



Volume II

Victory-Noll, Huntington, Indiana, January, 1926

Number 2

A DAY AT VICTORY-NOLL

By Mary Stephens
Associate Editor "The Southern Agriculturist"

"Yes'm," said the clerk at the little hotel in Huntington, Indiana, whom I had asked for information, "folks always seem to enjoy going out to that Mission School. They've got a beautiful place out there, and they're just as friendly as they can be. No'm, there don't seem to be any red tape about it. You just go—they'll be glad to have you."

Half an hour later I stood under the wonderful arched entrance to Victory-Noll Institute, wondering which way to turn. Through the French door of one of the wings I could see a number of young women in dark uniforms. I approached a bit diffidently. There was evidently some work on hand that was engrossing the attention of the persons within, and I disliked to intrude. Just then one of them turned and saw me approaching. She came forward, and down the steps, with outstretched hands and a smiling welcome. One or two others followed her.

"We are practicing a little," she said, "and if you don't mind waiting just a minute in here—" She led me to a small room a step or two down the hall, and there a moment later another smiling Catechist joined me.

"You would like to see our new building?" she asked. Visitors usually did, it seemed.

"Yes," I replied, not telling her that far more interesting to me were the groups of sweet-faced, happy-looking girls who were beginning to scatter in every direction, evidently to their morning classes or other duties. Anyway, the big, windowy, sunny building was worth the trip, for it was uniquely lovely, and still so entirely simple and plain one could hardly tell where the unusual charm came in.

That was the beginning of one of the pleasantest days I have spent in a long, long time. From cellar to garret, literally, those girls took me, first one and then another acting as guide. There were class-

rooms, dining rooms, hospital-training rooms, sleeping rooms and guest rooms to see. Then to the garden, the barns, the dairy and the "summer cottage" on the grounds, the scene of many a jolly frolic—for the Catechists at Victory-Noll are sane and

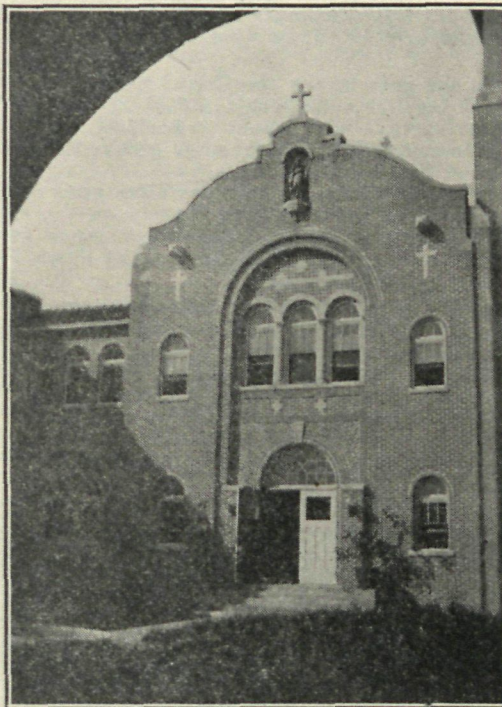
most beautiful place in the world to me. But I can hardly wait to get to work. There is so much waiting—so very, very much." She grew grave. "That is why we are here, you know—to get ready for the real service."

"The real service." That was the secret of the happiness that glowed in all those young faces. As the day wore on I came to understand better the source of the joyous lightness of spirit so apparent among them.

Midway of the building a long, bright corridor runs past the door of the wonderfully lovely chapel. There are three or four steps up, and one stands face to face with the adored "Master of the House", the Christ of pleading, Who stands with outstretched arms above the white altar. Dozens of times a day each Catechist passes this open door as she goes about her ordinary duties, and never without a loving look into the beautiful face of Christ. It has grown to be a simple and natural thing, that glance of adoring greeting, often varied by a moment of earnest prayer in passing—it is only the affair of a minute or two to go up the steps and kneel within the chapel for a word of gratitude, or petition, or love. It sounds almost irreverent to say that one feels a sense of glad comradeship running through the selfless devotion of this household to its beloved Master. But something of the sort is there, something that radiates the very spirit of Christ and makes unkindness or selfishness or personal consideration an unheard-of thing.

"I have been here eleven months," said one Catechist, "and I have never heard an angry or impatient word from anybody. You just don't feel that way."

But this is not the story of Victory-Noll and The Society of Missionary Catechists as I started out to tell it. That story is one of tireless zeal, entire Faith, personal sacrifice and ceaseless prayer. When the Society of Missionary Catechists was founded, the simple Faith of its founder was its greatest



The patio and main entrance portal glimpsed through a cloister arch.

happy girls who know that wholesome fun occasionally is the soul's best tonic.

"Won't you hate to leave when you have finished your training?" I asked a dark-eyed little Catechist who was nearly ready to be sent to the mission fields. "Don't you just love it here?"

"Indeed I love it," she replied. "It is the

asset. A few years after its foundation, just three years ago, to be exact, a priest—editor of national reputation, wide visioned and of consummate zeal—saw the wonderful possibilities of the new apostolate. He recognized at the same time the need of a practical training to fit its members for their work among the poor, neglected Spanish-speaking Catholics of the Southwest, and he, the Rt. Rev. J. F. Noll, LL.D., now Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Wayne, through the generous donation of a charitably-disposed Californian Catholic, not only erected the Victory Training Institute, but now maintains it through Our Sunday Visitor.

For the Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victory have nothing of their own. They are supported by a foundation fund designated as a Burse. A complete Burse amounts to \$6,000, which, when invested, draws enough interest to provide perpetually for the support of one Missionary Catechist in the field. Each Burse is named in honor of Our Divine Lord, Our Blessed Mother, or some particular Saint, and donations may be applied to whichever Burse the donor may wish.

Necessarily, the work is limited by the money that can be made available for the purpose. The Catechists live as simply as possible, eating the plainest of wholesome food, much of it raised in their own gardens by their own labors, and wearing the plain, habit-like uniform which has been adopted.

"Everything I have on cost less than half of what I used to pay for a hat", said one girl, smiling, as she touched her garb. "And I have worn this uniform since last December."

"Don't you sometimes miss your pretty clothes? Don't you want to go back?"

Her luminous dark eyes glowed. "Not for all the world," she said simply.

