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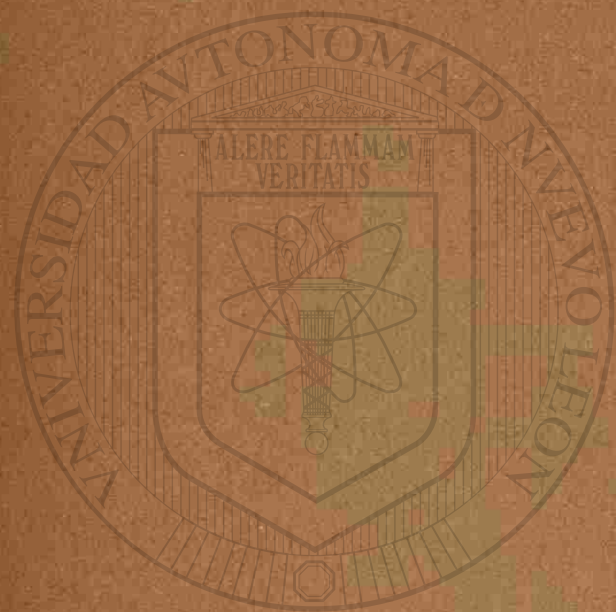
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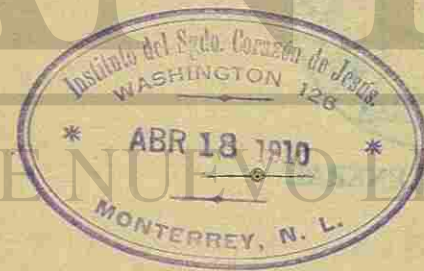
THE BROTHERS

ON THE BATTLE FIELD

AND

IN THE HOSPITAL.

1870-1871.



UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN

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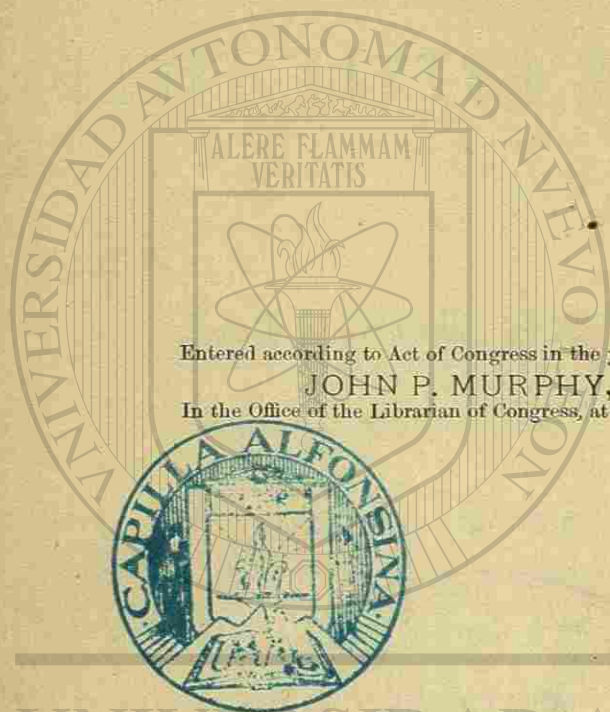
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## CHAPTER I.

### THE BROTHERS.

#### *Their Devotedness.*

France, so prosperous in peace, so triumphant in war, forgot to whom she owed her greatness.

Contemplating her exalted position among the nations, she exclaimed: "Is not this the great Babylon which I have built to be the seat of the Kingdom, by the strength of my power, and in the glory of my excellence?"\* Her pride and ingratitude excited the anger of the Lord against her, and like Nabuchodonosor she was made to know her own nothingness. The brightness of her intellect was obscured, an unwarranted sense of security possessed her.

Prussia was about to attack her; let Prussia come; she did not fear; she was ready to fight; her arsenals were full, her soldiers armed to the teeth, only anxious to be led to battle. Nothing was lacking.

Strange delusion! Never was a nation less prepared. Arms, ammunition, and provisions were wanting; officers, soldiers, muskets, cannon, horses, carriages, ambulances—all were lacking.

Prussia had carefully prepared for the conflict. Her soldiers were numerous, well armed and disciplined; her artillery and cavalry unequalled. France was to be punished; Prussia was God's instrument.

All credit must be given to the French soldiers. Though

\* Dan. iv. 27.



called upon to confront fearful odds, three and even four to one, they fought with a heroism never surpassed. Their deep love of country urged them to put forth every effort; but vain their intrepidity! futile their life-blood so freely poured out. Defeat followed defeat; the battle-fields were covered with the dead and the dying. France, that had lately been so confident, was now appalled; destruction threatened her on all sides. Her dead lay unburied, her wounded unattended. Desolation and mourning filled the land; a cry of agony went up.

France was not lost. She had pure, holy souls whose lives were devoted to God. Among these were the sons of the Venerable De La Salle, known as Brothers of the Christian Schools. In their country's need they hastened to proffer their assistance. Their charity and patriotism knew no bounds. Their boarding and their parish schools were generously placed at the disposal of the authorities, to be converted into hospitals, while they offered their services to act as nurses. The following letter, dated August 15th, 1870, from the very revered Brother Philippe, Superior-General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, to the Minister of War, shows how thoroughly in earnest they were:

“MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE:

“Notwithstanding the labors of the scholastic year, increased by the heat of the summer months, our Brothers wish to avail of the time of vacation to pay a new tribute of devotedness to their country.

“Consequently, *Monsieur le Ministre*, I now place at your disposal all our Boarding Schools and Academies; such as those in Passy, Saint Omer, Thionville, Dijon, Beauvais, Dreux, Lille, Rheims, Lyons, Chambéry, Le Puy, Béziers, Toulouse, Marseilles, Clermont, Rodez, Nantes, Quimper,

Tours, Orléans, Moulins, Avignon, our Mother House, Oudinot street, Paris, etc.; and, as far as we are concerned, the houses and parish schools directed by us throughout the whole Empire, to be used as hospitals.

“All the Brothers who conduct those establishments offer to take care of the sick and wounded.

“The soldiers love our Brothers, and our Brothers love them; a great number of them, having been brought up in our schools, will be happy to receive care and attention inspired by the zeal and devotedness of their former teachers.

“The members of my Council, our Brother Visitors, and myself, forgetting our fatigue, and the many years we have consecrated to the education of the working classes, will make it our duty to superintend this service, and to encourage our Brothers in this act of charity and devotedness.

“I have the honor to be,” etc.

Brother Philippe's generous offer was but an expression of the feelings of the whole Order. Its acceptance would entail painful sacrifices and heavy expenses; but what of that? They were called: that will suffice. They could tend the sick, soothe and comfort the parting soul, and help to bury the dead. The Brother Directors of Dijon, Thionville, Rouen, Chalon-sur-Saône, Gisors, Sarreguemines, Avignon, Bayeux, etc., wrote similar letters to the authorities. In each establishment ambulances and every preparation were made to receive the sick. Several of the houses were disappointed because neither sick nor wounded came, and said this was a subject of deep regret. Amongst those thus disappointed was the flourishing establishment of Beauregard-Thionville,

whose Brother Director wrote to the Superior-General: “As soon as war had been declared, we asked ourselves what we



could do to relieve our sick and wounded. Thinking that the eastern provinces would be the theatre of the great scenes of the terrible drama, dear Brother Visitor and myself thought the best we could do was to offer the Government our several houses to serve as hospitals, and ourselves to assist as infirmarians or nurses. Hence we went to the civil authorities on the 20th of July to make known our intentions. That there should be no mistake as to the object of this proceeding, the following note was sent some days later, at one and the same time to the Sub-Prefect, General de Ladmiraault, commanding the Army Corps, and to the sub-inspector,—

“The Superior of the Christian Schools of Beauregard again offers, with the greatest pleasure, the several class-rooms of his establishment to serve as a hospital.

“BROTHER EUTHYME,

“Superior.”

“Three days after we received the following letter in reply:—

“HEADQUARTERS, THIONVILLE, *July 20th, 1870.*

“MONSIEUR LE SUPERIEUR :

“I desire to thank you for the charitable eagerness with which you have offered the army the class-rooms of your establishment to serve as a hospital for the wounded. They are not as yet required; but when the time comes, your kind offer will not be forgotten, and we will thankfully avail ourselves of the generous devotedness of the Superior of the Christian Brothers in Beauregard.

“Accept, etc.

“DE LADMIRAULT,

“General Commanding 4th Corps.”

“Physicians sent by the minister of war,” continues the

Brother Director, “visited the house and declared it offered every advantage for such purposes, and we soon received from the War Department the requisite material for a military hospital to accommodate five hundred patients.

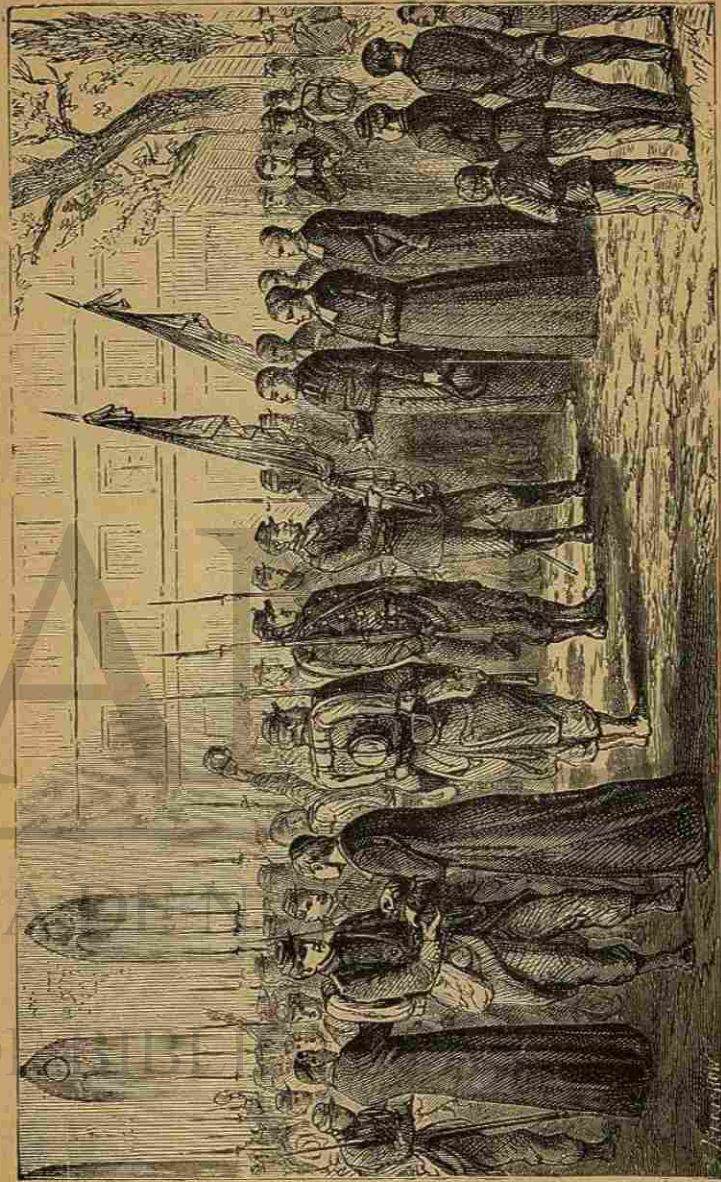
“Nevertheless, the reverses of France soon convinced the authorities of the danger of having hospitals in an undefended place, liable to be surrounded at any time. Orders were accordingly given to remove the materials belonging to the State. Hence we have only been able to show our good will, and have been prevented by circumstances from rendering any service for the present. After the battles of the 14th, the 16th and 18th of August, fought around Metz, several trains of wounded were sent to Ardennes and the north, by way of Thionville. We went to the railway station with eatables, thinking, perhaps, some of the victims of war might not have received the nourishment they required. Alas, our apprehensions were but too well founded, and we saw at once it was necessary to organize a regular service for the express purpose of supplying the wounded with proper nourishment. A private committee was formed, and established in our house a dépôt for bread, meat and other provisions; and having prepared this food, we went to the station and distributed soup, meat, bread and wine to the five hundred wounded brought by every train, and numbering, in all, nearly four thousand.”

Actuated by the purest spirit of benevolence, we see the Brothers did not allow the disappointment they experienced in some of their houses not being accepted as ambulances, or hospitals, to deaden their charity. They quickly devised other means of giving relief. How the poor, fainting soldiers must have blessed them! How many valuable lives, through their thoughtful kindness, were saved to their coun-



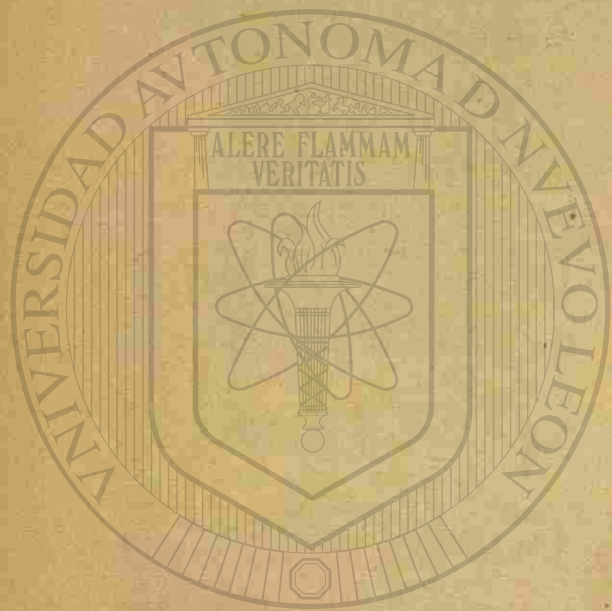
try! Still not satisfied, several of the Brothers begged to be permitted to make part of the ambulances of the Rhine; others opened subscriptions among their pupils, to raise means to send to the relief of the wounded. Furthermore, they became collectors. At Laurac, for instance, they went about the country collecting half-worn linen, which they converted into bandages and lint. They also obtained sheets, shirts, and medicines, that they might assist the nearest ambulances, and provide for each soldier sent from that district a certain number of bandages and some indispensable medicine.

They everywhere sought out the several occasions in which they could be of use, making themselves all to all, as St. Paul says.



THE BRETON MOBILES PRESENTING THEIR COLORS TO THE BROTHERS AT NANTES, AS A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FIREMEN OF THE CÔTES-DU-NORD IN PARIS. THE BROTHERS' ESTABLISHMENTS USED AS LODGING-HOUSES FOR THEM.

On the 17th of August, the companies from the Côtes-du-Nord arrived at the Saint Lazare Station. The Legendary, M. Janvier de la Motte, charged by the Government with the installation and interests of this civic army, was there, to point out to each company the quarter assigned to it.

The Dinan men, and a squad from Saint Briec, were conducted to the Mother House of the Brothers, in Oudinot street. They were received by a venerable man with a smiling aspect, a mild yet penetrating look: this man, one of the most popular in Paris, was Brother Philippe, the same who had placed his schools and his Brothers at the country's service. He wished to welcome in person these worthy sons of faithful Brittany. Some of them might have been his pupils forty or fifty years before; most of them had attended the Brothers' Schools; to him they were all sons and friends. "Make yourselves at home here," he said, "and consider this house as your own; the Brothers are all the servants of their country's servants."

"But," returned one, "perhaps we are too numerous, and will incommode you by our presence. We are two hundred."

"No, no," he generously replied; "we can find beds for you all."

"But yourselves, Brothers?" he persisted.



"We think not of ourselves," Brother Philippe responded; "our country's defenders claim our hospitality, which we are only too happy to extend to them. We Brothers will get along somehow: the important matter is to make you comfortable."

He then conducted them to a large dormitory, where two hundred beds were speedily prepared. Through the considerate kindness of the Brothers a number of tables had been brought in, on which were pens, ink, and paper, that each fireman might write to his family. This was indeed most thoughtful. The letters then and there written, lifted heavy burdens from many a weary heart and brought comfort to many a lonely home.

The officers were lodged in little rooms, plainly furnished, but exquisitely neat and clean. Provisions were the next thing thought of. As the men were strangers in the city, Brother Philippe took charge of the matter with the most disinterested kindness. At the officers' request he presided at their table. With pleasure they listened to his gentle voice as he made plain the inalienable rights of justice, which not only consecrate generous actions and laudable devotedness, but which, sooner or later, try and chastise prevaricating nations who are unmindful of their destiny. Thus, during the time the firemen from the Cotes-du-Nord passed in the Brothers' house, Oudinot street, they were treated with the utmost attention.

When they took leave, tears of gratitude were seen in many an eye. Brother Philippe gave to each a medal of the Blessed Virgin, hanging from a little tricolor badge. They thankfully accepted it as a precious memento of their stay with the Brothers. A multitude of other small religious objects were given them to distribute among their relatives

and friends when they reached home. Who can compute the good the Brother's charity did in this respect, the lessons of holiness these pious objects taught, the hearts they lifted up, the blessings they brought down?

