cholera which raged in Bombay, and spared us from tempests on the sea during the three months of our voyage, but this time we had scarcely left the port when a violent storm arose. The Captain and sailors had almost lost control of the vessel—and this state of affairs continued for three whole days and nights ! One night especially was so terrible that the Captain admitted that he had never experienced anything like it.

In the hour of danger I again turned to Our Lady of Fourvière and promised to have a Mass offered in her chapel and also to ask Father Maxime to offer up another Mass in the chapel of Our Lady of La Garde if we reached Calcutta safely.

Our petition was granted. The sea became much calmer and we appeared to be out of danger, but when we were within two days of port the storm began afresh and with greater violence at the mouth of the Ganges ! The night of the 22nd July was appalling. They tried in vain to cast anchor.

The violence of the waves threatened to break the massive chains, and the ship was at the mercy of the wind and the billows ! Two large new sails were torn to tatters, and enormous waves rose up like mountains. The water swept the deck and rushed violently down the stairs, entering our cabins. At every moment we thought the vessel would overturn.

In the midst of all these dangers our Sisters showed the greatest courage. All of them felt convinced that Our Blessed Lady would hear our prayers and that we would not be lost. However, I must confess that, in spite of this conviction, I was at times so penetrated with fear that I had very great difficulty in overcoming it. Thank Our Lady for protecting us.

But the storm was not our only cross during that journey. Three of the Sisters were attacked by fever. Mother St. Ambrose, Mother St. Augustine and Mother St. Joachim. Their temperature was not normal on our arrival at Calcutta, and they are scarcely well even now. Madam St. Vincent de Paul complains of pains in her chest and this makes me rather uneasy on her account. God's Holy Will be done !

We reached here on the 27th July. The Bishop of Calcutta sent his Vicar General to meet us as we landed, and the Rev. Father Meyet, Superior of the Jesuits, came also — he is French. These two priests and Monsignor were greatly impressed by the kindness and politeness of the Captain who, Protestant though he be, bade us adieu by firing a salute !

The Bishop invited the Captain and the Doctor (who was very attentive to our Sisters during the journey, and who refused to accept any fee) to dine at the Episcopal Palace. We are staying with the Irish nuns of the Congregation of Loreto, who arrived in Calcutta just six months ago.

They travelled from England and rounded the Cape. The journey took four months and cost only 1,500 francs for each Sister. They stopped nowhere *en route* and neither were they obliged to transship ; they were practically the only passengers on the boat and had Mass almost daily. These good religious have the very best house in the town — the Town Hall excepted — it is a real palace ; the furniture is magnificent and worthy of a European Prince's apartments. This magnificence is far from being to the taste of religious, but they say it is indispensable in this country, where luxury, as Melle. Dunand told us, is carried to excess. No European goes on foot in the town, consequently Father Caffarel, who is staying with the J suits at about five minutes walk from here, comes in a palanquin to see us.

These Ladies of Loreto are doing much good. They have thirty Boarders, some of whom are Catholics, the other Protestants. They have an orphanage. The Boarding School is on a very good footing. All the Sisters know music and play the piano and organ admirably well. Six religious and four postulants came from Ireland — and since their arrival in Calcutta four others have joined the Novitiate.

I hope God will bless us also. I spoke to you about three young ladies who wished to join us while we were in Bombay. The English girl would not decide about her vocation and His Lordship thought it better that the young Americans should wait until we were properly installed in Agra. Poor Agra ! whenever shall we reach it ? To get there we must now travel up the Ganges in steam-boats, and it appears these boats leave Calcutta only every fortnight and places must be reserved at least three weeks in advance owing to the difficulty of doing the journey by land during the Monsoons.

We shall therefore leave at the end of this month, and must consequently wait on for another twenty days ! Fiat ! We are going to spend the time at Chandernagore, a French town situated about seven miles from Calcutta, where the Loreto nuns have already opened a second establishment.

The air is better and the heat less intense than in this city, and His Lordship considers that it will do us good. We are in a continual bath of perspiration at the present, but we find the heat bearable.

The Bishop obliged the Loreto Sisters to exchange their black woollen habits for white calico ones during the summer months ; they are made on the same pattern as the serge habits. Most probably Monsignor Borghi will insist on our doing likewise. Our journey has been so long that we were obliged to buy material for new habits while we were in Bombay. We must be fittingly clad on our arrival in Agra !

At last, dear Reverend Mother, I have had the happiness of receiving a letter from you, dated 27th April, and which the Bishop of Agra was kind enough to forward to me here. What pleasure it gave us ! You should have seen us all gathered round to read it and then to kiss it. Everything you tell us about our dear Fourvière interests us.

I hope all will go well in Rome and that you will be able to make a foundation in the Vosges and several in India.

We are so glad to learn that the number of postulants has increased. I am sure that in spite of our separation we are more closely united than ever in Jesus and Mary. That is our greatest comfort.

You fear, dear Reverend Mother, that I do not tell you all our troubles, but you know me well enough to be sure that I could never hide anything from you, be it joy or sorrow. You will have palpable proof of this when you receive all the letters I have posted to you and in which I have given you full details of the various trials through which it has pleased God we should pass.

Alas ! long journeys are very terrible and are not calculated to sanctify those who are not saints already !

We shall take nearly two months more to reach our destination ; because the journey will take a whole month, and we shall not leave here till the end of August, Fiat !

All unite with me in love and affectionate messages for you, dear Reverend Mother, and for all our dear Sisters in Fourvière.

Your ever respectfully attached daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.
R. J. M.

Letter from Monsignor Borghi, Bishop of Agra, to the religious intended for his Mission and en route for his Episcopal city.

LANDOUR.

MUSSOORIE.

18th June 1842.

My very dear daughters in Jesus Christ,

For a long time I have been feeling extremely sad for I received no news of you ! You could never realize, my dear daughters, how anxious and perplexed I have been on your account. God alone knows the many sleepless nights I passed thinking about the sufferings and hardships you must have undergone during your long journey.

But God be praised that He has sent me comfort in my tribulation, for I have learned the glad and agreeable news of your arrival in India. Yes, my dear daughters, I rejoice that you have at last set foot in this land, which you must water with your sweat and enkindle its spiritual tepidity by the ardent fire of your zeal.

Your arrival has aroused in my heart the lively hope of soon seeing my desires and ideals realized and of succeeding, with your co-operation, in regenerating the interesting Mission which Our Lord has deigned to confide to my care. Let your hearts be comforted and your courage renewed, for your sufferings will soon be over.

Thank your Divine Spouse who has judged you worthy of suffering something for His sake, and be assured that your sacrifice is most agreeable to Him.

Allow me to reiterate that I accept you as my daughters in Jesus Christ, and that I shall always be ready to help you in your needs spiritual and temporal. Have confidence in me ; let me know your wants, your fears, and your desires ; and I shall assist you like a true Father.