So, everything considered, a Catechist's training at Victory-Noll costs very little. If only one can be sure of that little! It is that that is up to the people who can help in this glorious work only by their donations.

As may be inferred from what has been said, the Society of Missionary Catechists is not a strict religious community. Members take the simple vows of religion for one year at a time. The Society is not a Sisterhood at all, in the strict sense of the word. But it is a body of devout, zealous, self-sacrific-



The Missionary Catechist

(Lines dedicated to the Missionary Catechists by
Rev. Dr. William Shearin, LL.D.)

Forward she goes to sow the Gospel seed
And strengthen Faith by many a shining deed
When April gilds the faces of the rocks
And stony meadows light with blaze of phlox
And pearly dew, so bright and clear and pure,
Inlaid by Heaven on moss and mead and moor;
For Summer loves to linger and to trace
The flush of loveliness upon her face.

Forward she goes to sow the Gospel truth;
Upon her lips and cheek the flush of youth,
The Mesa spreads new beauty at her feet,
The mountains bow in homage and repeat
An echo of that song divinely old—
"The love of Christ for men can ne'er grow cold."
Winter or Spring, she marches bravely on
When snows are here or when the Summer gone
Trails past the Autumn fields the hues of dawn.

Forward she goes, all seasons of the year,
And speaks to children Christ has held so dear;
"Suffer the little child to come to me
And learn the wisdom of the Life to be,
Learn of the Kingdom far beyond the sky,
Learn of the joy that was not born to die,
And all the glory God hath kept in store
For those that love His Son forevermore."

ing young women who live under the authority of the Church a real Community life. They are trained in nursing, hygiene, social service and Tabernacle work. One of the two years of training is spent in the great Calumet Steel District at Gary, Ind., among the poorest laborers, in order that they may go into the field equipped with real experience.

I came away from Victory-Noll most reluctantly. There were goodbyes waving from the doorway still when I turned the last terraced curve and lost sight of the building. There were warm invitations to "Come back again", and I am surely going. I may say with perfect frankness that I wish with all my heart I could go and stay. Each of us has some sort of an ideal of perfect service to be offered to Our Blessed Lord, through Mary, His Mother. It can be found there—and that tells the story as simply and completely as I know how to tell it.

It may well be that the greatest lesson of Victory-Noll is in its inspiration to all who visit it to accept their share of Mission work as joyfully as those dear girls have accepted their call to a life of loving labor.

If there are any who lack this Mission spirit, let them spend one day among the cloisters and gardens of Victory-Noll, and hear the eager and happy dreams of one after another of the young women in training there; the while looking out past the great arches across the Wabash Valley, with the lifting of hills beyond, as far as sight can carry. Let them kneel beneath the outstretched hands of the Pleading Christ for an hour, asking Him with all devotion for guidance. Then let them come away at dusk, looking backward to the open door, and seeing again from the lower terraces the gleaming figure of Our Blessed Lady of Victory over the great central arch. And finally, let them lift their eyes to the shining Cross that is the last thing to be seen, as the road drops into the valley.

To one who will do that, the Spirit will surely come!

LOOK

at the wrapper of your magazine. If there is a cryptic "Jan. 1926" imprinted in conjunction with the address, your subscription expires with this issue, and should be renewed at once. Please lend us your support and encouragement then, by renewing your subscription promptly for one, two, or more years. Better still, subscribe for life. A life subscription is but ten dollars.



The East Wing.

IN HIS STEPS

VIII

"Well, here is our little Anne back again for class after her spell of sickness," cheerily remarked good Sister Charitina after she had duly opened her class with prayer.

"And I am so happy to be back, Sister", replied Anne. "I am sure I owe it to your prayers and to the prayers of my classmates. And Sister", she went on, "would you believe it, I felt ever so much better after your visit to me when you so kindly explained the beautiful doctrine of the Providence of God. Then I understood as I never did before, that Our Dear Lord permitted me to have this terrible attack of pleurisy for my good. I offered it up to Him through the Immaculate Heart of Our Blessed Mother and even though the Doctor told me it would be a long time before I would be up and around, I felt so much better that after a few days I was able to be about the house again."

"I am delighted to hear this", answered Sister Charitina. "After all, it is a source of great consolation for a teacher to know that her pupils not only understand the principles she tries to explain, but that they put them into practice, and especially is this true of the principles and practices of the spiritual life."

"I have had Rosemary write a short paper on the application of the second principle, which I touched upon at the end of our last class, namely, that our advancement in holiness or Christian Perfection consists in entire conformity to God's will. Rosemary, I think, is well qualified to write on this subject because we had a nice little private conference about it some time ago when we both read a very beautiful work written by St. Alphonsus entitled 'Conformity to God's Will', which clearly explains the subject. Rosemary, will you please read your paper?"

"The doctrine of conformity to God's Will", began Rosemary, "rests upon two principles, the first, called 'The Providence of God,' states that nothing save sin can ever happen in this life without the express will or permission of Almighty God. The second principle is that the greater or more perfectly our will is conformed to the Will of God, the higher will be our perfection."

"The Saints tell us that Christian Perfection is nothing more than the perfect fulfillment of the Law of God, and furthermore that the perfect fulfillment of the Law of God is nothing more than the conformity of our will to the Divine Will. 'The most excellent practice of the love of God', they say, 'is an absolute conformity to God's Holy Will.' This is a truth so plain that every Christian should easily understand and practice it. We have learned in one of the lessons of the spiritual life that Christian Perfection consists in the continual loving of God and the loving of our neighbor for God's sake. Hence if we would aim at the practice of Perfect Charity we must be conformed as perfectly as possible to the Will of God."

In this conformity of the human will with the Divine Will consists that union of love which we call Perfect Charity. Again, in this conformity we find the true effect of that love or charity we bear Him, for love by its own power changes the will of the person loving into the will of the person loved so that we may truly say in all things they have but one will. "This", says a great Saint, "is the most excellent effect of love, that it unites the will of the lovers."



It was love such as this that David had for Jonathan, the son of King Saul. 'David and Jonathan,' says the Holy Scripture, 'had but one heart and one will.' And so it is between our soul and God: the closer our will is united to His Will, the greater will be our love. And, moreover, since it is certain that there is nothing more perfect than God's Will, it follows that we should become better and holier according as our wills are more perfectly united with the Divine Will."