The Breton journals and others spoke in flattering terms of the Brothers' action. These are memories that pass not away, but are fondly, conscientiously cherished.

The following letter, which was addressed, on the 22d of August, to the *Armorique* of St. Brieuc, is proof of this:

"M. EDITOR OF THE ARMORIQUE:

"We beg you to permit us, through your columns, in the name of the Saint Brieuc Company of Firemen, to express publicly our thanks to the Institute of the Christian Brothers, for the kindly welcome they gave to a portion of our company during our stay in Paris.

"Each of us can bear witness to the great attention he uniformly received from the Brothers with whom we were brought in contact; and, above all, do we cherish grateful remembrance of their venerable and most gifted Superior-General, Brother Philippe, who, from our arrival to our departure, ceased not to load us with the most delicate and thoughtful attention.

"With our thanks, M. Editor, you will please also to accept our respectful consideration.

"A. GUEPIN, *Captain St. Brieuc Firemen.*

"LEUDUGER FORTMOREL, *Surgeon.*"

Mgr. David, Bishop of St. Brieuc, wrote to Brother Philippe:

"DEAR SUPERIOR-GENERAL:

"You have been so kind to our Breton Firemen that they



requested me, on their return, to thank you for them with all my heart.

"I do so with pleasure, uniting my thanks with theirs. Accept, dear Superior-General, this joint expression of our gratitude.

"DAVID AUGUSTINE,  
"Bishop of St. Brieuc.

"ST. BRIEUC, August 22d, 1870."

Brother Philippe, in the spirit of humility, replied to Mgr. David that in the kindness shown to the firemen he had but simply done his duty, only regretting that they had not been longer at the Brothers' house.

On the 27th of August a fireman wrote to Brother Calixtus:—

"I wish to thank you most kindly for the many gifts you bestowed upon me during my stay in your establishment. These have made many of my dear ones very happy. My wife and children unite with me in thanking God for my safe return. We beg of Him to pour down upon you, and upon all the Brothers of your Institute, His most abundant graces and blessings, in gratitude for all your benefits, which I shall never forget.

"May every blessing be yours, dear Brother; pray for me and my family, as we pray to our Divine Lord for you all. Believe us ever most grateful, and accept the assurance of our profound respect and devotion.

"PIERRE BRENDILY.

"EVRAU, COTES-DU-NORD."

This was the first step of the Brothers in a work of charity which is soon to appear before us in increased dimensions

and with wonderful lustre. Men who were by certain free-thinkers despised, are about to appear before foreign invaders and home barbarians as angels of mercy. They are about to show how religious love and serve their country.

Their first disasters showed the French government their presumption in commencing a war they were unable to sustain. The Chambers hastily assembled, and called on the youth of the country to rise and defend it. With a promptness distinctively French, the levy was made. Young soldiers and members of the *Garde Mobile* were met everywhere. It was the ebb and flow of a tide that covered the land from north to south, from east to west. Again were the intelligent zeal and generous devotion of the Brothers manifested. The friends of childhood could not but show themselves the friends of youth, especially when, at the cost of rest and blood, they tried to stem the torrent of invasion and to redeem the honor of France.

The young soldiers drilled or lodged mostly in the Brothers' establishments. In houses of four, three, or even two class-rooms, there were from one hundred to two hundred mobiles, or recruits.

*Aix-les-Bains.*

"The 29th of August," the Brother Director of Aix-les-Bains writes, "we had to dismiss our pupils in a hurry, to prepare the class-rooms for the mobiles of the district, who arrived unexpectedly, to the number of one hundred and eighty. We made haste to remove the tables, put the rooms in order, and prepare mattresses, sheets, and coverlets. After three weeks they were replaced by other mobiles to the number of ninety, who remained a fortnight, and for whom we were able to procure every comfort."

Early in August the mayor of Quimper asked the Brother



Director of St. Mary's boarding-school if he could lodge some soldiers. The Brother Director answered by placing all the dormitories of the pupils at his disposal. The mayor was in no way surprised at this generous offer, for he had long known his zeal and charity, and warmly thanked the Brother. On the 13th of the same month, 232 were lodged in the establishment. Three weeks later, they were replaced by 220 others, who in turn were succeeded by recruits.

These changes took place seven different times; and, altogether, the boarding-school became the temporary barracks of over 1900 soldiers.

The kitchen and large refectory were devoted to their service. Every day a Brother arose at half-past three o'clock, to prepare the coffee which they took before going to drill, and the Brother Infirmarian took all possible care of the ailing.

"We feel in duty bound to say of these brave soldiers," writes a Brother of this community, "that they showed themselves most grateful; but we strove not to confine our care merely to the material aid of men about to offer their lives on their country's altar. It was the salvation of their souls that engaged our especial attention.

"On Sundays our chaplain said Mass at the most convenient hour. We also provided for those who only knew the Breton language, the means of going to confession. Thanks to the Jesuit Fathers and our own chaplain, more than five sixths had the happiness of being reconciled with God, and of receiving Holy Communion before their departure. How much this rejoices us! since they afterwards took part in the most bloody encounters, in which the greater number fell."

The devotedness of the Brothers of Quimper was highly appreciated, and elicited the thanks of all the authorities.

*Rhodes.*

The Brother Director of the boarding-school of Rhodes lodged 300 mobiles. Here, as in Quimper and elsewhere, their spiritual and temporal welfare were carefully attended to.

After the morning and evening prayers some consoling and encouraging words were addressed to them. They were grateful for being enabled to hear Mass, go to confession, and receive Holy Communion.

*Avignon.*

At Avignon the Brothers distributed soup morning and evening to 700 enlisted volunteers and to 1,000 zouaves who were lodged in their parochial schools. In their boarding-school they lodged 360 mobiles. These, with the zouaves that slept in their community-house, and the recruits in the novitiate, made a total of more than 2,000 served by the Brothers. The community of Chateaubriant kept 130 mobiles for three months. Officers and soldiers, on leaving, expressed the warmest gratitude for the kindness shown them by the Brothers.

*Nantes.*

At Nantes, as soon as the first disaster was known, the Brother Director hastened to offer the mayor one hundred and fifty beds in their boarding-school, engaging to furnish, besides bedding, the necessary medicine, and Brother Infirmarians to serve in the ambulances.

"It was some time," writes the Brother Visitor, "before the wounded that had been announced and expected, arrived. The sanitary authorities then asked the use of our buildings and yards for the lodging and training of the mobiles while



they were waiting to be called to the field. A first company of 150 men were at once sent to us. The following article appeared in the *Gazette de l'Ouest* of Nantes in its issue of Sept. 10th, 1870:—

“The 150 mobiles, lodged in the Brothers' boarding-school in Bel-Air street, left that establishment this morning at six o'clock. At the request of the officers, a Mass had been said at half-past five o'clock by Father Bourguine, first chaplain of the house; at the close of which Father Chiché, second chaplain, delivered a short, soul-stirring address to those brave soldiers. On its conclusion seventy of the guardsmen piously received the scapular. These, and all the others, received each a blessed medal, which they fervently kissed and promised never to give up, and which would ever be a protection to them.

“Finally a good, though plain, breakfast was given, after which the officers proceeded to their equipment. May the cordial welcome they received, and which their good conduct and orderly bearing well deserved, remind them, amid the dangers they are going to brave, of the friendly wishes and prayers that accompany them on their way.”

“This first contingent was soon replaced by another of the same number, whose sojourn gave us no less satisfaction. Every morning a number of these brave fellows rose at five o'clock and went to the chapel to pray. Twice they assisted in a body at the holy Mass, and a third time in full uniform, on the day of their departure, when they listened with deep emotion to the encouraging words addressed to them by Father Bourguine. Many of them devoutly approached the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist; all received the scapular, the medal, or the beads.

“At the end of this religious ceremony, the company,

drawn up in the yard, presented to the house by the hand of the captain, as a mark of their gratitude and respect, the flags of the two parishes to which the young men belonged. At their going, while passing under the garden-wall, and returning the farewell salute of the Brothers, they waved a parting salute: ‘Long live the Brothers!’”

The Brothers' boarding-schools at Niort, Saint-Jean-de-Bournais, Aubusson, Dieppe and Péronne were also converted into lodging-houses and barracks for the soldiers. The military exercises occupied only a small portion of the day; the remaining hours became dangerous to the young, who, if idle, are apt to plunge into vice, or fritter away time without use or benefit. The Brothers, animated by an ardent charity for their welfare, opened schools for these young men.

“From the 18th of August,” says the Director of the Brothers at Péronne, “300 mobiles came three times a week to our establishment, from six till eight P. M. These meetings were so attractive to them that they hurried their supper and hastened to our residence, fearful, they said, of losing their place in our classes.”

In some localities where the same soldiers remained a certain number of days, the Brothers established courses which many of the young men followed with much interest, and great advantage to themselves.



### CHAPTER III.

#### THE EVENTS OF THE WAR. BROTHERS IN THE AMBULANCES.

The Brothers of the Christian Schools have identified their life with that of France. They have followed her in heart and mind through the several phases of her destiny; they have prayed and wept with her, and they have shared her sorrows. The whole tenor of their correspondence, as well as their deeds, clearly proves this. We insert a letter, full of interest and instruction, written by a man of courage, the Brother Director of Boulay:—

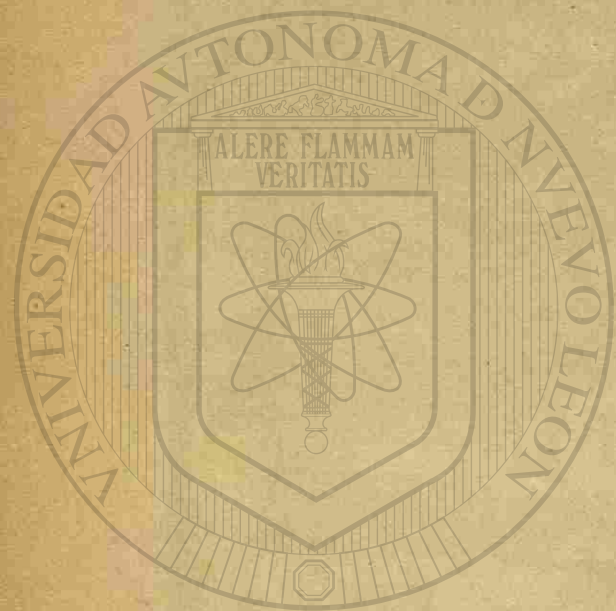
“The state of isolation in which we have lived for eleven months, in the midst of the belligerent armies, did not permit me to write to you as I was accustomed. I am now going to fill up the blank. War being declared between France and Prussia, I assembled the community, announced to them the fact, and my intention to offer my services to take care of the sick and wounded on the field of battle.— ‘And we too,’ said my Brothers, ‘we wish to serve our country in every way we can.’ Our offers were accepted. We then hastened to adapt our house to hospital purposes. Scarcely had we finished our preparations when some soldiers arrived. The heat was excessive. Several regiments had made forced marches. The very first day, the mayor sent us a certain number of sick soldiers at only a few moments’ notice. No preparation had been made to receive the army; there had not been time; the soldiers could not even find



BROTHERS AS STRETCHER-BEARERS.







UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECA Y ARCHIVO

enough bread. The first care of the sick devolved entirely on us. During the leisure moments we had from these, we went to the camp with some devoted priests, who came to offer their services to the soldiers.

“It was during these visits that I distributed amongst the soldiers fifteen or sixteen thousand medals, and nearly five thousand scapulars. I prevailed upon many to receive the sacraments. It was almost always our former pupils who were the first to call me. Seeing me, they said, reminded them of all their dear Brothers had taught them. These drew the others with them. Nearly twelve days passed thus. But on Sunday, the 7th of August, our soldiers all at once disappeared. The day following, fifteen Prussian cavalrymen passed through the town, and, for four days, the enemy's scouts dotted all the surrounding heights. On the 11th of August, the Prussian army took possession of the town. From the first we remarked the strict discipline that prevailed amongst them. It was always the highest officers who commanded at the exercise, and sometimes went through it themselves. All the streets leading to the country were guarded, which made one of Napoleon's old soldiers say: ‘This extreme caution and strict discipline of the Prussians, alongside of our presumptuous self-conceit, bodes no good for us. In our Grand Army we had much better order than our troops have now.’

“Several Prussian generals, passing along, lodged at the priest's house, and they coolly expressed themselves sure of obtaining the victory. ‘In some days,’ said they, ‘we shall have Metz, and then we shall enter Paris.’

“The chief physician of the Prussian army told us on the 25th of August: ‘We shall conquer France, but we can never make her submit to us.’ ‘But,’ said I, ‘why are you so



confident of success?' 'It is,' said he, '1st, because you attacked us unjustly; 2d, because, in Prussia, every one prayed to God for victory. In France, they are impious: by way of prayer they sing the *Marseillaise*; 3d, you have good soldiers, but no generals fit to command them: see Wissemburg, Forbach, and Gravelotte; 4th, your army has no discipline: now, we have 800,000 men who march as one. And our artillery, which has as yet scarcely played—' He was going to continue. I had seen the French army . . . I availed myself of the pretext of a sick person asking for me, and went away. I shuddered; I wept; I knew that he was right. The song of the *Marseillaise*, replacing amongst us the protection of God, left me nothing to say."

He said the truth; and we cannot better conclude the letter of the Brother Director of Boulay, than by recalling the words of St. Jerome in reference to the Roman society of his time, which may well be applied to ours: "It is our crimes that render the barbarians so powerful against us; it is our vices that cause our defeats. If we would succeed, let us prostrate ourselves in prayer."

From the 24th of August till the 10th of September the town of Verdun sustained with admirable courage the attack of the formidable army which girdled it with a belt of iron. The Brothers here, as elsewhere, were as devoted as they were generous.

On the 24th of August, the day of the first attack, they bravely mounted the ramparts, to assist the wounded, and carry away the dead.

In the other bombardments, they repaired to the scene of the fires, and worked with the firemen, exposed to the enemy's missiles, raining incessantly. They did so, especially during the terrible attack of the 13th, 14th, and 15th of

October, which was so fearful that, according to artillery officers, the enemy must have thrown more than 30,000 shells or bombs in fifty-six hours.

At the outbreak of the war the Brothers had offered themselves to the Bishop for the service of the ambulances. After the sad days just mentioned, their zeal was called into action. They spent their whole time with the sick and wounded. One of their number, Brother Apronien Armand, already worn out with fatigue by his attendance on the sick, was so afflicted by the sight of a surgical operation, that he fell sick, and died on the 13th of May, a glorious victim of charity.

Three other Brothers in the same community contracted serious diseases in the same occupations. All four cheerfully made the sacrifice of themselves to God, and to their country.

The Brothers had served on the ramparts in the city during the fires, and in the ambulances. After the capitulation, they received into their houses troopers from the 57th and 80th of the line, and from the 5th Hussars (*Chasseurs-à-cheval*). They kept them for five months, asking, or procuring themselves, whatever was needful for their support. They discharged all the duties of hospitality.

Of the Brothers of Verdun it may be said, they were heroes of the Gospel, giving to all the most sublime example of Christian abnegation, of the love of mankind, lost, merged, so to say, in the love of God. Of all the rewards that might be offered them, they claimed none, save only the title of Brothers of those who weep, consolers of those who suffer.

*Pourru-Saint-Rémy (Ardennes).*

The 5th corps, under the command of General de Faily,



was appointed, on the 30th of August, to cover the passage of the Meuse. The troops, overcome by fatigue, could not move quick enough over the heights of Beaumont. They were surprised by the enemy in a deep valley, and completely routed. There was a panic, followed by a general rout. The army of Châlons marched towards Sedan.

The class-rooms of the Brothers in Pourru-Saint-Rémy had been arranged as ambulances. On the night of the 30th-31st of August they were crowded with the sick and wounded, who, in the absence of the physicians, received from the Brothers alone the care and attention they required.

On the 31st of August, some Uhlans having entered Pourru, a hundred French soldiers, who had not followed their corps, posted themselves here and there as sharpshooters, and fired on the Prussian scouts. The latter fled at full speed, but returned an hour after with a company of infantry. On their appearance, the French escaped into the adjoining woods; the stragglers fell into the hands of the Germans. Two of these unhappy men were mortally wounded; they expired in the Brothers' ambulance.

The Germans found the town of Pourru-Saint-Rémy nearly deserted. The middle-aged and young men had gained the neighboring forests of Belgium. The Prussians were greatly exasperated, and thirsted for revenge. Humanity forbade them, nevertheless, to wreak it on old men, women, and children. The Prussian soldiers took the Brother Director as far as Brévilly, loading him with abuse. The officer in command expressed his intention of setting Pourru on fire. "We were fired upon there," he angrily said; "the village shall be punished; we are going to destroy it." With dignity and energy the Brother Director protested in the name of justice and civilization.