I have already written to His Lordship, the Bishop of Bombay, asking him to give you whatever you ask and to prepare all that will be necessary for the remainder of your journey.

By the last European mail I received two letters for you, and one for Father Caffarel, but last week having had to visit and assist a Catholic family living at some distance from here, the box containing all my papers and in which I put your letters was stolen during my absence.

Write to me often ; take care of your health and pray to God for me.

With all my heart I give you my blessing.

I am, my dear daughters,

Your very affectionate father in J.C.

+ J. J. B. B. Bishop

ELEVENTH LETTER OF MOTHER ST. TESES A

CHANDERNAGORE,
5th September 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

I hope we may be at Agra when you receive this letter. I told you in my last letter that I would write to you only on our arrival there, but I fear you may be anxious if you do not hear from us by every mail. We must leave here next Friday by the steam-boat which will take us as far as Allahabad, a distance of some 200 miles from Agra. A Father from the Agra Mission will meet us there with carts to conduct us to our destination.

Our good Bishop would have come himself to meet us, but he is feeling ill after his return from the Himalayas. We are making a Novena for him. I recommend him to your prayers. What a loss he would be to the mission and to us !

God be praised ! He has made compensation to us for some of our trials by allowing us to recruit

a nice young Irish girl of twenty-one years of age ! She was recommended by the Bishop of Calcutta. She belongs to a very good family in Dublin. Her father and her brothers are Protestant ministers—she has been a Catholic for the past two years. The poor child has had to endure very great persecution for the Faith during this time. She was kept shut up in a room all the while and allowed only bread and water ! to make her give up the idea of being a Catholic.

Her parents, seeing they could not get her to renounce her Catholic faith, at last gave her freedom and sent her away from home. Some ladies took her under their protection and she accompanied them to Calcutta. There she had to undergo further attacks from the Anglican Bishop and some bigoted Protestants, who made her the most advantageous offers if only she would abandon the Catholic religion. She remained as firm as a rock ! This dear child longs only to belong entirely to God, and will follow us to Agra. The Bishop of Calcutta and the Superior of the Jesuits have spoken very highly of her. We have every reason to hope that the first novice we receive will one day be a worthy member of our Congregation.

The only anxiety I experienced in accepting her was the difficulty I have in speaking and understanding the English language, and she knows no other. But there are graces of state which God never refuses at the right time, and when it is necessary for His glory and for the accomplishment of His Holy Will.

To my own great astonishment, I find that I understand and even speak English with greater facility than I naturally expected to do. God is very good to us; we had many proofs of that during our long voyage.

Madam St. Vincent de Paul is laid up with fever and chest trouble. She is slightly better to-day and God grant that the improvement may continue, otherwise it would be impossible for her to travel with us and we should be obliged to leave her behind in Chandernagore with Mother St. Ambrose until she is completely recovered. We cannot now delay our departure from here as our places are already booked. We had to pay the enormous sum of 4,000 francs ! and this amount would not be refunded if we refused to leave by this boat.

All the other Sisters are well and I myself in better health than any of them.

Do not feel uneasy about our food. Here we have meat, and the bread is much better than the bread we had in France. Very fine wheat is grown in Agra, and excellent fruit also. We had counted on having privations which God has not reserved for us.

The heat is intense, but not so bad as we anticipated. The worst part is that we are in a continual bath of perspiration, which necessitates frequent change of clothing that can be washed. Almost everyone, men and women alike, wears white calico clothes. The priests themselves wear calico soutanes. Father Caffarel has had two made for himself.

When you receive this letter we shall be at Agra. It is your motherly heart that makes you think our trials so terrible, but God lightened them for us and, besides, missionaries must expect to suffer something.

This evening, 6th September, Madam St. Vincent de Paul is much better and the doctor thinks she may be able to travel with us. The day after to-morrow we shall assist at the Clothing Ceremony of five young English girls, who entered the Loreto Convent in Calcutta. The day will come when we too, please God, will have our Clothing Ceremonies and our Profession days in Agra !

Two little non-Catholic girls, pupils of the Sisters, have been baptised, and we hope the day is not far off when we shall have a similar consolation, if there be any Protestants or pagans among the dear children who have so long awaited our arrival.

This poor India excites our pity. Chander-nagore has a population of 32,000 souls and of that number only 400 are Catholics—and what kind of Catholics ! Very few even make their Easter duties !

We are studying English with all our might. We should have been at a loss, even with Madam St. Vincent de Paul, if the good God had not sent us our young Irish girl. Everyone in Calcutta seemed doubtful of the success of our work, particularly as regards the Boarding School—where English is so essential.

People in Europe have a very erroneous idea of the standard of education in this country. Most of the young girls here belong to very good English families and consequently must be well educated.

Dear Reverend Mother, I beg you once more to give a good English teacher to the Novices you think of sending out to join us later on.

I received a charming letter from the Superior of the Religious of the Heart of Mary at Gap. The good Mother still hopes to join us out here one day ; she begs of me to continue writing to her.

Good-bye and God be with you,

Your truly affectionate and obedient daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.
R. J. M.

* * *

TWELFTH LETTER

CALCUTTA,

8th September 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

We are in Calcutta — Mother St. Paul and myself — and have just assisted at the clothing ceremony of four young ladies. They should have been five but God called one to himself on the eve. She was the most robust of the number, and after four days of fever she died a most saintly death. Our dear Madam St. Vincent de Paul had the same kind of fever, yet God spared her to us.

The ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Calcutta and it was most impressive. There was High Mass accompanied by the organ which was admirably well played. We do not expect ever to reach such musical perfection, unless God sends us some excellent musician—but that is really not essential. Provided we do good to souls, and gain hearts to our Divine Master, that is all our ambition and, if not by means of beautiful music, He will show us other ways of working for His greater glory !

If only there were more Catholic priests in this country and if they had more money at their disposal, at least four hundred Irish children, whose fathers were killed at Kabul, could be rescued from the hands of Protestants and brought up in the true faith.

Unfortunately, these young souls will be taught the Protestant religion and will probably grow up and remain in error. There are not enough priests even to see to the spiritual needs of the Catholics.

If only some French priests understood all the good they could do here, they would not be content to remain quietly in their native land. How much we thank God for having called us to do such grand work. Pray that we may not be unworthy of our vocation.

Your obedient and affectionate daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.
R. J. M.

THIRTEENTH LETTER

ALLAHABAD,

1st November 1842

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

We are, at long last, with our holy Bishop and still at seven or eight days' journey from Agra.