"Well done, Rosemary", exclaimed Sister, "I am sure all the members of the class will agree with me that you have given a very precise statement of this great Spiritual Doctrine."

"From this it follows that although we might take great pleasure in offering to Our Blessed Lord certain good works, still if they were not done according to His Holy Will He would not accept them, but would, on the contrary, reject them. If, for example, we took pleasure in offering prayers, Masses and Holy Communions according to our own will and not according to God's Will, they would not be worthy of merit, but rather would be a source of demerit. Should my Superior say to me: 'Sister, I do not want you to attend the Community prayers or go to Mass tomorrow morning. The Doctor has ordered that you remain in bed and you must do so', and, in disobedience to the command of my Superior, I went to Mass anyhow, you readily see I would not be gaining the merits of the Holy Sacrifice, but I would instead be deserving of punishment."

"There is one thing that always strikes us, children, when we read the Holy Gospels, and that is the frequency with which Our Dear Saviour announces the purpose of His coming into the world: 'I come, not to do My Will, but the Will of Him Who sent Me'; 'My meat is to do the Will of My Father'; 'I always do the Will of My Father.' St. Paul tells us that Jesus was obedient even unto death. In order to give a proof of the undying love He bore for His Heavenly Father and of the perfect conformity of His Will to the eternal decree that He should die upon a Cross, in the hour of His agony He bowed His Head

in humble submission, saying: 'My Father, not My Will but Thine be done'."

"Even before Our Divine Lord began to teach, He gave us the example of the perfect conformity of His Will to the Will of His Father by spending thirty years of His life obeying His Blessed Mother and St. Joseph, His own creatures, in all things, seeing in every command they gave the express Will of His Heavenly Father."

Finally, children, we can take Our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph as our models of perfect conformity to the Will of God. What was Her answer to the Archangel when he announced to Her that She was to become the Mother of God? 'Behold the Handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto Me according to Thy word.' And how glorious an example we have in the life of the foster-father of Our Lord, the great St. Joseph! Never once do we hear St. Joseph speaking in Holy Scripture, but we always see him doing God's Will. Always it is prompt, ready, cheerful, unquestioning obedience to the command of the Angel who appears to him in the dead of night and orders him to leave home and country and undertake the long and perilous journey into Egypt and to remain there until again ordered to leave. If we could only bring ourselves to look upon every command of God as St. Joseph looked upon this midnight order of the Angel and to obey as perfectly as he did, then indeed we would be truly conformed to the Will of God and greatly advanced in the way of Christian Perfection."

"TIA MARIA." (Aunt Mary)

She is not the "Aunt Mary" of the Hoosier poet's boyhood dreams whose iron-gray locks were hidden under a snowy cap of starched ruffles, and who knew how to capture and hold little boy's hearts with big, fat pumpkin pies, delicious doughnuts and tempting cookies. Nor is she anything like the Aunt Marys of our own childhood acquaintance. She is just a brown, wizened-up old lady with dull eyes and a sweet, wistful smile lighting up her patient face, framed by the folds of a picturesque mantilla. Her euphonic name and soft drawing tones bespeak her ancestry. Her larder is very meagre, if not bare, yet what is hers is ours when we chance to call. She knows neither the definition of, nor the distinction between, "mine" and "thine."

Tia Maria is lame, but her infirmity does not stay her from hobbling to the door to greet us this morning and to implore for us of the bountiful God, innumerable blessings. We have brought her a warm scarf and a pair of woolen stockings. She fondles them, feeling of their warmth appreciatively. Then, to her delight, we produce a "muy fuerte" (very strong) liniment to relieve the pain in her stiff, swollen joints.

There are more "Tia Marias" on whom we must call, so our visit is brief. But before we leave we have garnered the bright jewels of an old woman's gratitude, and we offer them to Heaven for the good loyal friends who have done so much to help us dispense charity to Tia Maria and other aged, needy souls among our poor Mexicans, by forwarding us clothing for distribution among them, or by sending us small donations towards our Medicine Chest Fund.

"Doings" at Victory-Noll

By

Catechist

Margaret

Molloy



My dear Brother:

Now that we are back to normalcy after the holiday period of extraordinary activities and unusual excitement, I know you will be anxious to know what I did, and how I felt, during the recent Christmas holidays—the first I ever spent away from home, as well as my first in religion. Contrary to your expectations, I was not at all homesick. Every time the suggestion that it was an appropriate season for the shedding of a few self-indulgent tears came to my mind, I vetoed it, for if it be true, and it is true, that "home is where the heart is," a religious should be at home and happy wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

My story begins long before December 25, for we were imbued with the spirit of Christmas long before the day itself dawned. Our solemn Christmas Novena, in preparation for the Feast, first of all prepared the way for its happy celebration. Mysterious boxes and bundles, with signs labeled "Keep out until Christmas," plastered all over them, began to arrive in truck-load lots at least a full week before. Simultaneously with the advent of the first consignment of boxes, holly wreaths and gay red and green festoons proclaimed everywhere throughout the building that Christmas was approaching. The kitchen, too, was redolent with spicy, appetite-provoking odors, which, in spite of closed doors, penetrated to "points beyond."

Every one was busy contributing to the general good, and I think I realized for the first time what a diversity of talents God distributes among the members of even a small missionary community. The cook and her assistants concocted holiday dishes in their domain; deft fingers constructed the cave and setting for the crib in the chapel; artistic fingers produced, with the aid of brush and palette, Christmas greeting cards and sketches; those of the community endowed with pleasing voices practiced Christmas carols; the dramatic "stars" of past productions rehearsed an original play written by one of the Catechists; a corps of decorators accomplished marvels with crepe paper and other accessories of the decorator's art; those assigned to the sewing-room plied industrious needles; and the office force occupied itself in getting out the Christmas number of "The Missionary Catechist," and in designing and mailing out a greeting card to its subscribers. Like the various instruments of an orchestra, all worked to produce the finished symphony of a happy community Christmas.

I want you to know, incidentally, so that you will properly appreciate your copy of "The Missionary Catechist," that all the work entailed in the publication and mailing of our little magazine is performed by the members of the Society. Besides con-

tributing the greater part of the material appearing in its columns, they are responsible for its editing, make-up, mailing—everything, in fact, except the actual printing.