"The inhabitants did not fire on your men," said he, in good German. "They are in no way responsible for the attack on the Uhlans by the last soldiers of the 5th corps; and as those soldiers have been made prisoners, the right of war is satisfied. The honor of your flag forbids you to burn the dwellings of our peaceful and inoffensive villagers. If you commit this crime, you will have to answer for it before God and before history, and you will be held in detestation by good men everywhere.

"Think that the fortune of arms may be one day against you. That which makes the grandeur of victory is moderation after the contest, and respect for the vanquished."

This courageous and sensible language, this appeal to justice and honor, was heard. The officer saw how odious his project was, and shrank from putting it in execution. He announced, nevertheless, that a close search would be made at Pourru, and if arms were found there, the Brother Director should be shot. The brave religious did not allow himself to be frightened by this threat; even the fear of death could not shake his devotion. His bearing, full of simple dignity, obtained his release.

In the absence of the mayor of the locality, the Brother Director was required to procure provisions for the army of the Prince of Saxony. He showed himself fully equal to this arduous position.

Three several times he prevented the village from being burned, and even caused their cattle to be returned to some of the inhabitants. M. Lecaillon, overseer in the iron-works of Brévilly, favoring the flight of some French soldiers, was condemned to death by the Prussians. Conveyed to the prisons at Sedan, he counted the hours he had yet to live. The Brother Director of Pourru interfered in his behalf, and,



by earnest and persevering applications to the German authorities, saved his life, and restored him to his family. For a similar reason, M. Graftieux, a farmer, was to be shot. The platoon charged with the execution were already preparing their arms, when the generous Brother arrived. His tears and entreaties again obtained pardon. His voice thrilled, his face glowed with the heavenly charity that filled his heart. The Brothers of Pourru-Saint-Rémy took care of a number of sick and wounded soldiers, both French and German.

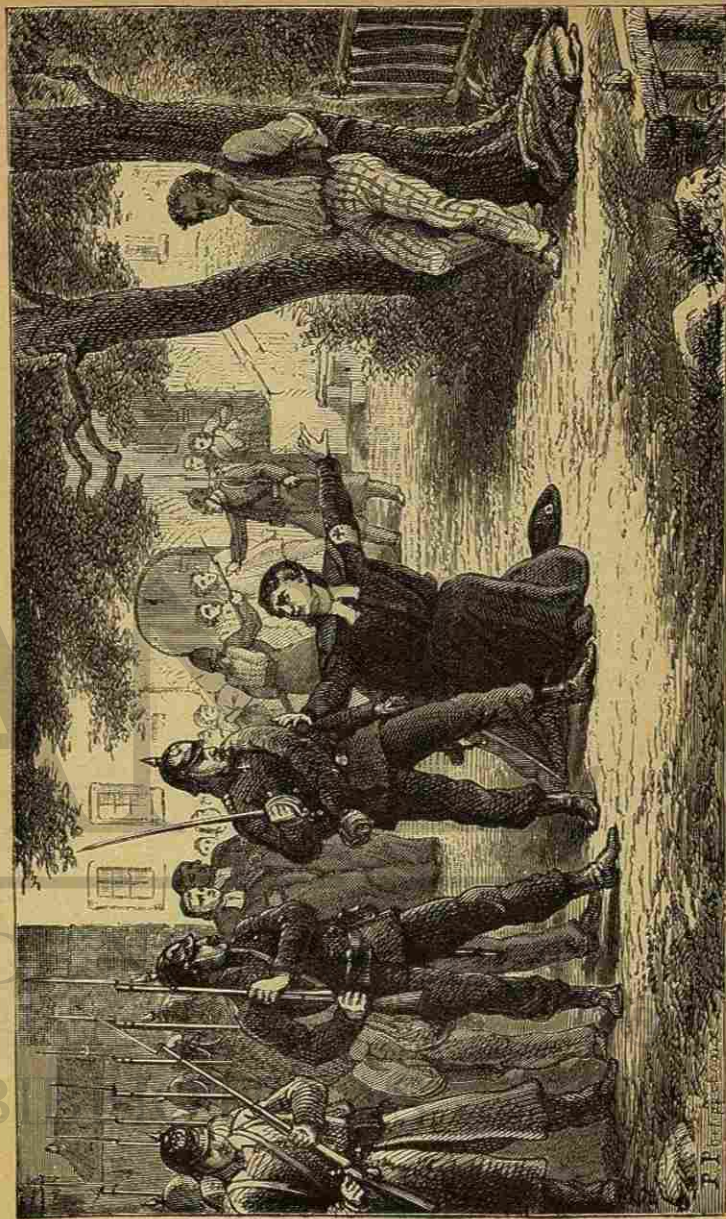
At Laon the Brothers acted as litter-bearers and nurses with truly Christian piety and devotion.

After the rout of Beaumont, the 1st corps of Marshal McMahon's army occupied, for a part of the 30th of August, the hills that command Mouzon. They afterwards moved towards Sedan. After a night march of six or seven leagues, the army reached the ground about seven o'clock on the morning of the 31st.

It was thought if the army should only stop at Sedan to get provisions and leave the sick, they could continue their retreat and keep five hours in advance of the enemy. But the Prussians made a flank movement so as to close up all the passes. The issue of the coming contest with a far superior army is easily foreseen.

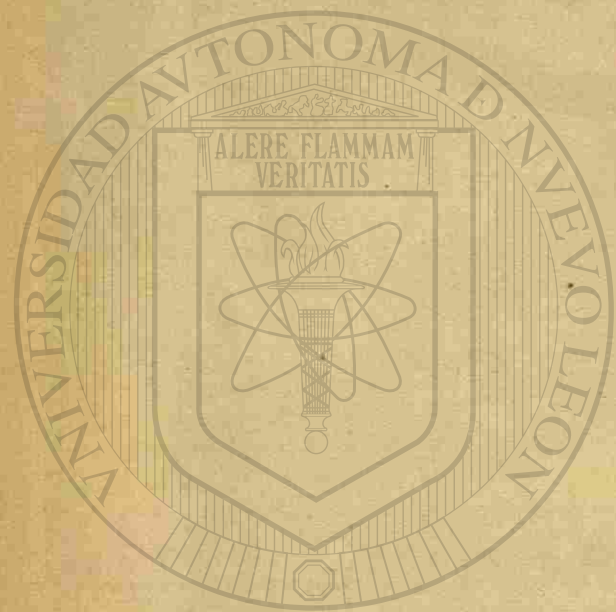
The French army, about 100,000 strong, was encamped on the great bend to the north-west and south-east of Sedan, on the right bank of the Meuse.

The 5th corps, under the command of General de Wimpffen, occupied the city, the former camp, and the heights of Givonne. The 12th corps, under General Lebrun, occupied the heights of Bazeilles. The 1st corps (General Ducrot's) stretched from Moncelles to Givonne, holding Daigny and



AN INHABITANT OF POURRU-SAINT-REMY, ABOUT TO BE SHOT, SAVED BY THE COURAGEOUS INTERVENTION OF THE BROTHERS.





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DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

the way to Belgium. The 7th corps (Felix Douay) was encamped to the north-east of the town, between Floing and the Calvary of Illy. On the 1st of September, at break of day, the battle commenced towards Bazeilles, and was continued successively on the right, towards the 1st corps. Marshal McMahon was wounded in the thigh by the bursting of a shell. The chief command then devolved on the senior general, Wimpffen. General Ducrot ordered a movement on Illy, in the hope of gaining the line of retreat by Mezières. His troops were received by a fierce fire of shells and cannon-balls, and were forced to resume their position.

At one o'clock, the Prussian batteries were thundering away on General Douay's corps; the French soldiers defended themselves with the courage of despair; notwithstanding the succor they received from the 5th and 1st corps, they could not prevent the enemy from closing in his fiery circle, covering them with shells.

Nevertheless, General Lebrun on the right still held out with the most heroic energy. The commander-in-chief hastened thither with the available troops, to drive a fraction of the hostile force into the Meuse, and clear a passage in the direction of Carignan. He wrote to the Emperor entreating him to come amongst his soldiers, assuring him they would make it a point of honor to clear a way for him. Meanwhile, the 12th corps took the Givonne road, and reached the Balan gate. The 7th corps, and a part of the 1st, were to form the vanguard of the 12th; but, being hotly pressed by superior forces, they drew up under the guns of Metz, the gates of which were open. At this moment (four o'clock), General Wimpffen received a letter from the Emperor, ordering him to negotiate with the enemy. In rage, he refused, at first, to obey, and, notwithstanding the fatigue of a twelve hours'



struggle, made another desperate effort. But the Prussian army had now completely hemmed in the French. The hostile columns, precipitating themselves on the French troops, drove them back on Sedan. By six o'clock in the evening, the city was thronged with wagons, carriages, and horses. The soldiers, who were crammed into the streets with artillery stores, were exposed to the greatest danger in case of bombardment.

The inhabitants, clergy, and religious communities of Sedan gave the greatest examples of charity and devotion. They fed thousands of poor, starving soldiers. Their houses, like a vast asylum, gathered in all the remains of the unfortunate army. At two o'clock in the afternoon the Brothers of the Christian Schools threw open their doors to the wounded soldiers. For three days, bread and other necessities of food were almost entirely wanting in Sedan, where there was an imprisoned army of 90,000 men.

Whilst some Brothers washed and dressed the soldiers' wounds, others, after the community's slender store was exhausted, went from door to door, asking from the different families relief for the unhappy soldiers with whom their establishment was crowded, so that they might not perish from hunger. They had also to provide food for two days for a score of French officers exhausted by want and fatigue. It was not till the 4th of September that they obtained from the French authorities a little meat and bread. The same day a military doctor came to their house; he was accompanied by some nurses, who shared with the Brothers the service of the ambulance till the 20th of September, the date of its final evacuation and transfer to Brussels.

For three weeks the religious were constantly at the bedside of the wounded. They assisted the surgeon in amputa-

tions, took notes, and punctually executed his orders themselves. They served as secretaries for the soldiers with their relations. The words of the Brothers, like waves of balmy consolation, soothed their sorrows; they made the tears of despair give place to the smiles of hope. These apostles of education, now become apostles of charity, cheered the drooping hearts of the soldiers. The utter prostration of the sick, their requirements, and the trouble they gave, did not discourage them. Nothing could repel them; nothing went beyond their zeal and their love of their neighbor. One of the Brothers was attacked by typhus fever, but he fortunately recovered. God would not yet reward his charity—He preserved him for his vocation.

The Brother Director of the boarding-school in Rheims relates, under the form of daily notes, some interesting details, which cannot be better given than in his own words:—

“The defeats of Wissemburg and Freschwiller have opened to the Prussians the gates of France.

“Sunday, August 21st.—McMahon's army arrives at Rheims in disorder. It camps a little everywhere, on the promenades, in the fields. The Emperor and the Prince Imperial follow the army: they appear sad and weary.

“Tuesday, 23d.—Departure of McMahon's army in the direction of Ardennes. The Emperor appears very dejected; he follows sadly.

“Friday, September 2d.—The strangest news was in circulation yesterday; it was, the overthrow at Sedan, the surrender of McMahon's whole army, the Emperor made prisoner.

“Sunday, September 4th.—Woful day! this morning we heard of the disaster of Sedan. All that remains at Rheims, in point of civil and military government, takes flight. They



say the Prussians are at our gates. The military inspector and the sub-prefect retreated to Soissons by the last railroad trains. At eight o'clock the canal bridge, and that of Vesle (Soissons railroad), are blown up. The inhabitants are indescribably stupefied. There is a regular stampede amongst our sick. Even those that are but slightly recovered don their uniform, hoist their knapsack, and try to escape, unwilling to fall into the hands of the Prussians. By noon, we have only twenty-nine wounded, who cannot stir from their bed. We are in a state of suspense. At three o'clock (sad and memorable hour!) 80,000 Prussians pour into Rheims by three different roads. They are four long hours marching in, to the sound of martial music. Before night, the city hall (Hotel de Ville), the residence of the sub-prefect, the jail, the post-office, the telegraph-office, every place, and every street, were occupied by the enemy. About eight o'clock, the first wounded Prussian is brought to our ambulance.

"Tuesday, 6th.—King William arrives in Rheims with Count Bismarck. He installs himself at the Archbishop's, where he establishes his headquarters. An order of the commanding general, Tumpling, is posted on every wall; the penalty of death occurs on every line. The Prince Royal arrives in his turn. All the Prussian Ministers are at Rheims; it is really a capital, but a very sad one.

"Thursday, 8th.—We learn the fall of the Empire, and the proclamation of the Republic in Paris. This news reaches us through Berlin, for we are Prussians and must submit.

"Wednesday, 14th.—King William leaves Rheims to establish himself at Meaux: His Majesty is accompanied by Count Bismarck and all his ministers.

"Thursday, 15th.—Arrival of the Duke of Mechlinburg

as Governor of Champagne. He replaces the King at the Archbishop's house.

"Friday, 16th.—Am very anxious about the fate of our Brothers of Laon. The citadel has been blown up, and they are not far from it. I get a passport from the Prussian authorities and go to them. I am happy to find the Brothers well; their house has been much injured by the shock. Not one partition has been left standing. A quarter of Laon is in ruins. More than 200 Prussians and 400 mobiles were killed by the explosion. I visited the hospitals, which are crowded with wounded.

"Tuesday, 20th.—I was also uneasy about our Brothers in the Ardennes; had not heard from them since the disaster of Sedan. Accompanied by the Brother Directors of Laon, Jard and Martrise, and our chaplain, got a carriage and went to see them.

"Wednesday, 21st.—We reached Sedan at noon. Find, thank God, our Brothers at Sedan, Donchéry, and Pourru-Saint-Rémy in good health.

"Thursday, 22d.—We are slow in visiting that immense battle-field—now a vast cemetery. We begin with Bazeilles. Great God! what a heartrending sight! that town of 2,500 inhabitants, which I lately saw so handsome and rich, is now entirely destroyed; the only house that remains is riddled with balls and bullets. The others form but a heap of calcined stones. The still smoking ruins of the conflagration were yet to be seen. With saddened hearts and tearful eyes, we continued our way over the field of battle. It is impossible to describe what we felt on beholding that still bloody ground, those remains of all sorts scattered around—broken wagons, rifled knapsacks strewn in thousands over ground beaten like a highway, ploughed up here and there



by shells and bombs. It was with heavy hearts we quitted this sad and desolate scene."

With the divine compassion and active sympathy which religion inspires, the Brothers, in the beginning of the war, eagerly lent their aid in the organization of ambulances. In the second half of the month of August, they were already taking care of soldiers in the towns of Sarreguemines, Mézières, Estain, Rheims, Réthel, Châlons-sur-Marne, Dijon, Charleville, Metz, Rouen, Châlon-sur-Saône, and Saint Malo.

It was the same, some days later, with the communities of Stenay, Donchéry, Gisors, Bayeux, Cambrai, etc., so that before the investment of Paris, the children of the Venerable De La Salle were tending the sick in from thirty to forty ambulances scattered over every part of the country. Their ambulance at Rheims was kept in operation from the 18th of August till the 5th of November. There were entered fifteen hundred soldiers—three hundred French and twelve hundred Germans. The entire number of days of the sick was fifteen thousand three hundred. Twenty-eight Brothers were employed in the different departments of service; six fell ill from fatigue, one very seriously, but, thank God, none died.

April 8th, 1871, the mayor of Rheims wrote to the Brother Director:

"MONSIEUR LE DIRECTEUR:

"The city of Rheims begs to thank you for the zeal with which you came to our aid in the management of the ambulances.

"I am happy to join in the public gratitude, requesting you to accept, in my name and in the name of my fellow citizens,

the expression of our gratitude for the services rendered by you to that precious and charitable institution.

(Signed) "ROME."

At Châlons-sur-Marne, the Prussians were loud in praise of the Brothers' charity to their sick: they gave them, on the 20th of September, a pass to go wherever they pleased through the town and its vicinity. This document bears the signature of Count Schmettin.

Some time after, the staff presented the Director of the Christian Schools a testimonial of gratitude, of which the following is a translation:

"The staff officers of Châlons testify, that the Brothers charged with taking care of the sick acquitted themselves of that duty, during the months of September, October, November, and December of the past year, with indefatigable zeal, and with boundless devotion, giving themselves wholly to the care of the poor sick or wounded soldiers, without regard to nation or religion.

"The staff cannot help testifying to them, in the name of all the wounded, their liveliest gratitude.

"BOETTICHER,

*Commandant of the place.*

"CHÂLONS-SUR-MARNE, 18th June, 1871." ®

On the 15th of October, during the Prussian occupation, the Community of Châlons-sur-Marne had the misfortune to lose their former Director, the revered Brother Hermogène. Thirty-seven years of his life had been consecrated to the service of youth.