I told you in my last letter that we had to take a steam-boat up the Ganges from Calcutta to Allaha-bad. It was on that boat that another trial awaited us, a portion of Our Saviour's Cross. You cannot imagine all the abominable things the men and unprincipled women on board had to say concerning priests and religious ! They did not dare attack us directly but they tried by every means in their power to pervert and ensnare the young Irish girl. They did not succeed ! The strain however has been so great, that the poor child is suffering from a nervous breakdown and I am afraid her weak health may oblige us to send her away.

We spent twenty-four days on the steamer and you can understand what we had to put up with, being constantly in contact with such people and meeting them face to face at every turn !

I was ill too, nearly all the time ; I had a touch of sunstroke and my indisposition added to the Sisters' worries. During the whole time on the boat they behaved with such dignity and reserve that even those wicked people never dared address them without a kind of respect.

A priest sent by Bishop Borghi met us at Allahabad. We delayed two days to rest and have our washing done, and during that short stay Mother St. Joachim fell dangerously ill. The fever was so high that we feared she would not live. Three doctors held a consultation and they gave small hope of her recovery. Then I had recourse to Our Lady of Fourvière as usual, and promised that, if God willed to restore the patient to health, I would ask you to have a Mass of thanksgiving said in her chapel. Our prayers were heard, and now our dear Sister is pronounced out of danger, and that to the great astonishment of three doctors! We hope that in three or four days' time she may be able to continue the journey in a palanquin, where she can lie down as in a bed.

Our good Bishop, who was awaiting us at Cawnpore, a town situated about half way between Allahabad and Agra, on hearing of Mother St. Joachim's illness set out to join us. And one beautiful night, yes, indeed, a very beautiful night, as I was keeping watch beside my poor M. St. Joachim's bed, I heard a cry which resounded in the very depths of my soul: "*Here is the Bishop.*"

I cannot describe the happiness I experienced on receiving that good Father's blessing. What a worthy Prelate and what a kind father! Ah! do not be uneasy about your daughters. I could never enumerate all the kindness we daily receive at his hands. He is interested in all that concerns us, and his joy on seeing us is very great indeed.

He repeats continually that he is happy to be with us, and that he is our father until death, that all he has is ours, and that he was delighted to prepare a house for us, and even to set up our refectory and have the table prepared for our arrival ; to see our rooms ready and our prie-dieus placed in the church. He hopes we may be very happy there, and that together we may work for the greater honour and glory of God.

Monsignor says that he will see that we want for nothing—that he would suffer any privation himself rather than that we should be in need.

But he tells us that he relies on us to help him save souls, and that there are many to save in this heathen land. This worthy Bishop unites in himself sanctity and learning. He speaks seven languages, and his affability wins all hearts. He protests he is very satisfied with his little colony, but he will soon ask for more nuns.

At Agra we shall have three separate establishments : the Boarding School for the better class girls, a second one for the daughters of soldiers, and a third for Indian poor girls. And this is not all, for the Bishop is about to buy a large house situated in Landour (Mussoorie) on the Himalayas and where the climate is absolutely the same as that of France. Many of the best English families spend the summer months on these hills, and there is already a Boarding School with some thirty resident pupils ; young ladies of very good social position and almost all Protestants. The persons in charge of the school wish to retire,

and His Lordship hopes to secure it for the religious of Jesus and Mary.

I hope God will send you a good number of subjects if He wills us to do all our Bishop desires. There are several other towns where we could open schools, for instance *Delhi*, which is only 120 miles from Agra !

We received your letter of July and we were indeed sad to learn of our dear little Mother St. John Baptist's death. She was a great loss just when you were arranging for two foundations. Blessed be God's Holy Will ! We were very pleased to know that the foundation at Remiremont is an accomplished fact. God has His designs on our little Congregation, and He wishes to make use of it for the salvation of many souls in Europe and India. It is here especially that we could open a number of establishments if only we had a sufficient number of subjects. Please, dear Reverend Mother, prepare some for us, and let them know English well. The more you give to India, the more God will send you to take their places.

I should very much like to reply to all the letters I have received, but alas, the post is about to leave and I must draw this epistle to a close. They all know my affection.

His Lordship thinks we will start with about twenty-five or thirty Boarders and a considerable number of soldiers' children and native girls too, and we are only six in community for all the work !

His Lordship knows a young lady who can teach music, and that is imperative in our schools.

Father Maxime was mistaken in thinking they were very much behind the times here, not in the least. There is perhaps more refinement and particularly more luxury than in Europe.

We shall certainly be obliged to change the material of our habits ; we shall have to adopt white calico ones like the religious in Calcutta, but made on the same pattern as our black habits.

Adieu, dear Reverend Mother, Our respects to Reverend Father Chaplain and to Father Coindre. There are only twelve priests in this diocese and each one has to look after a district as large as a whole department in France.

Your obedient and affectionately devoted,
M. ST. TERESA.
R. J. M.

V

ARRIVAL AT AGRA

FOURTEENTH LETTER

AGRA,
20th November, 1842

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

At long last we are in Agra and have been here just one week ! We made our solemn entry into the church and the Convent on the Feast of St. Stanislaus, amid honours that covered us with confusion.

The music of the Pontifical Mass, as well as the singing of the Te Deum, was accompanied by the military band, and all day long the air resounded with the booming of cannon, fired in our honour, as is done for princes !

On a pond in our garden we found a perfectly made miniature fleet, over which floated the Papal and French flags.

Our good Bishop was radiant with joy ! Our entry into the church was like a triumphal march : young girls, English and Indian, filed in procession, and walked before us singing the hymn "*Jesu Corona Virginum* " and in the evening not only the church and the Bishop's house but also the avenues of our garden were illuminated.

I hope God may draw His glory from all this. We shall begin to receive pupils for the boarding school from the 1st of next month.

The house intended for the orphanage is not yet completed. It seems to be far too small for the number of children we should like to take. We must only have patience and wait until God sends some funds to our worthy Bishop so that he may enlarge the premises.

Monsieur Caffarel remains our Chaplain and for this we are thankful.

I must not write any more to-day. However, thank God, I am feeling much better. Our little Irish Sister is not keeping too well; she has very indifferent health, poor child.

Next month, when giving you an account of our doings, I shall send you a long list of our needs. Everything is very expensive here, and furthermore we have great difficulty in finding what we want.

Do not forget your Indian daughters before the Altar and prepare nuns for India, so that we may realize the projects which our good Bishop has in view. He counts entirely on our Congregation to carry them through.

Adieu, dear Reverend Mother.

Your ever affectionate and respectful child,
M. ST. TERESA,
R. J. M.

Letter from Father Caffarel to our Reverend Mother St. Andrew.

AGRA,
21st November 1842.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

I am happy to be able to tell you that your daughters have at last reached Agra ! after ten months of travel and of suffering.

It was about 10 p.m. when we set foot in the beautiful large house which was at first intended for our little colony, but considering its very public position — it faces the Jumna — considering above all its distance from the Episcopal residence and the Cathedral, Monsignor finally decided to select a more suitable residence for the Sisters.