Officially, the celebration of Christmas began with High Mass at midnight on Christmas Eve. On my way downstairs to the chapel I stopped at the landing to admire the beauty of the world outdoors. If I thought of Indiana at all before coming here, it was as a place afflicted with a superfluity of literary men, and an excess number of moonlight nights. As far back as my memory extends, I can scarcely recall an uninterrupted interval of any duration when our neighbor's Victrola did not torture my ears with repeated renditions of the latest popular song having either the much-exploited "Indiana Moon" or the "Wabash" as its theme, so that I came prepared to be antagonistic to both. But I have reluctantly been obliged to concede that there are seasons when they are truly lovely.

Our windows on Christmas Eve framed the picture of a very Fairyland. The wide expanse of rolling land, blanketed with glistening snow, was made brilliant as day by the crystal light of the aforesaid justly-famed "Indiana Moon." Tree trunks and branches were coated with clinging snow, and a single star rode with the moon high in the east. Far down below in the valley and skirting the river, a limited train hurried past, its engine belching out jets of fire like some great dragon of an old mythical tale, while the smoke of its locomotive floated behind, in strange contrast, like a mystic veil of gossamer white. It passed quickly, going toward home and you, and carrying my thoughts for a moment with it. Then all was again still—so still and serene that I should not have been at all surprised had the Wise Men appeared on the crest of the hill, or an angel in the sky, singing again the song of Bethlehem.

Afterwards in the chapel, it was sweet to let love wipe out time and distance, and to kneel in the Judean cave during Mass with Our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph; to receive the little Infant at communion from the hands of His Mother, and to hold Him in a close embrace near my heart, while I whispered my love and my thanksgiving for His in the holy hush of the "stilly night."

Santa Claus paid us a visit immediately after Mass in the community-room where a beautifully decorated Christmas tree twinkled "Merry Christmas" from every light and ornament. When he departed, we returned to rest, rising for two Masses at dawn.

Christmas day was spent in recreative

pursuits of one kind or another as taste and fancy dictated. In the evening we grouped about the tree for a party, which ended, as all properly conducted parties should, with the serving of refreshments to which we endeavored to do justice, although, having dutifully sampled the contents of thirty-three individual Christmas boxes from "home" during the course of the day, we were beginning to understand the meaning of the vernacular phrase "to be fed up."

On the following Sunday we entertained our Rt. Rev. Bishop and friend, and the staff and employees of Our Sunday Visitor Press at a dinner, preceded by a program of vocal, instrumental, and literary numbers, including the singing of a group of Christmas carols in English, Latin, German, French and Spanish, and the presentation in two acts of an original play of mission life.

The task of staging the play fell to my lot, and although I have no press agent to attest to the fact in flaming headlines, and so enlist for me the sympathy of the public, I rise to protest that the way of a producer is hard—especially when the prima donnas and dramatic stars appearing in the production are so seriously engrossed in the hustle and bustle of the holiday rush as to be perpetually engaged in the manipulation of typewriter keys, scrubbing-brushes, paint-brushes, egg-beaters, oil mops, and such-like implements, to the serious detriment of their art, and to the chagrin of the director who patiently awaits their appearance at deferred rehearsals.

Our good Bishop congratulated us on the excellence of the program presented and expressed his gratification over the progress made by the Society during 1925, and of its splendid development both in scope and numbers. "Last year," he said in part, "there were but five members to greet me in the performance of the first program given at Victory Training Institute. Now, it is your happiness and mine to have almost forty members in training here. The year to come will undoubtedly witness an even larger growth and expansion of your Society, and prove to be a banner year."

On New Year's Eve we united in an hour of adoration from eleven to twelve o'clock to consecrate ourselves—in obedience to the wish of our Holy Father—to Jesus, "King of the World," and to make reparation to Him for the sins being committed at that hour in the world outside. Coming so recently from the world, I was forcibly struck with the contrast between its spirit and that of religious. In ours and other quiet convent chapels, the "White Love of Our Hearts," as the Irish love to call Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, received the love and homage of a few loving souls. Out in the world of wealth and luxury, Satan held court and millions attended upon him, mocking the God who had given them the year of life just closing, with all its blessings and benefits, and defying Him as they stood upon the threshold of that about to begin. A chance remark of my old and sainted confessor that one-half the world lives constantly in mortal sin, came to my mind as I knelt there, and I trembled at thought of the manner in which His creatures challenge the justice of God. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given shortly before twelve o'clock. The "Te Deum" followed, and the last verse was chanted just as the Old Year closed.

The holidays concluded with an informal farewell party on New Year's day for Miss

(Continued on Page Seven)



DREAMING DREAMS

By

Catechist
Dorothy
Schneider

"What would we do in this world of ours
Were it not for the dreams ahead?"

With each letter that comes from the Mission Field come new dreams to my heart of soothing fevered brows, of drying streaming tears, of applying love's own remedy to weary hearts, and of leading little children to the Master that He may bless them. Last night a Sister-Catechist wrote us of Ramon and his beloved sister, Bernita, and now, in this my hour of dreams, Fancy bids me live the tale in her stead. Who am I to disobey the call to wander forth into the Fairyland of Magic Hopes? So just for a while I shall pretend it is I who am the Catechist who visited Ramon, and that it is I to whom he opened the pages of his life.

Come with me to the land of sun-bathed mesas where graze the sheep, and where, oft under starry skies, the lone shepherd keeps his silent watch, and listen while I talk to this lad of old Spain.

"Catequista," he answers my query of his name and lineage, "I am Ramon Valdesz, a little shepherd boy. My ancestors have always been shepherds. In the long winter nights when we were all together, my father often told us the story of how his forefathers made the long and dangerous journey from their home in Spain with Coronado."

He hesitates a second, then, "Of course, you know of Coronado, the great explorer of this country?"

And as I nod assent, he continues proudly: "They brought the first sheep to America—they were the first to settle in this country, and my father told us that their lives were always in great danger in those days."

"As far back as I can remember I always helped my father take care of his flock. I like the little sheep. Even when I was a tiny boy I used to walk through my father's pastures and help the lost lambs find their mothers. My sister Bernita and I loved to run after the lambs that were left behind the flock when they were browsing on the sunny side of some large rock, or in the "barranca entre las montañas." At times the "corderitos" were chilled by the rain and the cold winds that blow from the high mountain tops, and then we carried them into the house and laid them in front of the big wood fire so that their fleece could dry. How proud we were," his little chest swells, "when we could make a house for the lost lambs and feed those that had strayed away from their mothers!"