Notwithstanding the public afflictions caused by the pres-



ence of the enemy's troops, the whole town appeared to take part in the Brothers' mourning. During the two days the dead remained exposed, every one wished to see him, to touch his garments with pious objects. At the obsequies, the mayor, deputies, and inspector of the Academy were the pall-bearers. The Vicar-General, clergy of the town, primary inspector, the principal of the college, a good number of the counsellors, many former pupils of the Christian Schools, and a vast concourse of the townspeople, accompanied the remains to the place of interment.

From the 26th of August, the day of the invasion of Châlons, the bells had been mute. But now the Prussians, masters of the city, allowed them to toll for the funeral, to make known to the city that they could refuse nothing to religious who had so charitably taken care of their sick.

At Réthel they were most tender nurses. They gave to all words of comfort and encouragement; those in danger of death they prepared for the last sacraments. Severe trials were the crown of such admirable zeal, such touching self-sacrifice. Nine of the Brothers fell sick. One of them, Brother Bénonien, died a victim to his charity. On the 15th of October, the eve of his death, he said:

"It was whilst attending the soldiers I got sick; had I to begin again, I would willingly do the same."

All through his sickness his words showed his entire union with the will of God. When he had lost the power of speech he frequently saluted with his hand the image of our Lord with gestures that seemed to say: "My God! I accept the death which thou sendest me! My God! I offer thee this life which thou gavest me!"

He had labored for God and his country; heaven was open to him; his reward awaited him. His last hour was

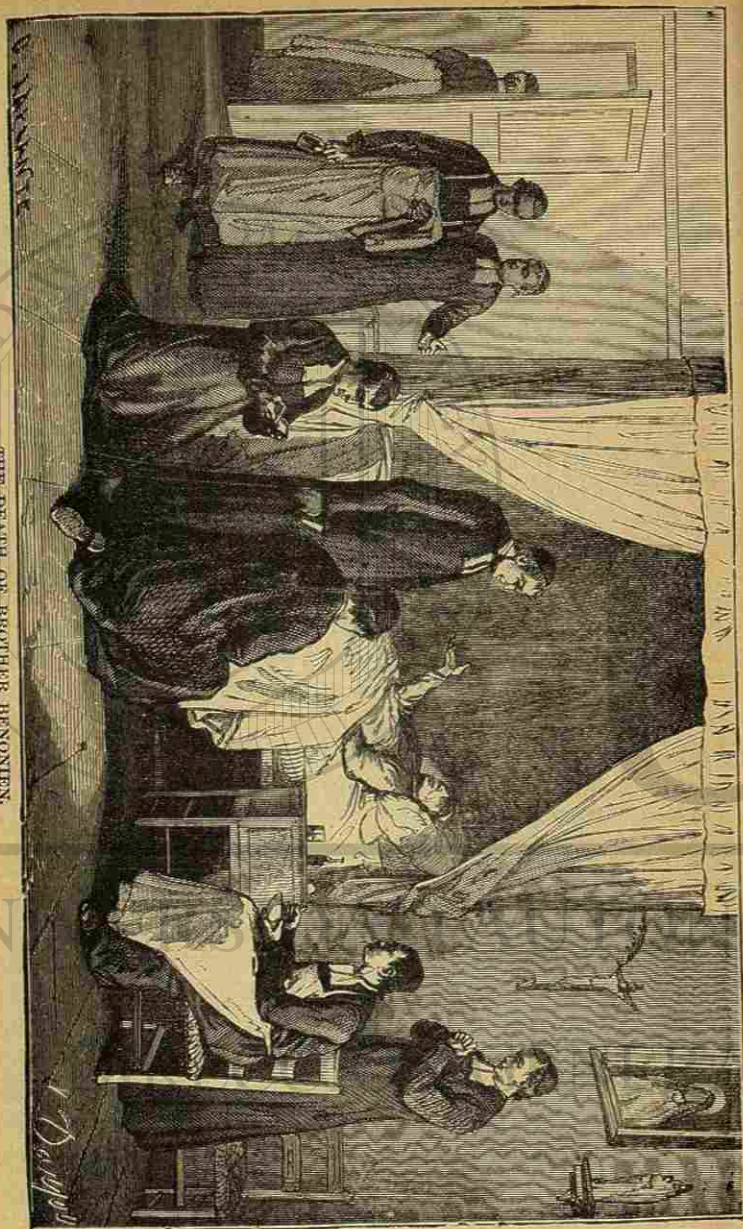


full of sweetness, faith, and resignation. His brethren finished for him the sacred canticle: "In thee, O Lord, have I hoped; my hope shall not be vain. *In te Domine, speravi; non confundar in æternum.*"

Brother Bénonien had taught youth for nearly twenty-seven years. His talents, urbanity, and goodness of heart won him the esteem and confidence of all.

He had taught twenty-two years in Metz. When his death was known in the city, a great number of his former pupils, most of them indebted to him for honorable positions, hastened to express to Brother Director their sorrow for the death of one they loved so much, and to request that a *requiem* Mass be offered for his soul. The number of young men who assisted thereat did honor to the departed, whose name shall remain in benediction not only in Réthel, but especially in the city where his gentle and heroic devotedness wrought so much good, and left such pleasing memories.

The ambulance of the boarding-school of Dijon received forty wounded, August 26th. Wounded soldiers were something new to the town, and, seeing them arrive in a pitiable condition, the people wondered what the Brothers would do under such circumstances. But when they saw them running to meet them, taking them in their arms, and carrying them to handsome and spacious dormitories, furnished with clean, comfortable beds; when medicine and nourishment were found for them as if by magic, they looked on in amazement, and began to understand what intelligent devotedness can do, when guided by Christian charity. The first favorable impression, far from diminishing, became still greater when it was seen that the same care, the same sanitary measures, the same affectionate attention, were unremitting from the 26th of August till the 15th of March. It



THE DEATH OF BROTHER BÉNONIEN.



was unhesitatingly declared in Dijon that, of all the great ambulances of the city, the Brothers' boarding-school was the best kept, the best aired, the one in which the sick were the most content and the soonest cured.

It was also remarkable that the most of the Turcos came to the Brothers. These poor Mussulmans were not a little surprised to find themselves amongst all those Christian *marabouts* (Mahometan priests), as they called them. But a few hours' intercourse was sufficient to make these children of Africa as much at their ease as if they were on a bivouac, and their relations with the Brothers became free, and even friendly. They were visibly affected by the exceeding kindness they received, and showed themselves grateful in return. They reluctantly quitted an ambulance in which they had been so well cared for; many shedding tears when saying "Good-bye." It was a touching and beautiful sight to see those sons of the Prophet affectionately embracing the children of Christ. According to the Scripture, a loving remembrance is like a precious ointment ever carried about us. May not those Mussulmans one day say to themselves: "Truth surely reigns where charity so prevails"? Several frequently went to the chapel during divine service, and their demeanor was marked by great gravity and decorum. Unmasked, of their own accord, they went, drawn by some mysterious power they would not resist.

After the battle of Borny (August 14th) the Brothers of Metz offered to act as correspondents for the sick. The Governor gratefully accepted, and the Brothers were installed in the several ambulances and began the task of love. Many would otherwise have found it impossible to communicate with their families. Those who, in pain and weakness, have longed to send some message to loving ones at home,

and others who have waited till heartsore, expecting a line from the absent, will fully realize the thoughtful kindness and blessed charity of the Brothers in this generous work.

But the total investment of Metz soon claimed their services for more urgent needs. At the battle of Gravelotte, more than 8,000 wounded French remained on the ground. There was no lack of arms to bear them away; but place to receive them was soon wanting; and there were no longer nurses enough to dress their wounds.

At once the Brothers' parochial school became an ambulance. On the following day, several soldiers were already under their care. The Sisters from Sainte-Chrétienne, the military authorities, and the Relief Society furnished them with mattresses and what linen they required. A portion of the community was employed in attending the wounded in the barracks till the staff of nurses was organized.

Three companies of custom-house officers, and a company of foresters, recalled to Metz, found themselves without shelter, encamped in the open air, and with very poor nourishment. These men, to the number of 250, were all fathers of families, and began to feel their many privations, to which a number had already succumbed, when the Brother Director hastened to ask permission of the managers of the free schools to care for the remainder. Part of them were lodged at St. Augustine's, the rest at St. Vincent's.

Some days after the declaration of war, the Brothers of Rouen offered themselves to the authorities for ambulance service. On the 26th of August, about ten o'clock in the evening, the first train of wounded reached Rouen. It was eleven when the wounded, to the number of fifty-three, were conveyed to the Brothers' Normal School ambulance. They had been twenty-four hours on the way. Many were suffer-



ing intensely. All were overcome with fatigue; but no one complained; they seemed glad to find themselves with the Brothers.

"The Brothers took care of us at Rheims," they said; "we find them again at Rouen: we shall be at home with them."

Some charitable young men and a physician, who had been at the station on their arrival, accompanied them to the Normal School: they helped the Brothers to dress their wounds, and to wait upon the soldiers at a meal quickly prepared. By one A. M. all had been provided with comfortable beds, and were kindly watched over by their faithful nurses.

On the 12th of September, the Brothers of Beauvoisine street received twenty sick and wounded, whom they lodged in their school.

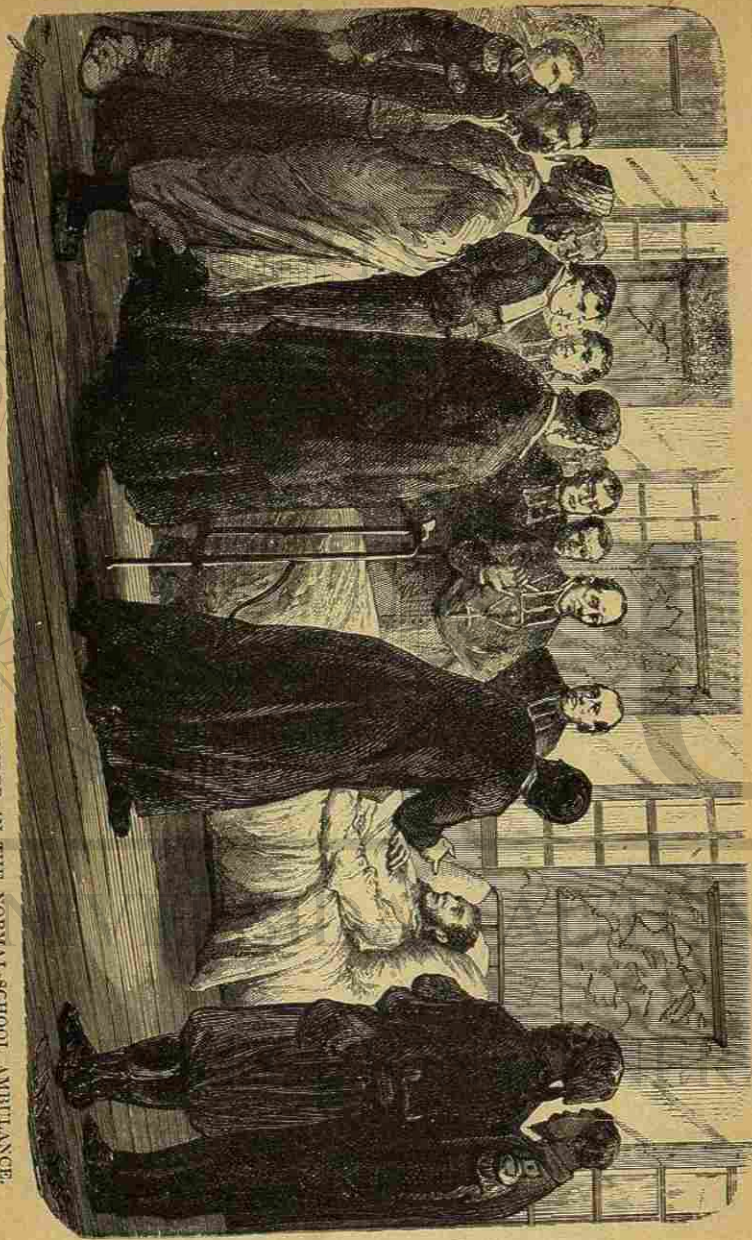
On the 27th of August, Baron Ernest Leroy, prefect of the Lower Seine, inspected the Normal School ambulance. On the following day, His Eminence Cardinal de Bonnechose was there, and spoke affectionately to every soldier. All expressed their gratitude for the kindness with which they were treated; they did the same to the general and the surgeon-major: "We should have been cured long ago," they said, "had we been cared for as we now are."

Drs. Gressent and Manoury attended the Normal School ambulance; Dr. Levasseur, the community in Beauvoisine Street; in both places the Brothers alone dressed the wounds, and gave the thousand little cares required by the sick, besides cleaning the wards, and supplying food and medicine at their own expense.

The Countess of Châtre established an ambulance at Grand-Quevilly; by her earnest entreaties, three Brothers were sent to direct it. This worthy and generous benefac-



CARDINAL HONNECHOSE, ARCHBISHOP OF ROUEN, VISITING THE WOUNDED IN THE NORMAL-SCHOOL AMBULANCE.



tress only appeared content and satisfied when she saw the sick soldiers in the hands of the children of the Venerable De La Salle.

On the 11th and 13th of September, numbers of wounded soldiers were added to those already in the Normal School ambulance.

The *Nouvelliste de Rouen* remarked on this occasion that, "of the soldiers who arrived from the Eastern ambulances, the worst cases were conveyed to the Normal School." Some indeed were very ill; some of their wounds mortified; nevertheless, all were cured.

"Were it not for the unceasing care of the Brothers, we should be dead!" said many grateful soldiers. "After God, it is to the Brothers that we owe our cure."

From the 9th of September till the 7th of October, the Brothers of Gisors watched over the sick and wounded. The enemy then advancing, those sufficiently recovered were sent to their homes, while those unable to be moved became prisoners of war. They were, however, fortunate in still being left to the Brothers' care.

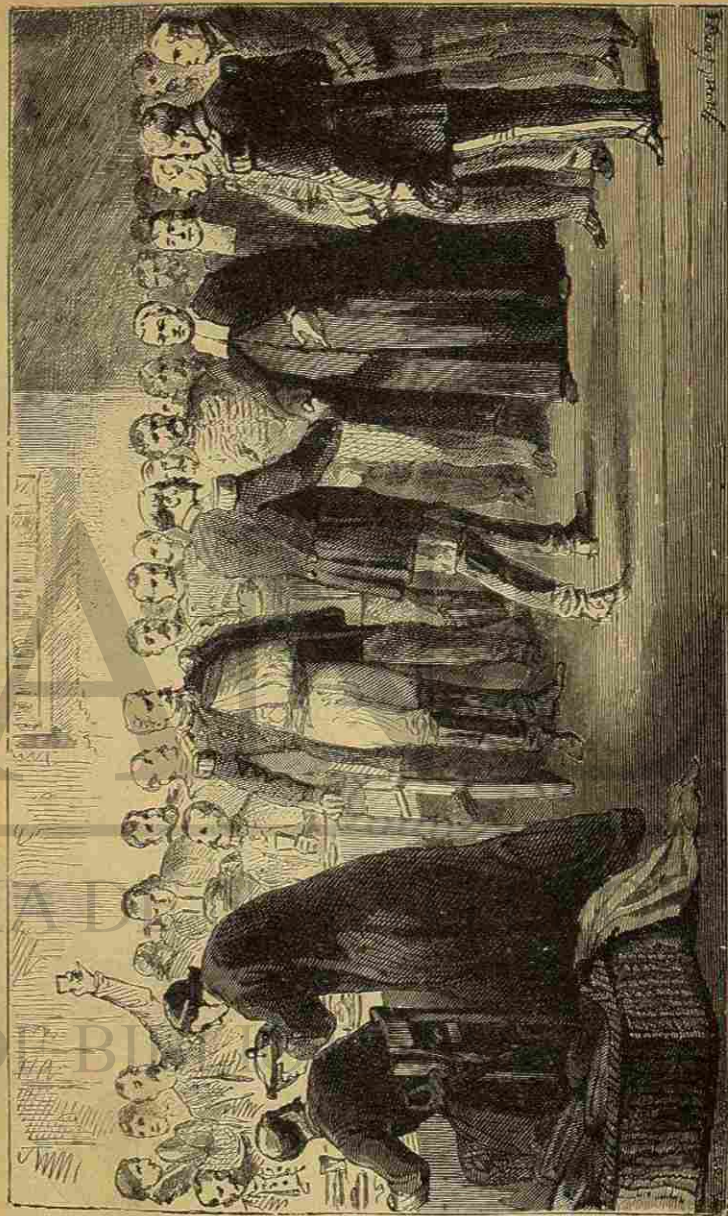
The ambulance of Bayeux, organized in the first week of August, entered upon its duties first from the 15th of September till the 20th of October; then, from the 4th of December till the 18th of March. It received 206 wounded, making a total of 7109 days.