Monsignor Borghi went ahead to see that supper was prepared for us and this we shared with Father Francis and his two companions.

The next day, Saturday, was spent in preparation for the feast day following ; and, whilst we were busy shaking the dust from off our souls (of which the dust which covered our clothing was but an emblem), the faithful illuminated the interior and exterior of the church and gave vent to their feelings in songs and jubilation.

At 6 a.m. on Sunday morning the ladies of the Catholic Committee arrived to salute the little colony, and lead it triumphantly in carriages as far as the

avenue which leads to the church. There we were met by a number of people who had come out to meet us in procession with His Lordship, Mgr. Borghi, at their head. He again blessed the little flock which you sent him and solemnly introduced them into the church, where there was Pontifical High Mass and a beautiful sermon delivered by the Bishop himself. He was moved to tears and greatly impressed his audience already electrified at the sight of these angels of peace, who had come from afar without any temporal gain in view, but with the sole desire of working for God and the salvation of souls.

After Mass the religious took possession of their Convent. If it were not for the orders issued by the Bishop, their house would have been besieged by visitors all through the day. His Lordship understood the Sisters needed quietness and rest after all these tedious months of travel and, thanks to his paternal care, they enjoyed a little breathing space.

In the evening Vespers were chanted and the nuns distinguished themselves by their melodious voices. It was almost dark when we left the church. At nightfall the exterior of the Cathedral, the belfry and the dome were brilliantly illuminated.

I forgot to mention that during the journey from Allahabad to Agra, which took seven days to accomplish, we spent some nights in the Rest Houses or Dak-bungalows, as they are called in India, and on two occasions we were given hospitality in Catholic

homes. Everybody vied with his neighbour as to who could show us the most kindness.

The Bishop was our worthy and most amiable leader.

The roads were generally good, but in certain parts the heavy rains rendered them rather dangerous and several times our carts nearly overturned, especially when we were obliged to keep on travelling till midnight or 2 a.m. so as to reach a halting place. As Mother St. Joachim journeyed all the way in a litter she greatly improved in health, and to-day she is quite recovered. Mother St. Teresa is slightly indisposed, but all the other Sisters are as fit as when they left Lyons. They have sanctified themselves during their long journey. This Community was charming when it bade adieu to the Mother House, but it is still more admirable today. I shall not enter into any details on this subject, but I just wished to make this remark for your consolation. All through the journey, in all the countries where we travelled, Catholics, Protestants, infidels, all alike have been struck with admiration in witnessing so much devotedness accompanied by so much virtue, and an enlightened piety, always dignified and courteous, never indiscreet.

Do not therefore be surprised on hearing that a great many wished to join them. The Novitiate would be filled if obstacles had not prevented several from obeying the call. Rejoice then, dear Reverend Mother, at having given to India a family which does

honour to your interesting Congregation. It would be impossible to express how much your daughters love you ; how often they speak of you and of their dear sisters in Fourvière, of Le Puy, of the living and of the dead.

As for me, I esteem myself happy to have conducted to port — safe and sound — this little flock you confided to my care. I have shared in all their trials, their joys, their consolations and they have shared in mine ; together we have received from God tokens of His special providence and protection. He sometimes led us to death's door to try us, and suddenly, when we thought everything was lost, He scattered the clouds, calmed the storms, dispelled famine and sickness, and restored us to life.

Please present my regards to all your spiritual daughters in France ; the bonds that united us are not broken since God wishes me to continue still to care for the little flock in Agra, and I shall have another flock too to look after in another part of the town. His Lordship wishes to confide to me the direction of a Boys' School, which will be the companion establishment to the girls' school of which your religious have charge.

May God's Holy Will be done, and may He bless us all.

I am, and always shall remain,
Yours sincerely in J.C.

ABBE CAFFAREL

*Letter from Madam St. Vincent de Paul to
Reverend Mother St. Andrew*

REVEREND MOTHER,

It is the first time I have the pleasure of writing to a Mother who is interested in me although I knew her only a very short time. The remembrance of you will remain in my heart as much as if I had spent my whole life at Fourvière.

I am always full of joy when Our Mother receives a letter from you, and I wish it happened every day. Dear Reverend Mother, I am happy, yes, very happy in my vocation and I ardently long for the day of my Profession. I hope it will come soon.

I am very imperfect, as Our Mother will tell you, but I desire to work with all my might to correct my faults.

I must admit that up to the present I have had a very strange novitiate ! I think that the way I spent it has pierced my heart with a lively horror of the world and disgust for its vanity, such as I should not have had if I had remained at Fourvière. I do not forget our dear little Novitiate, and I hope my Sisters the Novices pray for me sometimes. I say very faithfully the Our Father and Hail Mary I promised to say for you, dear Reverend Mother. I should love to see you again, but it will be in Heaven. I am trying to merit the grace to meet you there some day.

I am forgetting the little French I knew, but I should not like to forget how to write it. In any case it seems to me that I shall always be able to tell you that I do not forget you, that I think often of you, that I love you, and many other things.

I have written to my mother, will you kindly forward the letter to her ?

You must have heard that I was very ill at Chandernagore, but Our Blessed Lady cured me almost immediately after the miraculous medal had been put round my neck. Will you thank her with me ? I am, *etc.*

* * *

SIXTEENTH LETTER

AGRA,

2nd January 1843.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

We have had no news of you for two whole months, and the time has seemed very long indeed.

You cannot doubt of the happiness it affords your Indian daughters to hear from you, and so we beg of you not to deprive us of that pleasure. Your mind is at rest now since you are certain of our safe arrival and that the trials and fatigue of the journey are over.

We have hopes of having a good number of pupils in both Boarding School and Day School. At present we have only twelve pupils, of whom three

ARRIVAL AT AGRA

are Protestants. Our dear Madam St. Vincent de Paul gives the Catechism class and is doing very much good. One of the Protestant girls has already asked to be allowed to assist at Mass daily and we expect next week two other non-Catholic pupils whose mother wishes us to give them instruction in our holy religion ! Our pupils like being with us. We should have a greater number of children in our schools if the English Government had not transferred its headquarters to Delhi, which obliged the officials to take up residence in that town. However, as we have not come out here for the Europeans only, we shall find plenty to do for Indian children. In a few days time we shall have as many of these as can be lodged in the house which is being prepared for them.

Father Caffarel has charge of the small boys ; eleven of these were handed over to him last week. These girls and boys speak only Hindustani ; we shall have to teach them English. Pray that God may help us in this as in all the rest.

I am thinking of giving Mother St. Augustine and Mother Assistant charge of the little Indian girls. The latter will teach them how to make artificial flowers, which will be an excellent industry for these children.