"In those days, Catequista, my father and grandfather had big flocks—ever so many sheep and lambs. They had sheepfolds for them, too. Then the people from the East came and took away our green pasture lands, and now all that is left of our thousands of sheep are the few that are here in this little patch of ground." And he points a sad finger to his flock now so diminished in numbers, and looks out over the wide lands which had belonged to his people, and should rightly have one day been his.

Listen to what he tells me when I ask him whether he bears any resentment toward these co-countrymen of his, the Americans who wrested the land from him,

EDITORIAL

We receive daily requests from our friends soliciting the prayers of our devoted Catechists for spiritual and temporal favors. Every morning and evening these petitions are laid at the feet of Our Blessed Lady of Victory, both in the Chapel at Victory-Noll and in the humble oratories of our Catechists in their Mission Centers. Every morning these intentions are likewise recommended in a special manner to Our Blessed Lady of Victory in the Masses offered by the Director of the Society and by the Missionaries who kindly offer three Masses each week for these petitions. In addition to this, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered every Saturday in the Chapel of Our Blessed Lady of Victory at Victory-Noll for all the benefactors of the Society, both living and dead.

It is always a source of deep spiritual pleasure for us to hear that Our Blessed Lady of Victory is pleased to grant,—according to the Divine Will,—many of these petitions. Only recently one of our generous benefactors, a very old lady in Washington, wrote to inform us that she had undergone a successful operation after the completion of a Novena made here by our Catechists.

We are pleased to inform our dear friends that we shall gladly include their intentions in our perpetual novena to Our Blessed Lady of Victory, and also that we shall make a special daily momento in our Masses for all their intentions.

and toward whom we almost expect him to feel some bitterness:

"God forbid, Catequista, that I should hate them! I am only a shepherd, poor, unlearned, but my father told me to love God and for His sake, even those who wrong us."

Ah, stay with me while I sit beside this lad of Old Spain on a sunny slope 'neath a bright New Mexican sky and tell him more of the beautiful and ever-enduring lesson of God's love.

But my hour of dreams is over, and the call to duty is sounding—I return to my tasks in the realization and determination that each shall be performed with a greater ardor and a more sincere endeavor for its perfection in preparation for the great work of religious teaching that lies before me.

How I shall love to instruct such souls, humble, already possessing that gift which must needs be the treasured virtue of every soul when it comes into the presence of its Creator, perfect Charity—a supreme love of God, the love of neighbor, the love of poverty, and love of God's poor for His sake. May time hasten on that day when I shall be able to trace on minds such as this lads, minds clean as a stone of purest marble, the indelible characters of the doctrines and practices taught by the Man God when He Himself instilled His lessons into the hearts of men.



SEÑOR LUCAS.

Senor Lucas sat by the kitchen stove heaving deep sighs and brushing his hand across his eyes very often. "Que mal suerte," he muttered.

We, whom the older folk fondly call "las hermanas," had just announced that we were leaving the Ocate Mission Center to begin our Missionary labors anew in a hitherto uncultivated portion of God's extensive vineyard of souls in the great Southwest.

Old Lucas' father had been of pure Spanish ancestry, unmixed with Indian blood, and his reputation as a one-time wealthy sheep-owner could not be gainsayed by even the oldest of old timers. But the enactment of civil laws compelling the fencing in of all pasture land ruined the sheep industry. Then came unscrupulous carpet-bag politicians with a glad but insincere handshake, who exploited this simple, God-fearing people and confiscated their lands with due legality, but through the use of methods questionable when viewed in the light of the precept of the Golden Rule to do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

Therefore we have Lucas, son of the once wealthy Mateo Fernandez, sitting before the kitchen stove, wiping away the tears falling from the faded eyes of old age at the thought of our departure.

The Mexicans, taught by sad experience and tragic history to be wary of the American, have found that there are some "Americanos" who have their welfare, both spiritual and material, at heart, and who, although they cannot restore to them the earthly treasures they have lost, are trying to show them how to lay up other treasures far more precious.

And so Lucas sat by the fire and wept. His spiritual vision was impaired, even as was his natural vision. His only friends among the Americanos, "these good Hermanas," were going, and with them the warm clothing and good meals he was accustomed to receive at their house when he called. But the Guardian Angels of a younger generation smile, for they see in the coming of the Missionary Catechists to the isolated districts of our Mexican Southwest, the dawning of an era of better understanding and genuine friendship between the Latin-Americans of the border states and their fellow-citizens and countrymen, the English-speaking Americans of the north.

FOR THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM.

The Missionary Catechists pray the Infant Jesus to shower His choicest blessings upon all their benefactors for the charity they have shown towards God's poor during the Holy Christmas Season.

They also wish to thank the kind donors listed among the readers of Our Sunday Visitor for their generous donations towards the "Babe of Bethlehem Burse". Contributions to this burse, established by Our Sunday Visitor in honor of the Infant Jesus, now total \$886.45. When completed it will amount to \$6,000.00 and will provide for the perpetual support of a Catechist in the field. Donations, no matter how small, may be applied towards this burse, and the donors will then have a share in all the Missionary labors and prayers of the Catechist they have adopted, as well as in the prayers of the children under her care.

Within a stone's throw of the residence of Archbishop Daeger in Santa Fe, the Presbyterians have erected and are maintaining two large Mission schools filled to overflowing with Catholic children.

The lush grass was knee deep in March of that year—it was 1849. Senora Amato, her daughter Lucia, and Lucia's maid, Margarita, sat in the patio, busy with their needles. From the cook's quarters came the querulous scolding voice of old Pablo, the head herdsman. The Senora despatched Margarita to bring the old man to her. He came, protesting indignantly: "They are using our pastures, Senora."

"Who, Pablo?"

"Some Americanos. They are camped below the cottonwoods and their horses are consuming our grass."

"Bid them depart," ordered his mistress.

"I have, Senora, but they scoff at me and say they will go manana (tomorrow). There have been many mananas. And they have with them a young man who is ill."

The spirit of St. Francis flamed in the heart of the Senora Amato and lent additional charm to her native hospitality and courtesy.

"Ill, and among strangers! Bring him here at once, Pablo," she commanded. "We will care for him in the east wing."