Dr. George Dumagny, in his report, gives the highest praise to the Brother Director, who had charge of the general superintendence, and to four Sisters of Providence, who were, in their way, angels of charity. He concludes by saying: "In their spirit of abnegation, these devoted co-operators in our work aspired to other rewards than those of earth; but in the discharge of our duty, we feel bound



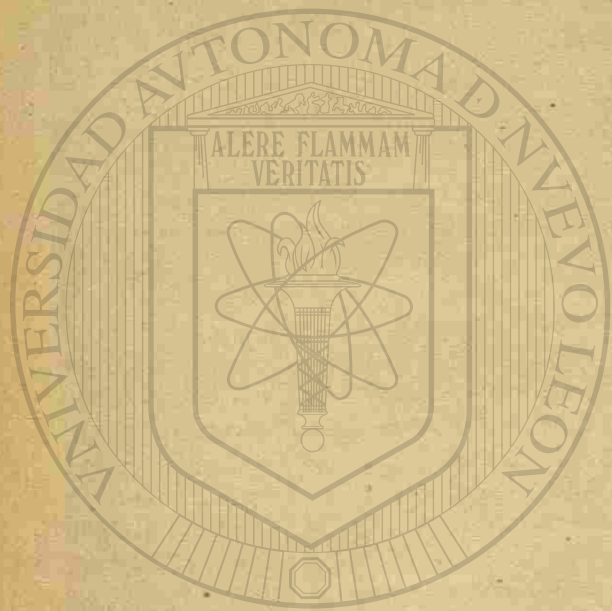
to testify here that they are deserving of our warmest gratitude."

After the disaster of Sedan, there were 360 wounded in the ambulance of the little Seminary of Cambrai. Eight Brothers were incessantly employed there for a whole month. All who visited them spoke with emotion of the care given the poor soldiers. The doctors were delighted to have them for auxiliaries. The peace and serenity of their soul, reflected on their countenance, indicated sympathy and begot confidence. The sick accepted their services with gratitude; they loved to call them *dear Brothers*. The example of Jesus, poor and mortified, whose bread was to do His Father's will, and whose law was reduced to the love of God and of our neighbor, was reproduced daily and hourly in the words and actions of the children of De La Salle, who had become saviors of their brethren.



A COLONEL THANKS THE BROTHERS OF CARLSBOURG FOR THEIR KIND RECEPTION OF THE FRENCH AFTER THE DEFEAT AT SEDAN.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE BROTHERS IN BELGIUM AND AT CHAMPIGNY.

France, in her days of misfortune, was not forgotten by Belgium, who remembered how she had been helped to shake off a foreign yoke. From the first disasters, Minister d'Anethan, with the governors of the provinces, organized ambulances in most large cities. The religious communities, with laudable eagerness, placed their houses at the disposal of the authorities. The Brothers of the Christian Schools, with enthusiastic zeal and devotedness, relieved the wounded and the prisoners. From volumes of testimony we are allowed only to make short extracts, specially naming the Brothers of Carlsbourg and Namur. The praises spoken of these sons of La Salle must be considered as due and applied to their brothers in arms throughout Belgium.

##### *Carlsbourg.*

The principal phases of the battle of Sedan have been related. The sound of the cannonade was distinctly heard from the Belgian frontier. The sky was cloudless and serene. The roar of the artillery was terrific; the sound varied according to the calibre of the pieces: now quick and dry, now hollow and more prolonged. The crash of the shells added still more to this frightful din. Clouds of gray and bluish vapor rose above the woods and mountains that stretch away towards Belgium.

On the 1st of September, at four P.M., the roar of cannon



began to grow fainter; the great drama was drawing to a close. The setting sun shed his rays upon a blood-bedewed field.

General de Failly's corps had been cut to pieces by eight A. M. A small part was fortunate enough to get into Belgium.

After a march of ten or eleven leagues through woods and over mountains, more than 1100 soldiers arrived at the Brothers' establishment in Carlsbourg. It was dark; from four A. M. these unhappy men had not tasted food. They were exhausted with hunger, thirst and fatigue; some were in rags; others barefoot, or had lost the little money they possessed. The sick and wounded were dragged in carts. Officers and men were in a pitiable condition when they reached Carlsbourg.

The Belgian general Thiébault and his staff showed themselves, on this occasion, worthy of the mission which had been assigned them: they treated the French with the utmost courtesy and attention. They were neither Belgians nor French: they were comrades and brothers.

At that late hour, the poor soldiers knew not to whose hospitality they were being confided; they waited, sad and silent, till such time as they might be allowed a little rest. But when they saw the Brother professors of the establishment, their faces at once brightened.

"Ah! we are with the Brothers of the Christian Schools!" they exclaimed; "we have known them long and well; they are brave and worthy; they are our friends."

Thenceforth, a bond of sympathetic affection existed between the religious and the military.

On the arrival of the fugitives, the Brother Director caused a large fire to be made in the yard, that the soldiers might warm themselves, and dry their clothes.

The officers, to the number of forty, were ushered into the parlor, together with the Belgian staff. The refectories, study-halls, and several other apartments of the house, were placed at the disposal of the military. Refreshments were served as soon as they could be prepared. All in the establishment waited on these poor fellows with cheerfulness and alacrity; they spoke so encouragingly to them that their miseries were almost forgotten. What provisions the Brothers had were brought: bread, cheese, meat, fruits, preserves, beer and wine, all were distributed with unequalled charity.

After this supper, which took place about eleven P. M., the Brother Director, consulting only his own good heart, served coffee to each. While the sick and wounded were receiving the care their condition required, the horses were let loose in the park, and appeared to make up, on the green, smooth turf, for their want of rations on the previous days.

In that nocturnal assembly hearts were opened; grief lost its poignancy; its bands relaxed; so many men drawn together by misfortune and affection, presented a striking spectacle. There were Turcos, zouaves, sharpshooters, dragoons, artillerymen, engineers, men of the line, etc. Some cried: "Belgium forever!" others, "Hurrah for the Venerable De La Salle!" "Long live Brother Philippe!" "Success to our teachers, the Brothers of the Christian Schools!" While the Belgians said: "Viva la France! Hurrah for her army, which has been crushed only by superior numbers."

Brother Mémoire then, on the part of the Brothers, warmly expressed the pride and pleasure he felt on finding himself surrounded by French officers and soldiers.

"I am honored," said he, "in having a share in the disas-



ters which have befallen France and her world-renowned army. Like all Belgians, I love France; I desire that she may always maintain the place which Providence has assigned to her, for the sake of civilization and humanity. I wish her the same peace and happiness which I earnestly pray may ever be the lot of my own country."

A French colonel rose in his turn, and, in a voice quivering with emotion, thanked the Belgian officers and Brothers of Carlsbourg for the kindness and attention bestowed on him and his. He spoke of France and her misfortunes in terms that drew tears from every eye.

The next morning, before parting with the Brothers, the French officers insisted on leaving a memorial of their gratitude. The document reads as follows:

"The Superior of the establishment of Carlsbourg, and the Brothers of the Christian Schools, will please accept the testimony of our profound gratitude for the generous hospitality they have extended to us.

"PÉRIER, *Col., 7th Lancers.*

BÉCANE, *First Physician, 88th Regt. of the line.*

CHAS. FOURÉS, *Major, 7th Lancers.*

VICOMTE DE KERHUE, *Lieut.-Col., 7th Lancers.*

BOYER, *Sub-Lieut., 56th of the line.*

LECORNY, *Major, 7th Lancers. Etc., etc."*

Again, on the evening of the 2d of September, several hundred soldiers, who had been wandering in the woods, reached Carlsbourg.

They, too, were exhausted from hunger and fatigue. But the Brothers, foreseeing their coming, had made the necessary arrangements, so that everything was ready for their relief. This second detachment was welcomed with the same

kindness, the same generous hospitality as the first. The officers, touched by the aid and sympathy shown them in their sufferings, signed, as their predecessors had done, the following certificate of gratitude:

"CARLSBOURG, *Sept. 2d, 1870.*

"Certain officers of the French army, driven to the Belgian frontier and obliged to advance into Belgian territory, have passed through Carlsbourg, where they received the most cordial welcome from the Brothers of the Christian Schools, to whom they feel bound to express their gratitude. They will ever cherish the remembrance of the kind and sympathetic welcome of those gentlemen.

"BIRLE, *Capt., train of Artillery.*

FRANK, *Capt., 45th of the line.*

WATELLIER, *Lieut., 7th Chasseurs.*

BARON DE MONTBRON, *Capt., 1st Lancers.*

COMTE D'OLONDE, *Sub-Lieut., 6th Cuirassiers.*

FRIER, *Assist. Bandmaster. Etc., etc., etc."*

On the 3d and 4th of September, the Brothers' establishment was thrown open to other groups, as they came along: the same kind reception was repeated. The greater the misfortune of the defeated army, the more active and energetic was the devotion of the Brothers of Carlsbourg.

Brother Mémoire, not satisfied with relieving the unfortunate men who presented themselves, covered with dust and blood, sent his Brothers out into the woods to seek those who were lying there, unable to continue their journey. Furthermore, he gave money to those who needed it. Blessed investment, registered in God's golden book!

On the 5th of September, the boarding-school of Carls-



bourg was again crowded with French. It is needless to say, with the Brothers' sublime charity, they were welcome. These, too, like the others, left their written testimony of boundless gratitude. As the establishment in Carlsbourg was becoming the thoroughfare for the French detached from their several corps, the Belgian authorities established a military post in this very house. The officers of the post took care that none of the soldiers wanted for anything, always having recourse to the charity of the Brothers, which the French and Belgian journals unceasingly praised.

The following lines, copied from the *Bien Public* of Ghent, briefly describe what was going on at the Brothers' house:—

“A SIGN WHICH IS A DECORATION.—The Belgian officers posted at the establishment in Carlsbourg from the beginning of the war, seeing, every day, hundreds of French soldiers received into the Brothers' house, conceived the happy idea of calling the institution the *Hôtel pro Deo et Patria* (Hotel for God and country).

“Having prepared this sign, they placed it where it would be sure to meet the eyes of the poor French soldiers.

“Brother Mémoire, appearing to take no notice, continues his charitable efforts on behalf of the unfortunate soldiers who are every day brought in by the Belgian officers to the school-house in Carlsbourg.”

During the whole month of September, Brother Mémoire pursued his work of charity. He undertook the delivery of letters for Sedan, and its vicinity. The house had become a species of consulate, where intelligence might be had from all parts. It was a central post-office, corresponding with Belgium, France, Germany, and even Africa. As for the expenses, the Brother Director took no account of them: to

do good over and over again—that was his motto, and his sweetest occupation. He rendered the French every possible assistance. The following letter will show how far his service extended:

“PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF NAMUR,  
“NAMUR, *Nov. 10th*, 1870.

“MONSIEUR LE DIRECTEUR:

“I have the honor to inform you that the families of the French officers hereafter named have written to me, requesting me most earnestly to let them know, if possible, what has become of them. The following are the names of these officers:

“1st. M. Clément, Captain-Adjt.-Major, 1st battalion, 17th of the line, 3d division of the 5th corps, commanded by General Guyot de Lespart.

“2d. Count Pierre de Lur Saluces, Sub-Lieut., 7th Lancers, 6th corps.

“3d. M. de la Riviere, Lieutenant, 8th horse chasseurs, orderly officer of General de Vandeur, of the 3d corps.

“4th. M. de Mallevance, Sub-Lieut., 8th chasseurs, 12th corps.

“5th. M. Ramalanski, Captain, 8th chasseurs, 12th corps.

“6th. M. Septime de Vaussuy, Sub-Lieut., Marine infantry, 12th corps.

“7th. M. Henri de Lyonne, Lieut., 4th battery, 19th artillery. ®

“I beg you to give me, Mons. le Directeur, with as little delay as possible, any information you may possess as to the fate of these officers. From what I have learned, either of the five officers mentioned under numbers 3 to 7, might probably procure information of the other four.



"Accept, M. le Directeur, the assurance of my distinguished consideration.

"COUNT DE BAILLY,  
"Governor of the Province."

The Director of Carlsbourg replied to the Governor of Namur that he would make inquiries on the subject of the French officers mentioned. And, in fact, many families were by his agency relieved from their anxiety concerning the fate of their relatives, taken prisoners.

Every one knows what miseries follow in the train of war. Brother Mémoire collected in Belgium, and went himself with the proceeds to the poor of Bazeilles, and the neighborhood of Sedan. God only knows how many unfortunate creatures he assisted, and what suffering he relieved.

The school-house was the hospital and relief office of the fugitives of Sedan: later, it opened its doors to those of Mézières and Metz. The soldiers repairing to Givet, all went by way of Carlsbourg, and did not fail to stop at the hotel *Pro Deo et Patria*. Brother Mémoire received not only from France, but from foreign countries, presents of all sorts, which he was not slow in distributing. Linen, clothing, provisions, liquors—the Brothers accepted all on behalf of the innocent victims of war.

The letters addressed to Carlsbourg in relation to the disasters of the war, and the noble conduct of the Christian Brothers, would make a volume.

Limited as this work is, justice to the heroic devotedness of the Brothers requires us to make extracts from one or two of these letters. This from Thionville:

"M. LE DIRECTEUR :

"We have not forgotten your touching kindness to us dur-

ing our stay at your establishment: we likewise remember all you have done for our poor soldiers; and those tokens of sympathy for defeated bravery, and for our country, console us for much sorrow. Misfortune makes true friends known. May the Lord remember your generosity, and hear our fervent prayers for your welfare, and that of all your dear Brothers of Carlsbourg."

A member of the society established at Namur for the relief of the French, addressed the following letter to Brother Mémoire:—

"NAMUR, *Sept.* 18th, 1870.

"DEAR BROTHER DIRECTOR :

"I have received your beautiful letter, full of interesting details. You have deserved well of the country, and your establishment is worthy of the name awarded to it by generous and grateful soldiers. . . .

"The work you have done is just what the association was got up for; you have done it generously, without hope of a return, and before assistance could arrive from the committee.

"I hope you will be indemnified for your enormous expenses. My God! whither are we going? How incomprehensible it is that, at the bidding of two men, two nations massacre one another, and ruin their families and their country! But I must stop, lest I go too far.

"Ever yours,

"J. C. and J. G. E.—"

The thoughtful kindness of the Brothers knew no bounds. With them were deposited sums of money for the poor



officers, whom the capitulation had thrown into Prussia. These sums were sent with scrupulous care. One day it was 2500 francs forwarded to the French in Bonn; letters addressed by Brother Mémoire reached nearly all the Prussian fortresses. The sums mentioned in the following receipts had been sent by the president of the civil court in Sedan :

“ COBLENTZ, *Nov. 12th, 1870.*

“ M. LE DIRECTEUR :

“ I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of eleven post-office orders you have sent me.

“ I thank you very sincerely for all the part you have so kindly taken in the service rendered me by the president.

“ You will please accept, M. le Directeur, the expression of my highest esteem, and most devoted and grateful sentiments.

“ COLONEL GUILLEMIN.”

From its foundation, the boarding-school in Carlsbourg had always had some French pupils. These held a high place in the heart of their venerated teachers. The following letter from one of them, a prisoner in Prussia, plainly shows the affectionate interest Brother Mémoire took in his former pupils :

“ EMMINENS, *Jan. 5th, 1871.*

“ I beg to inform you that I have received the box you were good enough to send me. I received it at seven A. M. Shirts, drawers, vests, nightcaps, hats, towels, boots, handkerchiefs and books, all were safe. I was very glad to get these useful things. How great is your charity for poor prisoners!

“ I thank you with my whole heart for all you have done

for me during so many years. I beg of God to reward you as you deserve. Accept my warmest regard. My life will not be long enough to express my gratitude.

“ CHARLES.”

*Namur.*

It was in the last days of August that the community of Namur began relieving the poor soldiers: the class-room became an ambulance, and here the provisions, linen, lint and medicines, that were likely to be required, were prepared. By the 1st of September there were thirty beds, and the wounded began to come in, in threes and fours, and larger numbers, before complete facilities had been secured for their reception.

On the 10th of September, about half-past eleven P. M., the doorbell announced another French visitor. The Brother who was that day on the watch, hastened to open the door. Twelve officers were before him. Seeing the religious, the Frenchmen exclaimed :

“ This is the Brothers' school! We are among friends! We are saved!”

They shook hands cordially with the Brother, who was so much affected by these marks of lively sympathy as to be quite speechless. The assistance of a hearty meal, with ample accommodation for the night, so completely surprised the weary wayfarers that their looks alone had to bespeak their gratitude; this their countenance did with the fullest success, to the amplest degree.

The next day they were made to stay at the establishment, in order to recruit their exhausted strength.

When evening came they were obliged to part. To their warm thanks for the Brothers' kindness, the latter replied :



"It is our duty in these unhappy times to assist all who suffer from the war."

"And you love France?" said one of the officers, a grateful light beaming in his eye.