The Bishop has just told me that he will give us sixteen children for our Orphanage this week. It is time for us to start our work.

Thanks be to God, we are all well now. The weather is delightful at present, just like everlasting spring, but very soon the great heat will rush in and then ! I hope God will help us to bear it.

The Sisters of Loreto in Calcutta are about to open another establishment in Bengal. Several of their nuns have just come out from Ireland. Our good Bishop would like to give us a house on the Himalayas where the climate is the same as in France ! But to found another house we would need several more nuns from Europe. When will they come, dear Reverend Mother ? When our Bishop goes next year to get them, I hope. Although the Loreto nuns in Calcutta are three times as numerous as we are, their Bishop has just sent his Vicar General to England to procure some more Sisters and Priests also. How poor in both is our mission ! How much good would be done if only there were more labourers, and above all good workers, holy priests and fervent religious, very humble and dead to self !

Will you please, dear Reverend Mother, present my respectful regards to the Chaplain, to Father Coindre and the Abbé Rey. Many affectionate messages to the dear Novices and pupils from all here. How often we talk of our dear Fourvière ! Kind and loving remembrances to the members of our families, whom we left for God alone.

Good-bye, dear Reverend Mother, your daughters in India will always remain the most affectionate and respectfully submissive of your children.

M. ST. TERESA.

* * *

SEVENTEENTH LETTER

AGRA,

19th February 1843.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

We received your letter of the 26th November with the Cardinal's and one from the Chaplain. It is always a fête day at Agra when we receive letters from our dearly loved Fourvière.

God has then given you some more subjects for the Missions ! May His Holy Name be praised ! He has allotted us a large part of India to cultivate, and He wishes our little Congregation to do this great work ! Please prepare labourers because the harvest is great.

As I have already told you, dear Reverend Mother, our worthy Bishop has formed many plans. He wishes to take over the education of youth and place it in the hands of Catholic teachers. If only we were numerous enough to open establishments in Mussoorie, or at Sardhana and Delhi ! Prepare your motherly heart to make more sacrifices. God wants more of our nuns out here, and is it not a privilege ?

It is with much pleasure I announce to you the arrival of a new postulant. A young girl from Calcutta, who spent three weeks with us at Chander-nagore and who wished to accompany us when we left that place for Agra, but unfortunately she was detained owing to the illness of her brother whom she was obliged to nurse. He died shortly after our departure, and now she has decided to join our Congregation. The Bishop of Calcutta regrets that she has not entered with the Loreto Sisters in his diocese, where she was a Boarder for some time. He has written to Monsignor Borghi on the matter and speaks of her as a person of culture.

This young person will be most useful to us since she knows not only English but Hindustani as well, and she will be able to give Catechism to our little natives. She can also teach music, and will lighten Madam St. Vincent de Paul's burden !

We are keeping fairly well, for up to now we have enjoyed delightful weather. We even felt cold, which we scarcely expected, and were glad to have our winter cloaks and warm clothing.

Please, Reverend Mother, send us some Sisters—holy and virtuous Sisters—for it is more necessary to be really holy here than in France. Pray for us to become holy. If you could let us have some religious able to direct the cooking, to take care of the sick, and to teach spinning, ironing, etc. We are obliged to have a crowd of servants on account of the customs

of this country and the various castes which exist among the Hindoos. The man who sweeps may not do the dusting, and he who lays the table may not wipe it with a cloth, the woman who sweeps may not make the beds nor help dress the children — she is a pariah. A Christian woman who teaches Catechism in Hindustani would not let the sweeper woman assist at it, because she is a pariah.

Our good Bishop is not keeping good health. He will consecrate his coadjutor at the end of this month, and will leave him in Agra while he himself goes up to the Himalayas for about three or four months. Before his Lordship leaves for Mussoorie two of our girls will make their First Holy Communion. One of these we hope to see admitted to the Novitiate in the years to come, unless she changes considerably. The Bishop is a good Father to us, he loads us with favours. May God preserve him to us for a long time !

Monsignor told me that he requested Father Maxime to present you his respects, and to beg of you to prepare some subjects. Will you kindly thank His Eminence for his very kind letter to me ? Our Mothers and Sisters and the novices know all I should like to say to them from afar off.

Believe me, dear Reverend Mother.

Your most obedient and deeply attached daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.

EIGHTEENTH LETTER

AGRA,

8th June 1843.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

Our good God has tried us lately : we have had eight invalids at the same time. . . . Mother Assistant, Madam St. Vincent de Paul, the postulant, four Boarders and myself. Thank God, the fever has left us and we are almost our old selves now. For several days Mother St. Paul was alone to do all the work in the Boarding School of thirty children, as Mother St. Joachim was fully occupied with the infirmary. Our young Irish Sister contracted the fever while nursing the sick and recovered in time to replace Mother St. Augustine, who is now in bed, in the Orphanage. I hope her illness will not be of long duration.

All these trials are sent us by God — may His Holy Name be praised. Oh ! how very much we need Sisters to come to our aid !

If we enjoyed a European climate here, work would not tire us as it does. We really should take a short rest each day on account of the great heat, but often the multiplicity of our duties prevents our doing so. God seems to initiate us gently and by degrees to the intense heat, for they tell us that this summer is less overpowering than that of other years and, what is most extraordinary, every month we have had good showers of rain ! Blessed be God for this and for all things.

Five of our Boarders and nine orphans are to make their first Holy Communion in a fortnight's time. Among the Boarders there is one who became a Protestant, her father having for worldly gain renounced his Catholic faith, but happily he has returned to the true Church and the girl likewise. One of our native pupils (a converted Mohammedan) will also receive her First Communion on the same day as these.

We have inaugurated the month of May devotions, and our children have spent Our Lady's month with great fervour. As we had no priest to give the opening discourse—you will laugh when I tell you—it was I, with my jargon of English, who became preacher ! I have also undertaken a Catechism class so as to relieve our dear M. St. Vincent de Paul who is not well, and the other nuns have too much work to do. God will help me ; it is all for His glory.

Our good Bishop has left for the Hills. He delayed his departure on account of all the sickness we had among the nuns and the pupils, and his own health has suffered considerably owing to the intense heat of Agra ! He left with high fever on him and felt so ill that he really believed that he would never see us again. You can imagine how sad we were bidding him adieu !

In spite of his illness His Lordship was fully resigned to God's Holy Will whether for life or for death, sickness or health, and he would not even say a prayer to obtain his cure ! God has granted our desires, for I have just received a letter from His

Lordship and he is ever so much better. The fever has left him and undoubtedly the good climate of the hills will complete his cure and restore his precious health.