So it was that Kevin Creighton, who had started for the gold fields of California and was halted by illness, came to Miramar (Rays of the Sun), the ancestral home of the Amatos, nestling in the sheltered cup of the blue hills, called at that time Cottonwood Canyon, but known for long years since as "The Haunted Canyon." Miramar was a home of plenty and of peace; no wayfarer had ever been turned from its doors.

The Senora and old Jauna nursed Creighton. Through the sleepy afternoons Lucia was sent to his chamber to watch while they rested.

When he was able to be about, he and Lucia walked in the garden together. There was a fountain there and they would sit beside it looking beyond to the fields of maize and to the ranges reaching off to the hills. Lucia knew she was acting contrary to the best traditions of her people in talking with this young man unchaperoned, yet she did it, and the Senora must have known. If she knew, she gave it little thought. Her daughter and a nameless Americano!—the very entertainment of such an idea implied a condescension of which she was not capable.

Creighton liked the lazy sunshine and clear, cold nights, the big hills and the stars so close to the earth. Lucia told him tales of the early pioneers among her people, of the treasure buried on her mother's acres—so said tradition—and how her great-grandfather Vasquez had come all the way from Guadalajara to find it.

The Senora returned unexpectedly one afternoon from a visit to Nurse Antonia, whose cabin set well back from Miramar, half a mile down the canyon. As she came round a bend in the path, she saw Senor Creighton holding Lucia in his arms.

"O, shameless one," she said to her daughter, "go to your room. I will deal with you later. And you, Gringo," she turned her smoldering eyes full upon Creighton, "leave my house."

From her window Lucia saw him ride away. She listened to her mother's lecture, hid her pain, and settled down to wait.

When Creighton sent her a letter from the City of the Angels through Manuel Chico, a herder, her mother intercepted it. Lucia, she learned from the letter, was to meet Creighton at the Cottonwoods next night; they would ride to the Mission and be married, and then go east into his country.

"My daughter," she said, "to even think of a heretic!"

"He is no heretic, mama. He belongs to Holy Mother Church the same as do we, and his uncle is a padre, and—"

"No mas (no more)," commanded her mother. "You will be well guarded." And

THE HAUNTED CANYON

By Constance Edgerton

so she was. Margarita was with her by day, and Dolores slept in her chamber each night. As time passed and the girl seemed to have forgotten the American, her mother was less watchful. She was again allowed to ride her pony accompanied by Margarita. Felipe, the sheep-shearer, told her Creighton was again nearby, gathering horses in the Canyon of San Mateo. She sent a note with Felipe, and Creighton came in answer.

For a time they met each day beneath the cottonwoods with Margarita at a discreet distance. Here her mother again found them when she came on another day from the house of Nurse Antonia. She expressed her opinion of her daughter and of her slight wisdom in the serious affairs of life very freely, and once again she ordered Kevin Creighton to be gone from her home and her lands.

One, two, three years passed peacefully at the ranch. Then Ramon de Vargas, who owned 20,000 sheep, came riding down the Camino Real (the King's Highway) and stopped at the whitewashed hacienda. He saw the beautiful Lucia, made proposals to the mother, and the mother gave Lucia's consent. Lucia begged for time. Only that day Felipe had given her a message from Creighton, who was in New Orleans. He was coming again to the range lands, and Margarita, who was happily married to Felipe, said to her: "Senorita, mia, in the preparations for the wedding lies your safety. Your mama will not suspect. Trust Felipe. He will carry the messages."

So it was with the aid of Felipe that she and Kevin Creighton rode southward to the old Mission where Padre Reata married them. Then they rode on over the Camino Real,—the very road that Cortez and his men had passed over when they bored their way into the wilderness,—to the fertile valleys of San Juan where grapes, nuts, pears and wood abounded.

All thought of returning to New Orleans foregone, Creighton settled down into the life of a rancher. They built their home near a spring. Two giant cedars stood sentinel at its door. Here Paquita was born and the old missionary who lived in the valley baptized her with her grandmother Amato's name.

When the child was six years old, Creighton came home from a long cattle drive and said the country was at war. It was to hold the Union together, he explained, and he must go, but Lucia was not to worry—he would be back in six months. Next day, in the bluish-red dawn, Lucia, holding a wondering Paquita to her breast, watched him go. Then, dry-eyed, she went into the house and set about the performance of her homely tasks.

During three long years she lived on the letters which came at infrequent and irregular intervals to the isolated ranch. Then one day the old missionary told her that Creighton had died in a battle fought at a place called Gettysburg. Somehow this news ended the pain of their separation. She felt again the joy of his companionship, and ever as she worked he was with her. When the afterglow flooded the valley she sat on the doorstep and said a Rosary for him; when the first stars flooded the blue she visualized him as he was in the first days of their acquaintance.

When Paquita was thirteen years old Lucia's strength began to fail and she struggled against a premonition of approaching death. "What would become of Paquita, left alone on the ranch? Surely her mother, if she but knew her, would

take her into her heart and home," thought Lucia, "but how get her there?" There was but one way, and Lucia, despite her rapidly failing strength, hurriedly completed her plans.

When she was ready she called her faithful servant and telling him of her purpose, added: "If I do not return in a year, the house and the herds are yours."

Seven days later, at sunset, she sat within her mother's gate, a mile below the house, close by an old well and the ruins of an ancient adobe house. Here she and Paquita refreshed themselves and then pushed on toward the ranch house.

The old Senora saw them approaching, this daughter of hers and her unknown companion. The Senora was old, very old, and pride, loneliness and grief had embittered her. She could not forget that Lucia was to have married Ramon de Vargas because she, her mother, had said so, and that her disobedience had caused long years of pain and separation.

So she arose as her daughter stood at the foot of the broad porch and said: "Why are you here?"

"I came home to die," said Lucia weakly, "and to leave my daughter Paquita with you."

"I give you today the permission which I withheld years ago," replied the Senora calmly. "Go!"

They went to the adobe of Nurse Antonia in Cottonwood Canyon in the rear of Miramar. The old woman received them joyously. The Senora sent a herdsman to see if they had left her land, and when he brought word that they were with Antonia she went to meet them down the same pathway she had walked the day she had found her daughter in the arms of the Americano. Was it but eighteen years ago? At Antonia's door she said: "You shall not harbor this heretic, Antonia, nor her child. They cannot stay within my gates."