"Yes, indeed," the Brother Director replied, "we dearly love her; she is the cradle of our Order, and of many generous institutions. Repeat this to your countrymen when you go back to your beautiful land."

"We will," the officer returned; "and we will also tell of the blessed charity we found among the Belgian sons of the Venerable De La Salle."

A grave look rested on the Brother's face. "No, no," he hastily rejoined, "say nothing of that. What is the little we have done for you?"

"Little! Brother!" the officer exclaimed; "do you call it little? We came to you strangers, and you took us in; hungry, and you gave us to eat; thirsty, and you gave us to drink; and then the nursing, clothing of our sick and ragged comrades; visiting them in prisons, as you and the other members of your holy Order have done! And you know," he added affectionately, taking the Brother Director's hand, "in doing all this for the least of our Lord's brethren, you have done it for the Lord Himself."

The Brother was about to speak, but he quickly interrupted whatever he was going to say by remarking:

"Remember, Brother, His divine lips have solemnly declared it. You cannot gainsay it."

"No, no," said the Brother Director in a hushed voice; "we rejoice that the dear Lord has given us an opportunity to do something for His beloved poor. We it is who have reason to feel and to be grateful."

"At all events," replied the officer, "to you and all your

blessed Order will come the glorious reward." They gathered around him, shook hands, and, with tears in their eyes, bade him "Good-bye!"

Through a misunderstanding, a train that had left Sedan for Aix-la-Chapelle went by way of Namur. This train brought German sick and wounded. The Brothers received twenty-three of them. These poor men were in a most pitiable condition. Clean linen was given them, for they had not changed since the beginning of the war. The Brothers treated them with the kindness that Catholic charity dictates.

The Brothers' ambulance was kept in the most perfect order; the patients were scrupulously attended.

The friendship and confidence of the soldiers were admirably manifested. The brave man who had risked his life on the battle-field soon became attached to him who dressed his wounds, and kept watch by his bed of pain; and thus, very few days sufficed to win for the Brothers the affection of their patients.

While curing the body, they tried also to heal the soul. They succeeded wonderfully. When reminded of their first communion, and the pure joys of their childhood, the wounded, without exception, asked to be reconciled to God.

"God is my leader," said one; "I should be a coward and a wretch if I refused His friendship." Noble and magnanimous words, which cannot be too often meditated upon, and which are well befitting the lips of a soldier of France!

One of the priests of the parish heard the confessions of the French; a father of the Company of Jesus, those of the Germans. Next morning, at Mass, to the great edification of all present, the soldiers received the holy Eucharist. Af-



ter holy Mass they remained some little time in prayer and pious reflection.

The health of the sick improved daily; one only, struck in the shoulder by a bullet, appeared in a hopeless condition: he was a Bavarian. He bore his sufferings with much resignation, and died on the 21st of September, fortified by all the rites of the Church, after a lingering agony.

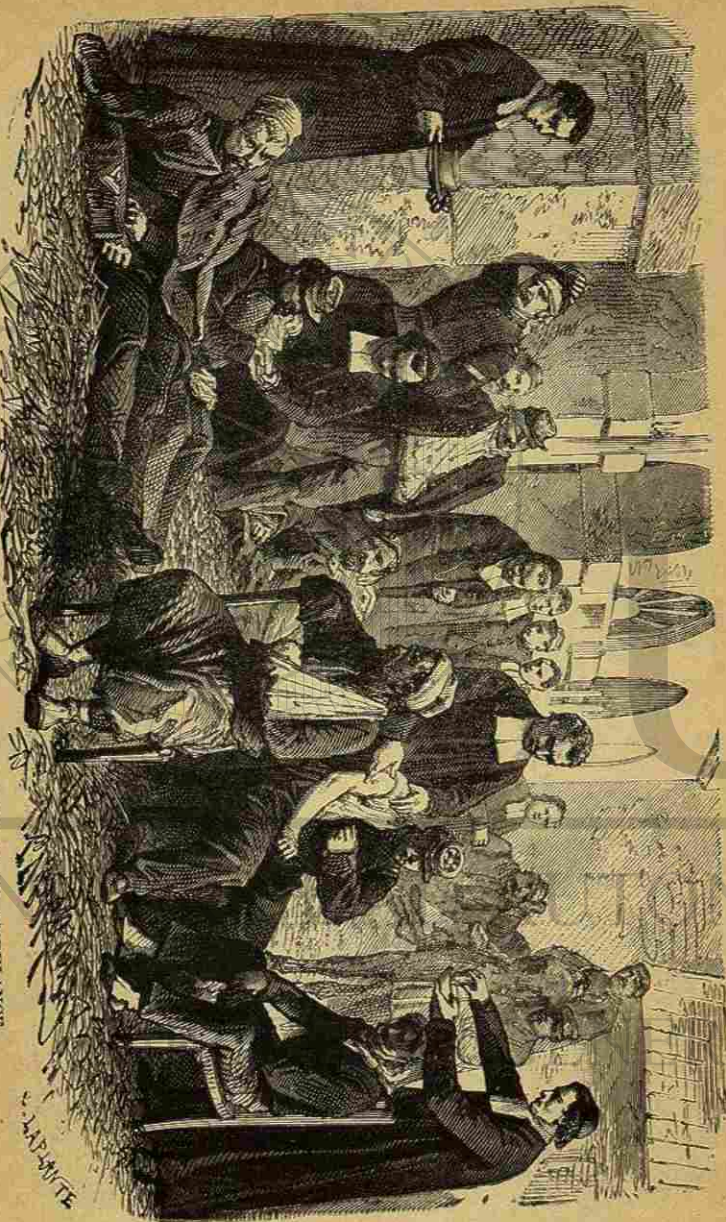
While the last sacraments were being administered, a Protestant soldier, lying in the same room, appeared greatly impressed by the Catholic ceremonies. After the departure of the priest, he called a Brother.

"Oh!" said he "how beautiful is your religion! Death among you is not death: surely it is a happy preparation for another life, a better life. I wish to become a Catholic: I will die in the old faith of my fathers!" Whilst pronouncing the words, "I wish to become a Catholic," a tear rolled down his cheek, expressing more clearly than words the grace that had touched his heart. He generously responded to it, and on his recovery, after a thorough preparation, he was received into the Church.

All the French soldiers remaining in Belgium, whether in the camp at Beverloo, or in any of the cities, and who had been under the care of the Brothers in Namur, wrote frequently to their benefactors. They looked to them for a word of comfort in their trials. This consolation was never refused, and, touching to relate, it was almost always accompanied by a little pecuniary assistance. Blessed be ye, dear Belgian Brothers of the Christian Schools! The gratitude of the soldiers will not end with their life, for their children, after them, will remember and tell how you assisted their fathers in their need: how you nursed them in sickness, and comforted and strengthened them by your holy charity when in prison!



THE COURTYARD OF THE BROTHERS' HOUSE AT SEDAN USED AS AN AMBULANCE.



Of all the letters written to the Brothers of Namur by the French soldiers, we have room but for two or three.

“LIEGE, Nov. 10th, 1870.

“DEAR BROTHERS :

“I write to let you know that thus far my health is good. For some days past we have been deprived of permits: we can no longer leave the citadel, because, the first days, there were some went out that did not come in again. The weather is very severe, and food not abundant. Ah! how happy we were at Namur! We trust that our imprisonment will soon end. If I could hear from my parents, it would be some little comfort; but I have not that happiness, and if peace be not soon signed, we are all going to be sick. We cannot live much longer as we are. Kindest regards to all the dear Brothers, the friends of the prisoners. I always think of you, and will, while I live.

“LOUIS BRASSEUR.”

“INTRENCHED FORT OF ANTWERP,

“Nov. 26th, 1870.

“DEAR BROTHER AND FRIEND :

“I thank you a thousand times, together with all your community, whose names are for ever engraven on my heart, for your thoughtful kindness. How happy I should be to spend my whole life as then, reading! My very dear Brother, how much I would like to be near you! Your presence would console me: but I am deprived of the sight of those I love and esteem! I do not forget morning and evening prayers, which I was accustomed to say in your holy house. I am thankful to God for having escaped death. Unhappily, many of my friends have fallen. Alas! I long for all these things



to end, that I may see dear France and my own home once more!

"I thank you a thousand times for the five francs you sent me: they procured me the things I want most.

"I conclude my letter by thanking you anew, and begging you to believe that I can never forget your many kindnesses. I look forward to the happy day when I can again shake hands with you.

"A. PARENS."

"LILLE, Feb. 5th, 1871.

"DEAR BROTHER:

"I shall always remember with pleasure the good religious whom I had the happiness of knowing at your house. It is by seeing them in private life that one learns justly to appreciate their many excellent qualities. Their boundless devotedness and kindness have inspired me with a very sincere affection for them. Please say to Brothers Rupert and Mervé, that if they will allow me to do so, I will call them in future my very dear friends: that name expresses better than any other the affection I have for them. I hope, if they should chance to visit a garrison occupied by the 51st, they will come and assure me they have not forgotten the lieutenant,

"JAVELOT."

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

*The Brothers at Champigny.*

The battles of Champigny and Villiers were carried on with great vigor. In these severe engagements the French lost some able officers: General Renault, General Ladriët de la Charrière, the Marquis de Grancey, etc.

The blood of the zouaves and mobiles from the departments flowed in torrents. The Brothers of the Christian Schools, with their active sympathy and earnest devotedness, had their full and appropriate share in those terrible struggles. The entire press was unanimous in praise of their grand, heroic charity on the battle-field. Even the *Opinion Nationale*, the implacable enemy of religious institutions, paid them a tribute which cannot be suspected of partiality:—

"We have often," said that journal, "struggled against the aggressive character of religious corporations, when the government was granting them all manner of favors. We now consider it our duty to acknowledge the services rendered by religious to our sick, and, especially, the courageous devotedness with which the Brothers of the Christian Schools came to gather the wounded, even under the enemy's fire, vying in stoicism with the admirable staff of doctors and ambulance volunteers. In the new era opened by the Republic of 1870, the struggle has changed its nature. There is freedom for all under the common law, and honor to whomsoever will do the best: public opinion shall be the judge, and the country will be the gainer by the loyal efforts of the combatants. We must admit that the Brothers of the Christian Schools are now foremost."

The *Soir*, moreover, added:

"One of the greatest topics of conversation among the soldiers is the conduct of the Brothers. These black-robed men, who, calm, stoical, walk amid flying bullets, carrying the wounded, fill our soldiers with admiration. It must be owned that these two hundred Brothers have given an



example of real courage. More than ten times, our generals had to keep them back till the firing was over, from going to take up the wounded.

"Thus the Institute of the Brothers has furnished two hundred infirmarians, whose black gowns are everywhere seen, in defiance of danger. Let us pay homage to their bravery."

This well-deserved tribute of respect was gratifying to those who knew the Brothers' exceeding worth.

What seemed to a portion of the press extraordinary acts, were but the public exercise of their ordinary virtues. Abnegation, heroic charity, the spirit of sacrifice, are the daily life of those faithful disciples of our Lord.

Whilst the International Society for the Wounded called in the aid of hired litter-bearers, the ambulance of the press, with better judgment, made an appeal to gratuitous devotedness. It was then that Brother Philippe placed at the disposal of M. Ricord and Mgr. Bäuer, hundreds of Brothers as nurses and litter-bearers.

Truth compels us to add that there were none forced by their Superior to enroll themselves under the banner of the press. They voluntarily offered to go; nay more, they begged, they entreated to be permitted to do so. And this, not from any foolhardy and reckless impulse, but from the purest and holiest motive. A glance at some of the letters the postulants of Oudinot street addressed to the Rev. Brother Exupérien, master of novices, will plainly show it.

One writes:—

"Our brave soldiers are giving their lives for the country: I willingly offer mine to relieve them, and especially to help those who are mortally wounded to die well."

Another:—

"The soldiers are our brothers, our friends, our defenders, and for all these reasons I consider them entitled to our care."

Here is another of similar tone and spirit:

"Although feeble in health, and quite timid by nature, I nevertheless offer myself to go to the battle-field; my courage gives me strength, and I may still be able to do something. Besides, one does not need to be very strong to suggest to poor wounded and dying men sentiments of faith, of confidence, and contrition, to prepare them to appear before God."

Blessed youth! he candidly admits his timidity; but his zeal to do good to his fellow creatures raises him above the weakness of the flesh. He naïvely remarks that it does not require much physical strength to point the thoughts of the dying heavenward. Fortunate the dying who have such to attend them in their last moments.

One more extract must be given from these admirable letters. Brother Zévrites writes:

"If, in going to the battle-field, there were no danger to run, the merit would be very little; I would not dare to offer it to God; but it is precisely because life is exposed there that one should go courageously and unhesitatingly.—To do a thing pleasing to God, useful to my neighbor, honorable to the congregation to which I belong, and sanctifying to myself, will be always a pleasure and a happiness to me. Have the goodness, then, to put down my name and count on my devotedness."

Animated with such sentiments, is it any wonder the



Brothers performed prodigies of valor, and won from even their enemies the warmest praise?

On the morning of the 29th of November, with the cold seven degrees below zero, one hundred and fifty Brothers assembled on the Quai d' Orsay, near the Champ de Mars. The Venerable Brother Philippe, notwithstanding his four-score years, accompanied them.

The projected opening by Champigny had brought on engagements at almost every point of the investing lines. The cannonade was heard on every side. Still the ambulances received no order to advance, and the Brothers had to wait from six in the morning till two in the afternoon. With their ardor to be up and doing, this forced inactivity must have been a severe trial.

The next morning, Nov. 30th, the ambulances assembled in the same place. Brother Philippe was still with his Brothers, who, according to the account of the *Figaro*, had increased to one hundred and seventy-five. "The next day (*Figaro*) and the day after, they were two hundred. Then, in order to bury the dead, and to lend their aid for the transfer of the wounded from the temporary to the definitely established ambulances, three hundred and twenty arrived, without interrupting the services of the public schools, and the ambulances of Paris. It is, in fine, according to the arrangements of M. Jules Ferry, who had himself borne testimony to the devotedness of the Brothers, that necessary dispositions have been made, so that the children should not cease to receive daily instruction in the numerous establishments directed by the Brothers.

"The ambulances of the press conveyed the Brothers to the Place-de-la-Bastille. Brother Philippe accompanied them thither, but, owing to the infirmities of age, he could go no

farther, and had to confide to one of his able assistants the care of conducting them to the field of battle.

"From Vincennes the brave Brothers, each with a two-cent loaf, a cake of chocolate, and a flask of wine, of which the wounded drank the greater part, went on the double-quick to Champigny."

The Brothers were divided into squads of ten, and a physician was appointed for each division. They were warned to keep together, if possible, and never to lose sight of the doctor with whom they were severally to act.

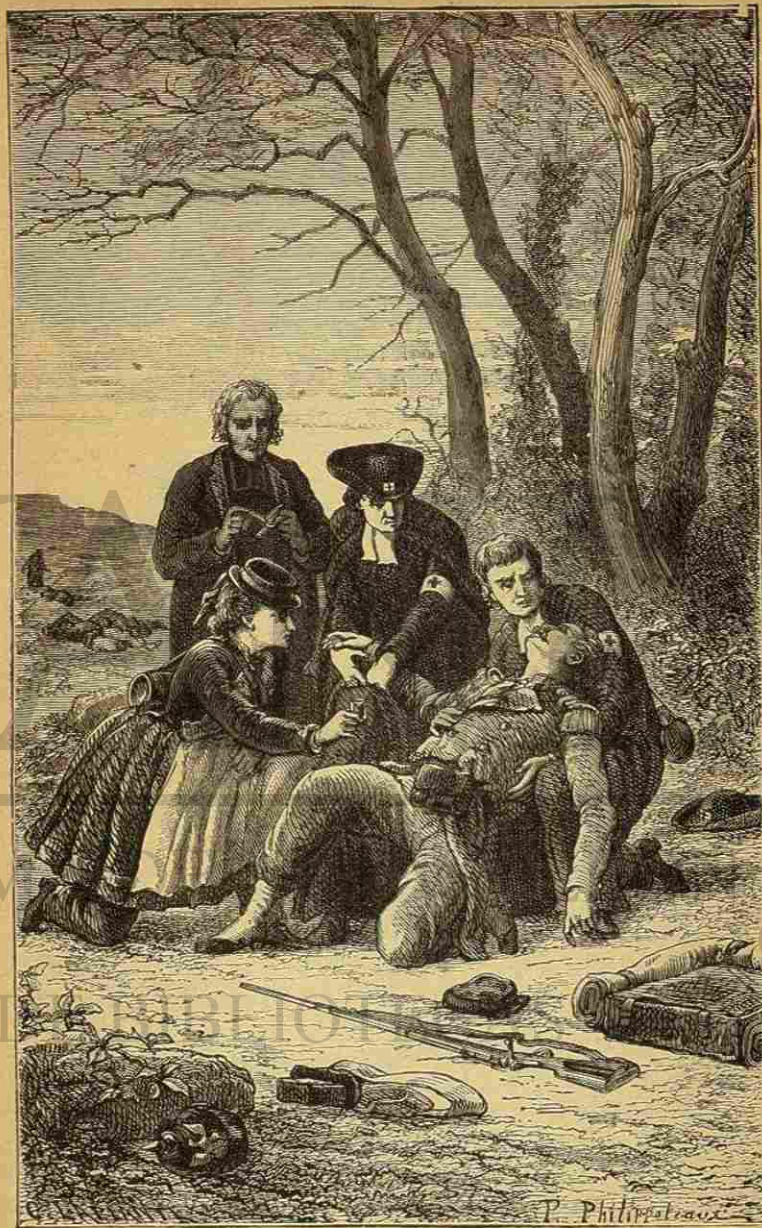
At the fork of the road, leading to Villiers on the left, and Champigny on the right, the doors of the ambulance were hastily thrown open, and the Brothers ordered to get out quickly, seize the litters, and run and take up the wounded. Those who gave this order either did not know, or forgot, the injunction laid on the Brothers a short time before. The Brothers obeyed. Providing themselves with litters, they advanced along the two roads. From the hurried order, they were at first a little confused as to the direction they ought to take, or where they were to carry the wounded. But charity is courageous and ingenious. A quarter of an hour had not passed when the service went on as if the Brothers had been employed in it often before. The sound of the cannonade and the musketry served to guide them; they advanced without fear of the projectiles that might reach them, and stopped only when they met or were shown a wounded soldier. They took him up, and carried him to the ambulance wagons, at a distance of two hundred, four hundred, and sometimes sixteen hundred yards. Once full, the wagons proceeded towards Joinville-le-Pont, and thence the wounded were transferred to ferry-boats which conveyed them to Paris.