I heartily congratulate the newly professed as also the two young novices. It is a joy to us to know that our religious family is on the increase. Let those who wish to become missionaries endeavour to become very holy, more so even than those who remain in Europe. I hope they do not imagine that one has only to become a missionary to become *ipso facto* a saint ! Alas ! there is much more to be done. It is the time, not to acquire virtue, but to practise what one has already. Absorbed by the multiplicity of duties, tried by the intense heat of the climate, how many mortifications one has to practise almost unceasingly in order to carry on the apostolic work and preserve union with God ! It is necessary that one be dead to self in order to fulfil this sublime vocation, and maintain by silence and prayer interior recollection, so that, when circumstances prevent one from accomplishing the customary religious exercises, one may truthfully say with the great St. Francis de Sales " I cannot now say my prayers, but I am doing that which is equally good " — and so be it for us, dear Reverend Mother.

Our good M. St. Vincent de Paul is exceedingly happy. The Bishop received her vows on the eve of his departure and behold her fully professed ! The ceremony took place in the Cathedral with great

pomp and solemnity. His Lordship was assisted by Monsignor, his coadjutor, by Father Francis and Father Caffarel. A great crowd filled the church, and among the number were many Protestants. Agra had never witnessed anything of the kind. The Bishop experienced great consolation.

Adieu, dear Reverend Mother.

Your most affectionate and obedient daughter,
M. ST. TERESA.

* * *

AGRA,
18th June 1843.

DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

God has just given us three of our non-Catholic Boarders by sending them, doubtless in His merciful designs, a very terrible cross. On the feast of Pentecost, just as they were enthusiastic about the happiness of their Catholic companions, and spoke of their determination to become Catholics themselves, they received the news of their father's sudden death. Their mother died about two years ago: so they are entirely orphans. They are English and all their relatives are in England with the exception of an uncle who is a Captain, as their father was. This gentleman is not in Agra; he is married and has already four children.

These poor little orphans are happy in the thought that they will find mothers in us, and their only fear is that their uncle should wish to

withdraw them from our school and place them in an establishment in Calcutta for the orphaned children of officers. We hope he will not do this. The Bishop, as well as the girls themselves, wrote to the Colonel of the regiment, requesting him to use his influence to prevent the uncle from acting contrary to the children's wishes and to allow them to remain with us. He replied in a most satisfactory manner both to the Bishop and to the children. The girls already say the Catholic prayers and assist at Mass. The eldest, who is 14 years of age, says she will never leave us even if the Queen wished to force her to do so ! She wishes to become not only a Catholic but also a Religious !

These are some of the consolations God gives us and may He be blessed. If only it were given us to convert many, whether heretics or idolaters, what happiness it would afford us ! We do indeed pity their ignorance and blindness. One of our servants remembers—so he says—having been a Brahmin in another life, and all his ambition now is to become a horse, because horses are well treated. (It is true—they are better lodged and better treated than the poor native.)

One day Father Caffarel saw his gardener in great grief, and wished to know the cause of his distress : “ Ah ! ” said the poor man weeping, “ it is because my dog is dead. All my care was of no avail, I have not been able to prolong his life. ” “ You were then very fond of your dog, since you are so distressed

at his death ?” asked Father Caffarel. “ You ask me if I was fond of him !” replied the gardener with a sigh, “ why—he was my uncle !”

I do not know what revelation he had on the matter, but he was firmly convinced that the soul of his uncle had passed into the dog. “ Besides,” added he, “ the dog bore a striking resemblance to my uncle both in face and in character.”

Poor blinded souls ! To what lengths they carry their absurd notions.

Their idols are hideous : they are monsters with several bodies, or many heads, five or six enormous arms or legs, faces with frightful contortions, etc., etc.

If it were not for these unfortunate castes—truly an infernal invention—one could hope to convert the pagan more easily. But, as matters stand, he who becomes a Christian is banned from his caste and is treated worse than a pariah. No one wishes to give him work to earn his living ; neither will they give him food or drink, even if he were dying and happened to be their father or son !

Priests are greatly needed in this mission. Actually there are only fourteen in our diocese which is larger than the whole of France ! Even the Catholics are deprived of spiritual succour and are absolutely without instruction in several localities. The father of one of our pupils was fourteen years without seeing a priest, and the unfortunate man turned Protestant. The greater number of Catholics are faithful to their

religion solely because they happen to be born Catholics. The mother of one of our pupils knew nothing whatever about her religion beyond the prayers of her prayer book.

We are at present in the hottest time of the year, and the *punkas* are in full swing. Thanks be to God we are all in good health, and make as much use as we can of the *punkas* and *tattis*. *Punkas* are a species of short curtain extending across the apartment and kept constantly in motion by means of a rope pulled by a servant and worked from the exterior. The *tattis* are a sort of door made of fibrous substance and placed in the verandahs in front of the entrance to the rooms. These *tattis* are watered constantly and by these means we enjoy a little coolness in the apartments where the thermometer registers 112° to 120° of heat, even in the shade !

Our little Indian orphanage is getting on very well. These good children have the best spirit in the world. It is a great mistake to imagine that these poor people are lacking in gratitude and are incapable of an active and civilised life !

Our dear Mother St. Augustine has much to do with our orphans and she finds great consolation in her charge. One day she was suffering from a stiff neck. All the children did their best to relieve her and vied with each other in heating cotton wool at the lamp which was applied to her neck, and you should have witnessed their delight at thinking they really were giving her some relief. These dear children are

happy in the thought that they have other mothers far away who love them, and you, dear Rev. Mother, are the very special object of their gratitude.

On Easter Sunday we exchanged our black wool-len habits for white calico ones. We have kept our black caps and veils, cords, and choir mantles. We think we shall be able to wear them in spite of the heat—at any rate we shall try.

Last week we had a visit from the Governor General who has been in Agra for a month, and he was delighted to find an establishment such as ours in this part of the globe.

If only we were more numerous so as to do more good and to convert many pagan children. Alas ! we are so few !

Good-bye, dear Reverend Mother, please remember me very affectionately to all our dear Mothers, Sisters and novices in our beloved Fourvière.

Your devoted daughter,

M. St. TERESA. R.J.M.

VI

MORE LETTERS

*LETTER OF MONSIGNOR BORGHI, BISHOP OF AGRA,
TO M. ROSSAT, VICAR GENERAL OF GAP.*

28th June 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am greatly touched by the favour which your brother, Monsignor Rossat, has conferred on me by sending me his portrait.

Mother St. Paul has painted two portraits of me and I shall have much pleasure in presenting one to Monsignor, and the other to the members of the Council at Lyons.

Next year, my dear friend, you will receive the case of articles which I am collecting for you. At present I am getting together a number of ancient coins and putting by a small provision of agates.

Our Boarding School was opened only five months ago and already we have 32 Boarders and seven or eight applications for vacancies.

The Mother Superior informed me that very soon we should have a deluge of children, for not a week passes without bringing new ones to the school. Knowing that you intend giving me 8,000 francs, I have started building another dormitory, 82 ft. by 22 ft.