"They are not heretics, Senora," answered the old nurse. "They will go as soon as they have eaten, and I shall accompany them."

"As you will," replied her mistress, and went her way.

That night there came a storm that never before nor since had equal in that region. Snow and wind fought valiantly for mastery. On the wings of the wind came a message to the Senora, who, with shut heart, sat by her glowing fire all through that terrible night. With dawn the storm abated, and with it her anger. Hurriedly she summoned her men to search for and find the three women and bring them to Miramar.

They found them just outside the gates and brought them home,—but Lucia and old Antonia were dead.

Senora Lucia Amato Creighton and old Antonia, her nurse, were buried the same day, and some of those who attended the funeral drove in from estates a hundred miles distant.

When quiet reigned once more within the portals of Miramar, the Senora Amato and Paquita tried to be happy, but the Senora could not sleep at night. She could not shut her ears to the mournful, sighing wind of the Canyon. The lines about her lips tightened and into her eyes came a tortured look. The servants whispered that the wailing wind pleaded: "Mama, mama, take me in," and one by one they left.

Deserted by her one-time faithful servants, the old Senora sold the ranch and went to California, where Paquita became a student at a convent school. Senora Amato, too, made her home with the nuns, spending her time between her kneeling bench in the Chapel and the flowers in the convent garden, until a quiet sunset brought her peace.

Our imagination dwells upon the Foreign Missions with a fascination that plays enchanting music on the heart-strings and awakens sympathetic echoes from those of our purse. We drink in the fragrance of Oriental sandalwood, revel in thoughts of the Land of Cherry Blossoms and Wistaria, and allow the tints of Yellow China with its pagoda temples and grinning idols, to enthrall our senses. We are apt to think the home mission field prosaic and uninteresting in contrast with this picturesque Oriental phantasy. Yet there is a section of it—its rural population living in little clusters of adobe shacks on flat, sandy prairies wrapped in an atmosphere of sun, sand, and silence, or nestling in the hidden valleys of mountain ranges—as foreign to the American work-a-day world, and as romantic and colorful, as the alluring Orient.

That large section of our country known as the "Great Southwest" is largely an unknown world to the average American. In fact, he knows less about the Spanish-speaking people who make up the greater part of its population, and of their character and temperament, than he does of the fabled dwellers in "Timbuctoo." The ancestors of this race discovered America for us, and conquered and colonized the entire Southwestern portion of our country some four centuries ago. Isn't it about time that we should discover and interest ourselves in their descendants?

There are more than two million of them in these United States. Simple, poor, humble, kindly, diffident people—yet having withal some of the pride of the old Spanish cavaliers from whom they trace their descent. With a mentality and temperament radically different from that of the American, these impoverished Catholic people receive scant courtesy, and very little—if any—sympathy or assistance save that given to them by powerfully financed Protestant missionaries who are putting forth every effort to rob them and their children of the Faith of their Fathers.

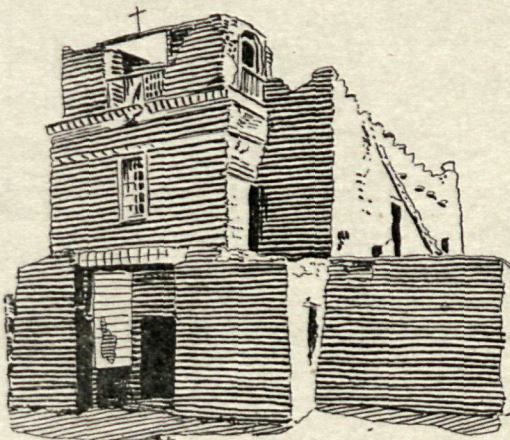
Here in this region of limitless distances, it is nothing extraordinary for a priest to have a parish and missions comprising five or six thousand square miles of territory. Parish schools are practically unknown. In the diocese of Santa Fe, for example—the oldest of the Western dioceses—there are but fifteen parish schools, accommodating a total of 3,706 children, for a Catholic population of more than 158,000 souls.

Some towns in these isolated regions have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass but twice a year, although they are centers of a Catholic population whose faith can be traced back for generations. Without priests, sisters, or schools, these poor people suffer from a deprivation of the things conducive to the life of the spirit, as well as from a lack of material necessities.

It was to remedy the distressing conditions existing among the inhabitants of these districts—to keep the light of Faith from being extinguished among them, and to relieve their corporal necessities—that the Society of Missionary Catechists was established. As faithful auxiliaries of the missionary priest, its members devote their lives to the service of the poor in neglected mission centers. They place no hampering limitations on the extent of their activities save to confine them within the broad sphere of personal service—working, like Christ, as individuals, with individuals.

It is obviously impossible for the missionary pastor of a parish with an area greater than that of the States of Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Connecticut combined, to prepare the children scattered throughout its length and breadth for their First Holy Communion. So the Missionary Catechists go out daily from their little

Our Nearest "Foreign" Mission Field



mission-centers, gather the children together in the various hamlets, and conduct catechetical classes in which they are thoroughly trained and instructed in the principles and practices of their Faith.

Disease in these districts is prevalent, and frequently fatal, because of undernourishment and ignorance of medical procedure—in some districts fifty-five out of every one hundred infants born die before having completed their first year. The nearest doctor is often 50, 75, or 100 miles away, and his fees even more prohibitive than the distance, so that the poor many times are born, live and die without receiving any medical attention. The Missionary Catechist comes into the homes of the sick as a Visiting Nurse, ministering to their sufferings, and bringing with her the blessings of health and content.

Living in an arid country, with the opportunity of earning only the most scanty livelihood, these poor people are often in dire need of the simplest necessities. The Missionary Catechist relieves their wants as a dispenser of Christian Charity.

They are remote from the beaten path of civilization and progress. As a social service worker she trains them for good citizenship through a realization of their opportunities and privileges.

Laboring among the destitute in a land of cactus-covered desert and towering mountains, she is as far from the comforts and conveniences of civilization as though she were in darkest Africa. She trudges across country in mud and snow, and sand, getting rained on and snowed on, half-frozen in winter, hot and dusty in summer—teaching, preaching, and healing by a life of sacrifice which speaks as the language of the lips never could; faithfully holding to her purpose of a life of service in behalf of her fellow creatures, and to her simple creed and sublime ideal: Never to grow weary, never to grow cold; to be ever patient, sympathetic, and cheerful; to hope always and to love forevermore.