On the 30th of November, one of the bridges of boats was damaged, and a wagon-load of wounded became entangled in the Marne. This accident prevented the other carriages from crossing, and hindered those in charge of them returning to the battle-field to take up the many wounded that still remained there. Thus it was the occasion of double labor to the Brothers. Those who went with the wounded to Joinville, were obliged to carry them in their arms across the Marne. Those who picked them up on the battle-field carried them almost incredible distances, for want of carriages. In some places, the stretchers being defective, the Brothers took the wounded on their backs, or in their arms, and toiled along with their precious burdens through the fields for considerable distances.

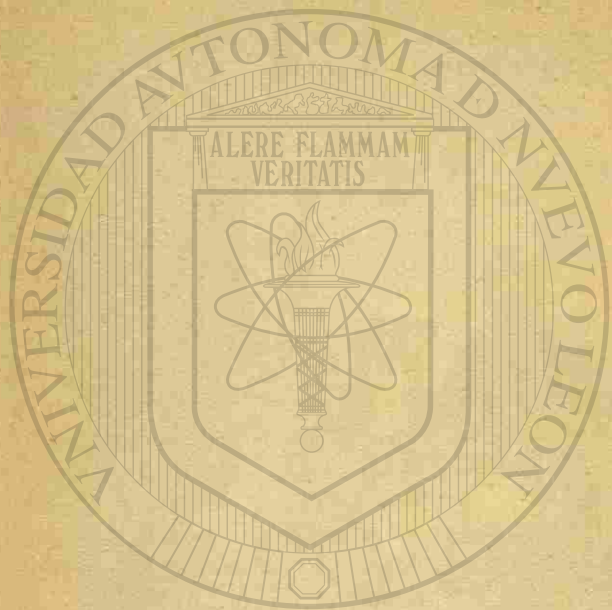
The Brothers formed two groups: one, after crossing the Mulhouse railroad, carried the wounded who had fallen before Villiers to that village; the other, nearer Champigny, conveyed the wounded found in the fields, ravines and thickets to a dwelling and cart-house near a limekiln. This position became for a time very critical. A Prussian battery, placed at the extremity of the table-land of Cœuilly, directed its fire against a French battery posted at the railroad station near the Plant wood. The latter answered back: thus projectiles from both camps passed right over the limekiln, of which an ambulance had been made.

The Brothers soon became accustomed to the roar of shells and bombs. It was useless to remind them to remain within the lines. They fearlessly marched to the foremost ranks, and as soon as one of the soldiers fell, two of them picked him up and carried him to the nearest ambulance wagon. By a providential protection, not a Brother was seriously injured. Only three were slightly wounded by spent balls and shells.



SUCCOR FOR THE WOUNDED ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

It was the Brothers who lifted up General Renault when he fell, and bore him to one of the ambulances.

They voluntarily assumed an office the most humble and perilous. Not one flinched. As soon as the firing ceased at any particular point, they left it for another. In their ardor to be useful, they literally sought danger, and competed with one another for the most painful tasks; and this without distinction of rank, and with that admirable sentiment of equality which gives strength to their Order. In their zeal, they never asked, in the thickest of the battle, if there was danger there, or was it too far. It was enough for them to know that there was something there to do, and they rushed, regardless of consequences. They knelt on the damp ground, in the mud, snow or ice, tenderly raised the pallid faces, questioned the bloodless lips or the all but sightless eyes, and offered the last possible consolations. Then, with all the horrors of war around them, over rough, torn-up fields, over ranks of dead bodies, over débris of all kinds, they hurried with the fainting ones to the nearest wagon, and then back again to pick up and rescue others.

On Dec. 1st, the Brothers from several houses went on foot to the Bastille. Brother Philippe, notwithstanding his feebleness, was there to meet them. The doctors and officers paid all honors to the saintly old man, who in his humility was greatly confused. With his patriarchal blessing resting upon them, the Brothers set out for the plateau of Faisanderie. There was an armistice there that day from morning till night. The day before, a strange ambulance had been sent to pick up the wounded who fell at Créteil. Its stretcher-carriers had done it most inefficiently. The Brothers undertook to finish their work. Alas! it was too late. Cold and want had caused the death of all, even those who had



been but slightly wounded. The dead they picked up and carried to the church of Créteil.

On Dec. 2d, the battle commenced at early dawn. The Germans threw themselves strongly on the army of General Ducrot. The attack was sudden and general on the line of the French outposts from Champigny to Bry-sur-Marne. The German attack failed. Supported by a strong body of artillery, the French, notwithstanding the heavy losses they sustained, opposed a solid resistance. The struggle was long and terrible. The French batteries stopped the Prussian columns on the plateau, and the latter were entirely defeated.

The ambulance wagon reached Joinville at nine o'clock in the morning. The passing of the artillery trains prevented their crossing the Marne. The Brothers alighted and again repaired to the fork, which appeared to be their headquarters. Breaking up into numerous groups, they went, as on the 30th, to the first lines, and chiefly to the Place la Plâtrière, where a desperate struggle progressed. Intent on the strict performance of their merciful duty, they noticed neither hunger, cold nor fatigue. A supernatural strength seemed given them. "The grand acts, and the instances of the Christian heroism of these men," says Dr. O. de Langenhagen, "are talked of in every circle of the metropolis, and it is almost superfluous to repeat their exploits, which are only equalled by the modesty, the abnegation, and devotedness they everywhere display. Their conduct commands respect and admiration, and their example should convert to religion and truth all those who are led astray by doubt or unbelief. For my part, heretic though I am, I have been struck with astonishment and admiration by the facts of which I myself, as well as many of my colleagues,

have been an eye-witness, at Champigny, Villiers, Petit-Brie, etc."

"Believe me, Brother," said General Ducrot to one of them, who, to save a wounded man, in the battle of Nov. 30th, had ventured into the midst of the Prussian balls, "believe me, neither humanity nor charity required that you should go so far."

In his detailed account of the two battles, M. Jezierski speaks of the Brothers and their work as follows:—"Speaking of ambulances, I must repair an involuntary omission. The Brothers of the Christian Schools, who came on Wednesday and Friday evenings to the battle-field, to the number of one hundred, bravely assisted in taking up and removing the wounded; they did their work with much order. I remarked one white-haired Brother who modestly and simply did as much as four; the stretcher-carriers relieved each other by turns: he, indefatigable in his zeal, went all the way. Such an example needs no praise; it speaks for itself."

A correspondent of the London *Times*, in referring to the management of the ambulance, speaks thus of the Christian Brothers:—

"As for the Brothers of the Christian Schools, they seem truly the choice corps—the 'old guard' of the nurses; their activity was prodigious. They were easily known by their large round hat, their white *rabat* (neckband), their long black gown, as they ran all over the battle-field, assisting and consoling the dying, carrying off the wounded; in a word, accomplishing the work with which they were charged, as the bravest and most devoted of men."

"Let me tell you," wrote Dr. Decaisne to Brother Philippe, "how happy I am to see the hostile press lay down its arms be-



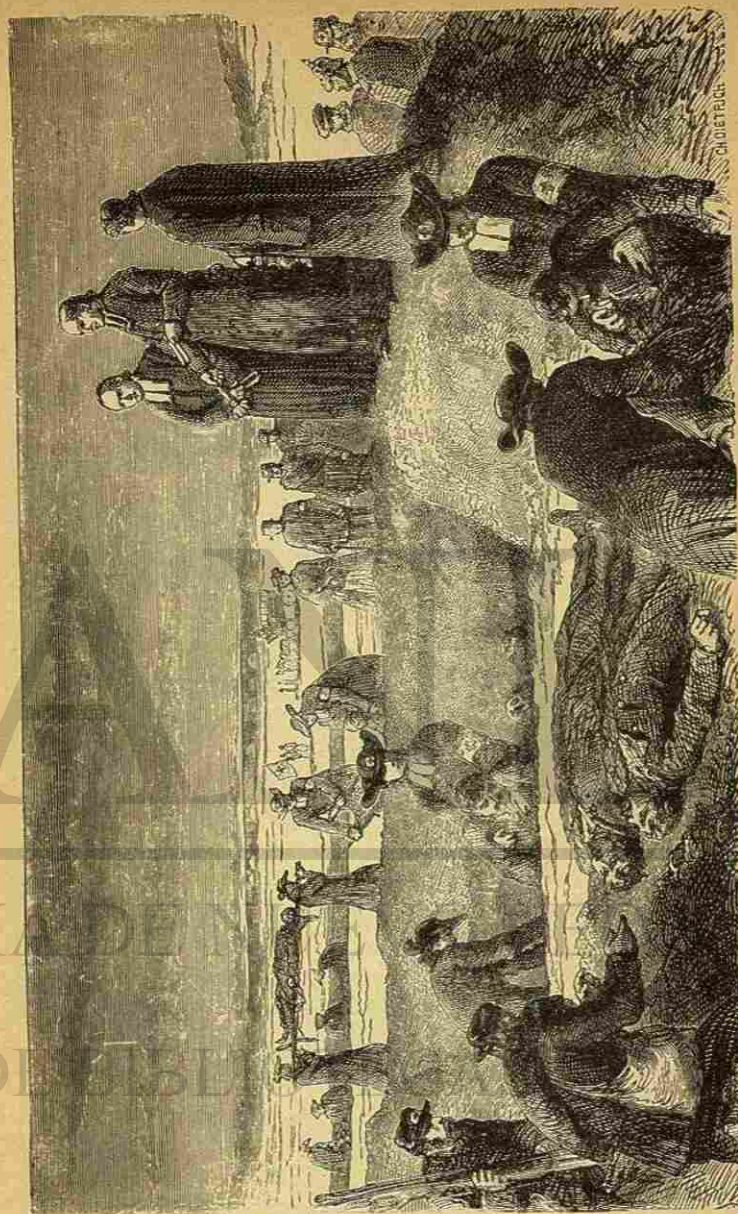
fore the admirable devotedness of your religious. I rejoice at this with all my heart and with all my strength, for the great and holy cause we serve together. All others, even the most triumphant, are only for a time, transitory: that is immortal.

"Accept, I pray you, my dearest Brother, for yourself and your brave soldiers, the homage of my sincere and respectful admiration."

"As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me,"\* says our blessed Saviour. This was the secret of the ardor and devotedness of the Christian Brothers, which excited the wonder and admiration of the world.

One would suppose that, called from their quiet retreats and peaceful profession of teaching, to face all the horrors of war, would have been enough to frighten such gentle souls. But while religion refines, it does not weaken. Shaking off the coarseness of nature, it also shakes off its selfishness, its fears, its littleness. It enlarges and exalts the mind, it makes the wings of the soul rustle, till, opening, they lift the body above its narrow horizon of petty cares, sorrows and griefs. What to such spiritualized beings are the terrible sights and sounds of the battle-field—the roaring of the cannon, the shrieking of shells, the whistling of the grape-shot and the hissing of the canister? With these frightful sounds they hear others—the cries of the dying, the groans of the wounded. These last touch the very fibres of their hearts, and, over heaps of slain, in the very face of death, they rush to speak a few words of comfort and preparation to the one, to snatch up and safely carry off the other.

\* Matt. xxv. 40.



BROTHERS BURYING THE DEAD AT CHAMPIGNY.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

Said General Renault, as the Brothers took him up from the ground, slippery with streams of blood: "Ah! Brothers, look at my head; it has grown white on the battle-field; I have made twenty-two campaigns, but such a slaughter as this I never beheld."\*

During the engagement, a Brother carrying a wounded soldier from the field, received a bullet-wound in the arm; he kept on his way, however, and returned again to the front. Another ball, after carrying off a horse's shoulder, rebounding, wounded the Brother in the leg. This time the hurt was more serious; the soldiers called to him to go back; but he, mindful only of his duty, bound the leg with a handkerchief, and continued his work of charity.

Others showed themselves incapable of fear. General Ducrot, passing on horseback, saw them standing round a battery, waiting to pick up the wounded. He called out: "Brothers, you are too far out. There is certain danger there; go back."

Mgr. Bäuer, who was with him, answered:

"General, they will go away because you order them to do so; but you will never see the Brothers quail before danger."

Some paces farther on, four others were informed that a wounded captain was lying unaided in a little house which was pointed out to them on the Prussian side of the field. They immediately darted right under the cross-fire, and through piles of corpses, carried off the captain, who was moved to tears by such heroism.

A young lieutenant, shot in the chest, fell. The Brothers ran to take him up.

\* Six days after, Gen. Renault died in the hospital, watched over and consoled in his last moments by a Sister of Charity.—TRANS.



"Ah," he exclaimed, a smile flitting over his pale face, "here are the dear Brothers! It was they who brought me up, and now it is they who come to my aid on the field of battle."

The Brothers made kind responses to this remark while giving the first dressing to his wound. Then, taking him in their arms, they proceeded to carry him to the surgeon. They had gone but a little way when they saw a priest drawing near. "Ah, here comes Father F.," they said to him.

"Call him! Call him!" he entreated; "I want to go to confession."

They quickened their steps. Father F. saw and understood their earnest gestures. He hastened to them, heard his confession, gave him absolution, and left him happy and full of hope. Purified by his Saviour's blood, his soul soon after took its flight to a better world. This was the way in which the Brothers of Montrouge passed the day of the battle of Champigny.

After the engagements of Nov. 29th, 30th, and Dec. 2d, there was an armistice of three days, that the dead might be buried. On the first of the three days, sixty Brothers from Paris divided into two bands; some went with spades and shovels, to dig the trenches, while others, carrying stretchers on their backs, went to the Prussian lines, under the direction of Brother Clementis.

They had taken up but some twenty or thirty bodies, when the fort of La Faisanderie, probably unaware of the armistice, discharged four or five bombs in their direction, which burst very near them. The Prussians ordered the Brothers to depart at once. In obedience to this command, they returned to Joinville without being able to do anything more.

On the second day they went back, and it was agreed that

the Brothers should make the trenches, but that no Frenchmen should enter the Prussian lines.

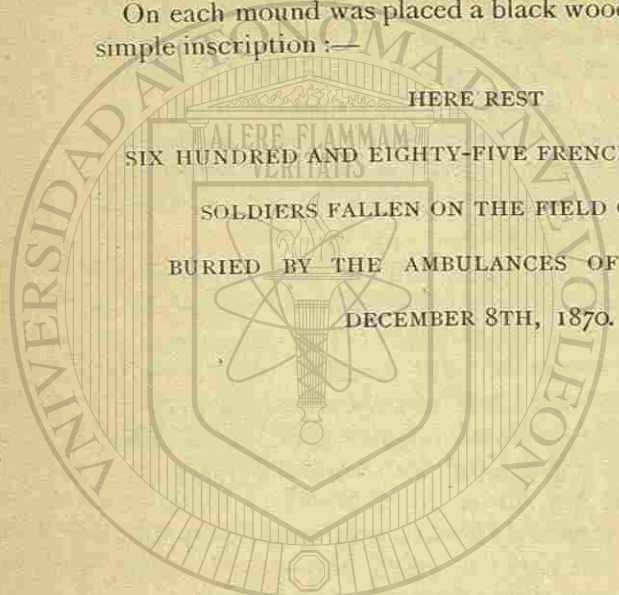
While the trenches were being made, two for the soldiers, and a smaller one for the officers, the Prussians brought the bodies to the railroad, and put them in carts, which they sent away full. At five o'clock on the second day, although those in charge of burying the dead had interred 485 bodies, their work was not yet finished.