On the 4th of this month, Lord Edinburgh, Governor General of India, came to visit our estab-

lishment. The Religious with the 22 Boarders all dressed in white, with myself and my coadjutor leading, received His Excellency in the large Assembly room, and after the music ceased I read an address.

His Excellency afterwards visited the various apartments and admired the elegance, order and cleanliness which reigned throughout. He also visited the orphanage and the church which are situated near the Boarding School. He left us expressing his high appreciation of our work.

The following day I received a letter from His Excellency requesting me to present to the Sisters, on his behalf, a beautiful piece of English work.

Mother St. Vincent de Paul made her vows, and the ceremony was very impressive. One can plainly see that God works miracles in favour of this angelic child. A short while before her profession she was spitting blood. The English doctor told me she could not be cured. However, the day after she was feeling perfectly well and able to take up her customary duties as though she had never been ill. This Religious will be an honour to the congregation of Jesus and Mary. All the other Sisters are well and are very hard-working.

I am looking forward to the pleasure of seeing you next year. God grant I may. Adieu.

Yours sincerely in Jesus Christ,
✠ BORCHI (BISHOP OF AGRA).

LETTER OF MONSIGNOR BORGHI, BISHOP OF AGRA,
TO MOTHER ST. ANDREW, SUPERIORESS GENERAL.

28th June 1843.

VERY REVEREND MOTHER,

I am afraid you are somewhat displeased with me for writing to you so rarely. Please forgive me and I shall endeavour to correct that fault.

Although I am 4000 miles away from my dear daughters of Agra, nevertheless I know that they are keeping well, with the exception of poor Mother St. Augustine who has been ailing for the past two weeks. Believe me, dear Reverend Mother, the same spirit that reigns in Fourvière animates the Sisters in Agra. I admire with astonishment the zeal, courage and charity of these good nuns. It is a great comfort to know that they are happy in their vocation and that they know how to bear the difficulties and privations inseparable from the life of a missionary. In a word, I am satisfied and I have nothing further to wish for.

Seeing that our establishment in Agra is getting on so well, I put aside a certain sum of money which was given me by the Society of the Propagation of the Faith at Lyons, and with this I am building a new dormitory capable of containing 50 beds !

I also intend having a small chapel built near the Convent and an orphanage for the young Irish girls. I hope God will give me the means to do so and that He may inspire those gentlemen of the Council to allow me an extra grant of money for the

coming year. On the 7th of this month I blessed the church in Landour and called it the "*Church of Jesus and Mary!*" I trust these admirable names may serve as a magnet which will attract the Religious from Fourvière and bring them here !

Landour, as you know, is situated at 7000 feet above sea-level. The air here is very salubrious, and whilst on the plains of India poor folk must bear the dreadful heat, here on the contrary we must have a fire on account of the great dampness !

I would that we had an establishment for the good Sisters on these heights. I have already made mention of this and I have been offered the purchase of two English Boarding Schools. For the larger one they are asking Rs. 7,200, and for the other Rs. 3,700, but where can I find that amount ? (The rupee was worth 3 francs 50 centimes at that time.) But if it be God's Holy Will, we shall succeed.

Mother St. Teresa tells me you wish to have my approbation for your Constitutions. I consider it my duty to send this to you and at the same time I wish you to know that I have written to Rome requesting the Holy See to approve of your Congregation as an Order in the Church.

As I shall probably go to Lyons next year, I beg of you beforehand to get ready 6 or 8 brave religious for Agra. You know the qualities they require. I should recommend you to have them taught English. I shall accompany them on their

outward journey which will take about three and a half months. Let these good religious prepare and be without fear. They will always be under the protection of Jesus and Mary and will not have to endure the sufferings of our other dear Sisters of Agra who did not know where they were going, owing to the mistake they made in not taking the steamship from Suez. Assure them that they will find in me a father, and that I undertake to bring them to Agra like "poor princesses".

I thank you, dear Reverend Mother, and all your congregation for the immense assistance that you have already given to this Mission, which henceforth you must consider as your own.

I commend myself to your prayers and to those of all the Religious of your community.

Believe me, dear Reverend Mother,

Your devoted father in God,

✠ BORCHI

Bishop of Agra.

* * *

NINETEENTH LETTER

AGRA,

21st September 1843.

MY DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

I was not able to write to you last month, as I was ill for nearly three weeks. I am happy to say I am quite well now.

Our worthy Bishop is preparing for his trip to Europe. He hopes to be in Rome for Easter and you may see him in Fourvière about the month of May or June.

I trust, dear Reverend Mother, that you are preparing a large contingent of missionaries for India, where the harvest is great and the labourers alas ! but few !

Recently some poor Catholics offered to build a chapel in their town if only they could have a priest. The Bishop was sorry to have to reply that he deeply regretted having to refuse but he had no priest available !

In the Himalayan mountains, which as you know extend for miles and miles, and on which there are a number of towns, Landour alone has a priest. What an amount of good could be accomplished in this country among the poor idolaters and even among the rich, if only we had a number of willing workers and missionary priests ! The climate of Landour is very much like that of Europe.

We have the consolation of seeing the number of our pupils increasing. I mentioned in one of my letters to you that half the number were non-Catholics. Now we can truly say that they are so only in name. All the girls assist at Mass and Benediction, recite the rosary and ask for medals and holy pictures ! One alone resisted and failed to be convinced. However, on the feast of the Assumption, on which

day I presume Our Blessed Lady awaited her, she asked to be allowed to assist at the conference given to the pupils at 10 o'clock, the same time as at Fourvière. The priest naturally spoke of our heavenly mother and the joys of our celestial home. From that day onwards this child, once so rebellious, began to say she wanted to become a Catholic and shortly afterwards that she hoped to be a nun ! She is over 16 years of age, very sensible, and possesses sound judgment. If she is converted she will, I think, make an excellent Catholic.

The Protestants and especially the Anabaptists are doing all they can to prevent us from doing good, but often it has the contrary effect. Lately they attacked the mother of one of our pupils because she allowed her child to embrace the Catholic Faith. This good lady, not quite knowing what to reply, wrote from Delhi where she lives to a good Catholic friend in Agra begging her to help her in this matter. The friend sent her some controversial books, telling her to read them very carefully, and that after doing so she would be able to silence those who tormented her on account of her daughter's conversion to Catholicism. The lady followed the wise counsel given, and the first fruit of this reading was the knowledge of the truth for herself ! She made up her mind to follow her daughter's example, and this of course gave great joy to the child.

It is not only among pagans and heretics that there is good to be done. But also among Catholics,

the greater number of whom are absolutely ignorant owing to lack of priests and of religious instruction. A few days ago we received two newly baptised girls, but they did not know how to make the sign of the cross and had forgotten the "Our Father". These children had nevertheless spent three months in an Anabaptist school, where they are supposed to do much praying!