It is sometimes hard to give—but never so hard as it is to ask. The Missionary Catechist gives all at once when she gives herself. Henceforth, she must keep begging God for grace to be faithful to her sublime vocation; she must depend upon His Providence, exercised through the generosity of charitably-disposed Catholics, for the funds with which to carry on her work; and she must continually plead with and for the souls to whose salvation she has consecrated her life. Truly she needs the gift of

tongues that each may hear what she has to say, and each may do what she has to ask.

And so this appeal comes to you from her with a prayer that you will understand its message, and that you will not ignore the pleading hands she stretches out to you entreating you to associate yourself with her in her work as a member of our auxiliary organization known as "The Associate Catechists of Mary."

This auxiliary enlists the services and support of every zealous Catholic man, woman, or child who is anxious to spread devotion to Our Blessed Mother, to save souls, and to extend the Kingdom of the Sacred Heart in the hearts of all men. Its members, under a definite plan of organization, work generously, systematically, and consistently for the Home Missions, and form part of that heaven which will soon, with the help of God, cause the whole mass of American Catholics to rise up, like the Crusaders of old, and go forth to battle for Christ and His Kingdom, either as troopers in action upon the firing line, or as members of the Service of Supply in the rear.

We are never nearer to God—or nearer to His Blessed Mother—than when we alleviate the sufferings of others. Many stood "afar off" upon the hill of Calvary, but Mary stood with His few faithful followers at the foot of the Cross. Will you leave the self-seeking crowd, take your place with that little group, and so keep near to Jesus and Mary? Perhaps it may call for a little sacrifice, but sacrifice is the test of true love.

It may mean little acts of self-denial so that the pennies thus saved find their way into a mite-box. It may mean a morning spent in hunting up and packing off to the missions the dress Mary has outgrown, but which is still perfectly good and will delight some little dark-eyed Dolores whose frail little body is only scantily protected by a single garment from the winds which sweep the mesas; or mending the rent brother's trousers sustained when he tried to beat Joe Baxter in vaulting a fence, and which may still make their appearance in polite society when worn by a proud little Juan who never before had trousers with pockets.

It may mean a quiet afternoon or evening spent with congenial friends, sewing on altar-linens, the tiny garments of an infant's layette, soft, white nightgowns for the sick, or First Communion outfits for both boys and girls.

It will surely mean the blessing of the Giver of Gifts, Who will not be outdone in generosity, and the special benediction of Our Blessed Mother upon all your undertakings.

"DOINGS" AT VICTORY-NOLL.

(Continued from Page Four)

Estelle Bonner, a teacher in the public schools of Salina, Kansas, who conducted a course in pedagogy and simple psychology for us during the holiday season. The regular schedule of classes was resumed on January second.

I suppose you've already broken all your New Year's resolutions and are all ready for a new set. However, I shan't suggest any, for I've not forgotten your teasing assertion that you read my letters addressed to you in camp and France, to the boys at the conclusion of the regimental Sunday Mass as a substitute for the chaplain's sermon, when he failed to deliver one. Besides, one of my New Year's resolutions is to confine my preaching to myself. So I content myself with sending heavenward, whenever I think of you, a fervent, "God Bless your year."

Your devoted sister in O. B. L. V.

Telling The Story

Our Father left us on April 11th for Santa Fe to confer with His Grace, the Most Reverend Archbishop. After his departure good Father D. came from Wagon Mound, and we again had the pleasure of hearing Holy Mass.

On the 15th we received our first donation towards our "Medicine Fund" for the poor. If only our friends in the prosperous communities of the East could but realize how much good they could do by supplying medicine for the sick and suffering poor here in our Missions! It would surprise most of them to learn that about half the children born here die for lack of medical attention. When we think how much money is spent annually for candy and sweetmeats, for the movies and other entertainments, by the Catholics of our prosperous communities, and how hampered we are in our work through lack of funds, it makes our hearts ache. The average person in the East who gets a little ache or pain, will immediately send for the doctor or hurry to the family medicine chest for some remedy that will give immediate relief. These poor people, on the contrary, have neither doctor nor medicine, and they suffer so patiently! "God wills it", they say, whenever sickness carries off their little ones.

Only the other day we had to get the Doctor on two occasions to come from Valmore to visit a sick man. He said that an operation was imperatively necessary, and that the man would die unless taken to the hospital at Las Vegas. But Las Vegas is twenty miles from here—and it would cost forty dollars to get an ambulance—so we begged him to do what he could to help the poor man, intending, if the good Sisters could arrange to care for him, to have him taken to their hospital at Las Vegas in our trusty Ford when he recovered sufficiently from his attack to bear the fatigue of the journey.

His condition showing little improvement, Father anointed him. Through the grace of the Sacrament he recovered sufficiently to be taken to St. Anthony's hospital at Vegas a few days later.

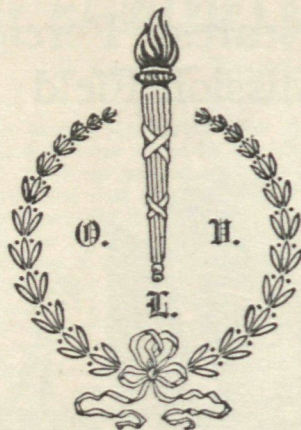
On Wednesday, the 20th, we went to La Parda where we had prepared sixteen chil-

dren for their First Holy Communion. According to the custom here, all the First Communicants renewed their Baptismal vows, and then were enrolled in the Scapular Confraternity with appropriate ceremonies. It is such a consolation for us to have these children enrolled in the Scapulars! We feel then that Our Heavenly Mother will protect them from falling into the hands of the Protestant proselytizers who are always on the alert to get our children.

TWO THINGS ONLY

are necessary for the renewal of your subscription—fifty cents and you. The fifty cents is easily enough supplied, but will you take the trouble to enclose it in an envelope and send it on to us? So far as we know, no other Catholic monthly is published at the low subscription price of THE MISSIONARY CATECHIST. Certainly none is devoted to the propagation of a better cause. Please lend us your support and encourage then, by renewing your subscription promptly for one, two, or more years. Better still, subscribe for life. A life subscription is but ten dollars.

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