Last month one of our little native girls died of cholera — she had only been ill a few hours.

I fancy our Mother Foundress, as also all the Community of Jesus and Mary in Heaven, must have rejoiced on seeing this little soul and must have been delighted to present her to Our Divine Lord as the first fruit of our Indian Mission.

Cholera has made dreadful ravages in India during the past two months, but thank God we have been preserved from its contagion. It was precisely when I was really dangerously ill that the epidemic raged most fiercely and, strange to say, all those who were suffering from various other diseases were smitten and succumbed. God spared me and cured me completely. Our Sisters and pupils prayed constantly and fervently, and Father Caffarel asked Father Maxime to offer up a novena of Masses in honour of Our Lady, and the good God granted our petitions. He wishes me to do some more work — Blessed be His Holy Will. Doubtless I was not ready.

The terrible disease caused great havoc, particularly in the military camp. Father Francis distinguished himself by his zeal and his devotedness. He never left the Camp, except to bury the dead. Day and night he assisted the poor agonizing creatures, who were happy to expire in his arms. Some clutched on to his habit and held on to it so tightly that the good priest could not disengage himself until they had breathed their last.

It was not thus that the Protestant ministers, so highly paid by government, acted, for they visited the Camp about three times only ! God rewarded the devotedness of the worthy Father Francis — he was preserved from the contagion, whereas the doctor, the apothecaries and a large number of those who only went near the stricken camp from time to time caught the disease and died !

Father Francis is esteemed by the soldiers, who venerate and love him as their father.

Please unite with us in thanking God, and pray for your Indian daughters.

Your affectionate and submissive daughter in
Jesus and Mary,

MARY ST. TERESA
R.J.M.

VII

THE CENTENARY

This last letter of Mother St. Teresa's was in 1843. Two years later, the foundation desired by Bishop Borghi was made at Mussoorie; one at Sardhana in 1848, and another at Bombay in 1850. Mother St. Teresa went home to France in 1854 to bring out some more Sisters, but to her great disappointment she was detained at the Mother House, and Mother St. Bruno brought out the party of sixteen nuns and novices. Not long afterwards, Reverend Mother St. Andrew died and Mother St. Teresa was elected General. Her heart was still in her Agra Mission, and all her life long she never ceased to love it and work for it.

Several other houses were founded in the second half of the century : four in the Punjab, Sialkot 1856; Simla 1864; Murree 1876; and Lahore 1877. In the ~~provinces~~ provinces of Agra and Oudh, Dehra Dun in 1880; and in the Bombay Presidency, Poona in 1860.

Nuns came from other parts of the Congregation to help in the good work: from England, Canada, Spain, Germany, the United States, and especially from India itself.

In this present century we have several foundations: St. Bede's Training College for Teachers, in 1904, and St. Margaret's College growing out of a Training Class established at Clare Road; Ambala in

1910, Delhi in 1919, and Hampton Court (Mussoorie) in 1921. Since the coming of our nuns to India there have been nine Provincials. In this Centenary year the Province consists of thirteen houses, maintaining twenty-four schools and two training colleges, and teaching between five and six thousand children. They are fine schools, well equipped, modern, up-to-date, filled with pupils. They have had a good record of scholastic success, and the encouragement of both religious and secular authorities, especially the Archbishops and Bishops of the dioceses in which they stand.

Looking back over the century, there is not much to catch the eye, — some heroic nursing of victims of cholera and plague, courage during the mutiny, presence of mind and resignation in fires and earthquakes, with the resolute endeavour to make things better than before. Three times the Kaisar-i-Hind Medal has been awarded for good service in the cause of Education, but here too, to a large extent, the Congregation may be said to have lived and worked unknown. There has been little to attract attention. Devotedness, self-sacrifice, fidelity to duty, patient endurance of a very trying climate with its resultant maladies, all these are so much taken for granted that they pass unnoticed. Yet what virtue it requires to struggle on, year in and year out, pursuing with unabated energy the difficult task of education among children of all classes !

In our Indian Province the task is rendered doubly hard on account of the limited number of nuns.

Vocations have not been as numerous as if our houses were situated in the more Catholic parts of India, but they too have made up by devotedness and capability for paucity of numbers. The words of Our Lord to Mother St. Cecile of Rome apply here in a particular manner: "I know how much you need subjects. I know you are seeking My glory and the good of souls and that you have many good works to maintain. I am pleased with, and I bless, the suffering and self-sacrifice called forth by a scarcity of subjects . . . Let the religious remain very submissive to My Will which asks suffering of them, and I Myself will replace those I have taken from them by multiplying their strength and helping them more powerfully." (Sillery, 11th January, 1929).

One way Our Lord helps is by giving us good, devoted secular teachers in our schools. Seconding our labours and sharing in our aims, they too — "instructing others unto justice, will shine as stars for all eternity."



A hundred years have passed and we stand on the threshold of a new century. Much has changed, inevitably, since our first French Mothers walked modestly into the Agra Church to the singing of "Jesu Corona Virginum". Greater changes will come when the world war is over. Each generation, like each race, has its own characteristics, its special graces to combat the evils of its time. Yet in a changing world the eternal values do not change.

Pondering the time that is past, what message can we find to carry with us into the unknown future? Might it not be this: "Hand on the flaming torch that each generation of Jesus and Mary nuns has thrown to its successor. Carry on in spite of difficulties and danger. God's work must be done, and it is a privilege to do it. Carry on, and trust in God; if you are few, He will multiply the effects of your labours; if you are weak, He will make you strong. Carry on, seeking only God's glory and the good of souls, and you will pass through this life doing good to all around you, and one day enter Heaven accompanied by a great number of souls, there to be your joy and your crown."

And from the other side of the world, from our own century and our own generation comes that consoling vision of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and our Congregation, shown to Mother St. Cecile of Rome: "Our Lord then showed me, a little below Him and His Mother, all the religious of Jesus and Mary reunited as on a vast plain. The rays of the Host and the flames of His Sacred Heart, passing by the Heart of the Blessed Virgin, descended upon the nuns of our Congregation and from them were radiated upon a countless multitude of souls who surrounded them on every side, as far as eye could reach, and who were turned towards them. Our Lord said: 'My Heart overflows with grace for souls. Bring souls to My Eucharistic Heart.' Moreover, the Blessed Virgin drew all the souls towards

her in order to lead them to Jesus" (June 4th 1928).

Is not this inspiration and encouragement enough to strengthen us for whatever the future may hold ? Let us then invoke our Mother Foundress, and try to realise the other prayer which tradition puts on her lips : " that each member of her little foundation might be so humble and so fervent that the Congregation of Jesus and Mary might last until the end of time." Amen.

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