Snow fell during the night, and the next morning the Brothers, before proceeding to their mournful tasks, had to shovel out the snow from the trenches. This done, the regular labor of the day went on. The Brothers were admirable under fire; but on that silent field, face to face with death, they were seen to the best advantage—calm, grave, mild, respectful. Brother Clementis, who directed them, gave orders in a clear voice, without any superfluous words; he made a sign for the carts to advance, measured the depth of the graves, pointed out how the bodies were to be placed, every movement being executed with the most perfect order. The Brothers pursued their work silently through the long day. Night was advancing, and the torchlights flickered drearily over the field of the dead. There were still some bodies on the edge of the trenches; the Brothers were exhausted, but one last great effort was to be made, and they made it. The last corpse was buried, the trench filled; then the Brothers all knelt and recited the *De Profundis*. As they left the harrowing scene, their prayers were still continued for the many poor souls so suddenly called to give an account to their sovereign judge and master. Their task had not begun without consolation, for most of the soldiers wore scapulars and medals—marks of faith in an age of skepticism and unbelief. They were evidently among the blessed who die in the faith!



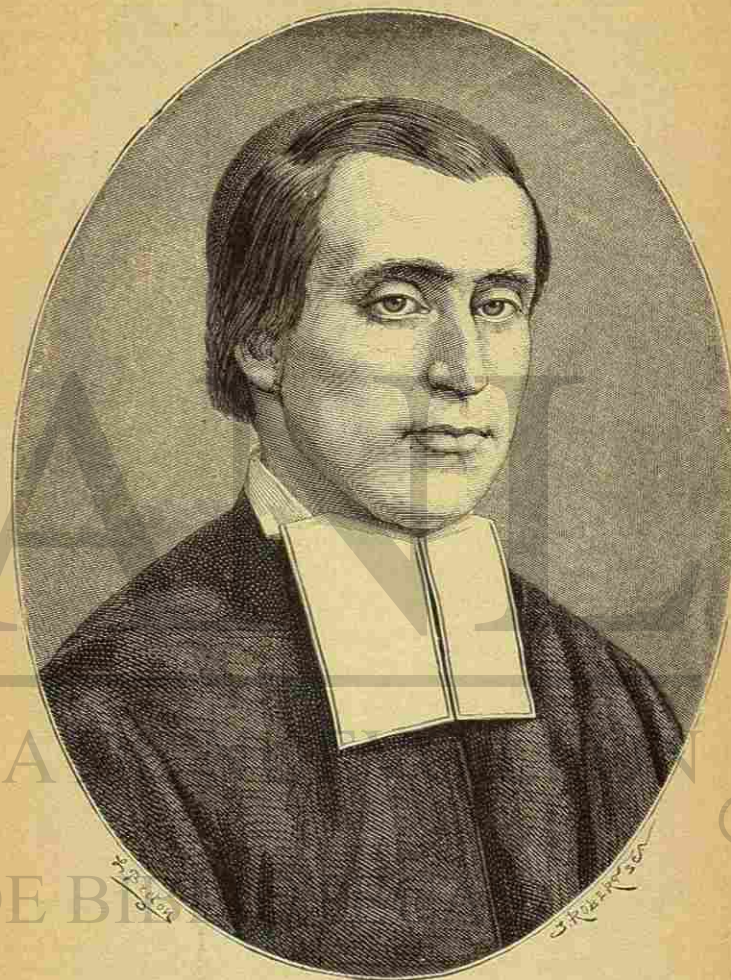
On each mound was placed a black wooden cross, with this simple inscription :—

HERE REST  
SIX HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIVE FRENCH OFFICERS AND  
SOLDIERS FALLEN ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.  
BURIED BY THE AMBULANCES OF THE PRESS,  
DECEMBER 8TH, 1870.



UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIENESTAR



BROTHER NÉTHELME.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL

## CHAPTER V.

### LE BOURGET. VICTIMS OF THE WAR. BROTHER NÉTHELME. HIS DEATH AND OBSEQUIES.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

As the army of the Loire had been defeated and dispersed, and the provincial armies were also defeated by the Prussians and forced to retreat, Paris could get no aid from them in that fatal war, entered into without preparation, and without any friendly power to assist.

The winter was exceptionally severe. The army of Paris had lost a number of its marine and other officers. Still, it was necessary that another attempt should be made against the besieging forces, who did not dare to advance, and whose policy it was, by waiting, to reduce the city by starvation.

General Trochu decided on the battle of Bourget, in the hope of measuring his infantry with that of the Prussians. Again the Prussians only opposed the French with artillery. The latter, unable to reach the Prussians, had to suffer a night of intense cold without shelter. The minister of war reported nine hundred frozen in the trenches.

In the engagements at Champigny, excepting the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the service of the wounded left much to be wished for; the most defective part was that of the organization of litter-carriers. The example of the Brothers struck every one. It was, thenceforward, deemed necessary to walk in their footsteps, and to form a well-



disciplined legion of stretcher-carriers, obeying the orders of their commanding officers, instead of acting, as hitherto, only on the impulse of the moment.

This body, being duly organized on the model of the Brothers, there was great activity in the ambulance service all of the 21st of December. The departure was fixed for four A. M.

The rendezvous was at six, at the barrier of La Villette. Thirty Brothers, half from the Mother-house, half from the St. Nicholas establishment, had set out the day before, at eight P. M., under the direction of Brother Clementis. They passed the night at St. Denis, in a house on the banks of the Seine; the next day, when the battle commenced, they directed their course to Courneuve.

The other Brothers appointed for the service, to the number of one hundred and fifty, assembled at five o'clock in the morning, on the Quai d'Orsay, near the Champ-de-Mars, with the cold six degrees below zero. At a sign from Brother Philippe, who in person directed the movement, they entered the ambulance wagons in order. Brother Philippe's able assistant attended them. At the barrier they were received by Inspector-General Wolf, and some other gentlemen of the ambulance service. They directed their course in silence towards the field of action, while shot and shell fell thick around. The presence of the Brothers cheered and encouraged the soldiers; they knew if they fell they would not be abandoned. Near them, on the same line, were devoted friends who would snatch them from death, carry them to a place of shelter, take care of them and cure them, if they could be cured, or would soothe and soften the anguish of their last moments.

The first detachment of the Brothers had advanced in

the direction of Bourget at nine o'clock in the morning. On either side of the Brother Director who led them was a Dominican father.

The cortége set out from Courneuve; the flag of the Geneva convention was carried in front by a Brother. By the direction of the officers, they went forward to take up the wounded; no soldiers accompanied the Brothers in their march. The firing had ceased on the side of the French, but they had only advanced a little way when a volley from the Prussian troops burst right in front of the ambulance party. The Brother who carried the first stretcher was struck; the ball passed under the left shoulder and penetrated the lung. The wounded man fell bleeding into the arms of his brethren, who placed him on the stretcher he had been carrying. They retraced their steps with their precious burden, passing through the ranks of the reserve corps; the soldiers were moved to tears at the sight of this new martyr to charity, whose name was J. B. Baffie, in religion, Brother Néhelme. Brother Clementis had him conveyed to the ambulance of the Legion of Honor, at St. Denis. The ball could not be extracted, and from the first examination of the wound the doctors lost all hope. When told his condition, he was calm and perfectly resigned to the will of God. As soon as Brother Philippe heard the news, he hastened to St. Denis to see him. Brother Néhelme was grateful for this visit and the deep interest taken in him; also for his removal to the Brothers' house at St. Denis, where he received all possible attention. Brother Néhelme was a professor of the first division in the well-known schools of St. Nicholas, Vaugirard street. There were thirty-eight of the Brothers of this establishment among the litter-carriers.



When the Paris Brothers heard that one of their number was mortally wounded, they thanked God for being permitted to have some little share in the sacrifices and expiations of the country.

Another Brother was wounded. As he staggered, another stretcher-carrier sprang towards him.

"It is nothing," he said; "go where you are more needed."

Some one asked his name.

"What matter is it?" he answered. "I am discharging a duty here which God is to reward, and not human praise."

At the moment when Brother Néhelme was struck, a bullet tore the robe of one of his companions: another pierced the flag; the international laws were not respected.

The Brothers were held up as models for the stretcher-carriers of the several administrations.

At Drancy, on the 21st of December, the director of a squad of stretcher-carriers learned that the Brothers were at the front line of the action. He took his men there, too, and ranged them beside the cannon which was placed in the battery.

Some of the men grumbled; they wanted to pick up the wounded, but not till after the battle, so that they might not risk their own lives. Their leader pointed to the Brothers, where they calmly and imperturbably awaited the opportunity of devoting themselves, without fear of shot or shell.

"How is our dear patient?" asked Dr. Ricord of the Brother Superintendent. The patient referred to was Brother Néhelme.

"Very ill, doctor—he is no better."

The doctor was touched, accustomed though he was to sorrow.

"Oh, I regret it! I regret it," he exclaimed; "one like him

to be cut off in his prime! So good, so talented, so useful! Oh, we can't spare him. We have need of him; France needs him; you require him." So speaking, he impatiently wiped the tears from his eyes.

"We love him too," said Brother Assistant, gently touching the doctor's arm; "we shall miss him; but we dare not regret him. His life has been sacrificed for the good of others; his death will usher him into endless joys. Blessed youth! glorious will be his reward."

Brother Assistant reverently raised his eyes, and on his face, framed as with an aureola by his snowy hair, rested a look of unutterable peace.

The doctor, standing before him, bowed his head. He felt he was in the presence of one whose holiness raised him infinitely above him.

A Brother came in, and spoke to Brother Assistant about the earnest desire of some of the Brothers to go to the battle-field as stretcher-carriers.

"The fate of Brother Néhelme does not damp their ardor," observed the doctor.

"No," returned the Brother; "the mortal wound of Brother Néhelme increases their enthusiasm. They are more eager than ever to go to the battle-field to take up the wounded and suffer for God and their country. They would willingly give their lives to save one poor soldier from death."

"How admirable you all are!" exclaimed the doctor. "Tell Brother Philippe, and all your Brothers, that we thank you in our own name and in the name of France."

Doctor Ricord afterwards repeatedly declared that the Brothers were men who did good for its own sake, regardless of fame; that they knew how to carry true fraternity and love of country even to heroism.



During the three days which elapsed from the 21st till the 24th of December, Brother Néhelme, though suffering intensely, never for a moment lost his serenity of soul nor his presence of mind. No pain could cool the ardor of his piety; no complaint, no word of regret, escaped his lips.

Whilst his Brothers exhorted him to unite his sufferings with those of his Divine Master, his glance rested on the crucifix placed before him; then he raised to heaven those eyes which burned with desire to see God.

Some hours before his death, he was seized with delirium, during which he spoke aloud to his pupils, fancying they were around him, exhorting them to prepare themselves well for the visit to the Child Jesus.

When he had breathed his last, a Brother closed his eyes. His face was so life-like that it was hard to believe him dead. Life had ceased almost unperceived. The beauty of holiness illumined his face. His was the death of the just, spoken of in Holy Writ.

After the first service in the church of St. Denis, Brother Néhelme's body was conveyed to Paris, to the St. Nicholas establishment, where it remained a whole day exposed on a catafalque.

On the morning of the 26th, a vast concourse of people, of all classes, with grave, collected mien, assembled in Vaugirard street, and in front of the St. Nicholas establishment. In that vast multitude were seen children, sad and silent, wondering lookers-on from among the common people, national guardsmen drawn from the ramparts, mobile guards, poor women clad in mourning, doubtless remembering how their children were loved and cared for in that house; priests, religious of various Orders: all crowding into the great court-yard, each one bowing down before a modest coffin,

and throwing some drops of holy water upon it as they passed along.

Around the coffin, on which were laid the black robe of the pious victim, and the badge of the red cross, stood the principal dignitaries of the Institute, the directors, and a great number of Brothers, in prayer.

All along the route to the church of St. Sulpice, the multitude continued to increase. The funeral procession was most imposing.

Brother Philippe and assistants were the chief mourners. A most touching feature in the long procession was the appearance of the children of the St. Nicholas schools, who walked with edifying recollection after the remains of one of their most beloved teachers, the heroic young martyr of charity. It were too long to enumerate here all the noble and official personages who assisted at the last solemn rites, and joined in paying the final tribute to the memory of this brave and gentle Christian Brother.

*The Little Martyrs of St. Nicholas.*

After a siege of over three months, the Prussians commenced bombarding the French forts on the 30th of December, and the week following, those of Paris. A rain of projectiles of enormous weight, used for the first time in the history of sieges, was thrown on that part of Paris which extends from the Invalides to the Museum. The firing continued day and night, without intermission, and with such fury that, on the night of the 8th and 9th of January, in the part of the city situated in the vicinity of the Luxembourg, a shell fell about every two minutes. The hospitals, though crowded with wounded, schools, museums and libraries, prisons, churches, and private houses, were struck; some victims were struck



in the streets, others in bed; children in their mothers' arms were often killed outright. The Brother Director of the St. Nicholas establishment, learning that the bombardment had commenced on the eastern side, wrote to all the parents, requesting such as feared for their children's welfare to take them away. Two hundred were removed on the 8th, but the balance preferred the safety of the establishment to any home protection. Provisions becoming very scarce in the city, great numbers were dying of hunger; the pupils of St. Nicholas's school had to submit, like every one else, to the fixed share of food. However, the careful foresight of the Brothers, and the donations of some benefactors, preserved the children from actual want. Thus it was that many parents left their children with the Brothers, that they might escape, if not the horrors of the bombardment, at least the torments of cold and hunger.

The Brother Director took every possible precaution against accidents. The windows were carefully stuffed with mattresses; pails of water were placed in every apartment of the house, in case of fire.

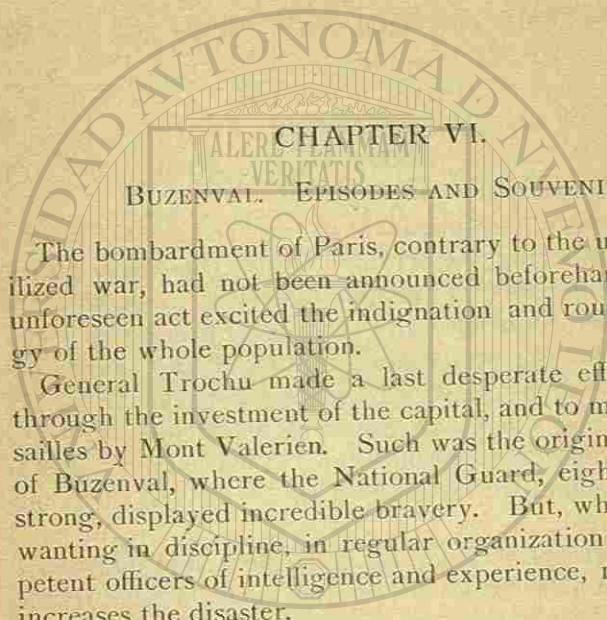
During the night of the 9th and 10th, the roar of the bombardment was terrible around the Brothers' establishment. The pupils, to the number of one thousand, were being removed from the dormitories to the cellars for safety. A few moments more, and all would have been saved. Suddenly, a shell burst through the roof, tearing through three floors of the house. In the first dormitory that shell caused such havoc, that the news next day drew a cry of horror and dismay from all Paris. Four pupils were killed, several were wounded, and one died in a few hours, after having received the last sacraments, with the piety and resignation of a little martyr. Another of the wounded children died of the effects

of his injuries on the 14th of January. On the 11th of January, at nine o'clock, the obsequies of the victims of St. Nicholas's school were celebrated in the church of Notre Dame-des-Champs. They were attended by a great crowd of rich and poor, all of whom pressed eagerly around the little coffins. Tears were in every eye.

M. Jules Favre, vice-president of the Provisional Government, arrived during the service. Abbé Duchesne, pastor of the parish, delivered a touching discourse. The final absolution being pronounced and the funeral procession formed, M. Jules Favre placed himself in front of the hearse, behind the officiating priest, who walked between two lines formed on either side by the pupils of St. Nicholas's school, and a numerous detachment of the 83d battalion of the National Guards, and led the way to the cemetery of Montparnasse.

In the cemetery, M. Jules Favre spoke a few impressive words, after which M. Leroy, in the name of all present, thanked the Minister for his presence in the cemetery to which the municipality had so lately conveyed the mortal remains of Brother Néthelme, one of the teachers of the institution whose pupils had been so cruelly struck. He reminded his hearers of the courage and manly virtues which make the great citizen, and which can alone give glory and security to France in the future.





## CHAPTER VI.

### BUZENVAL. EPISODES AND SOUVENIRS.

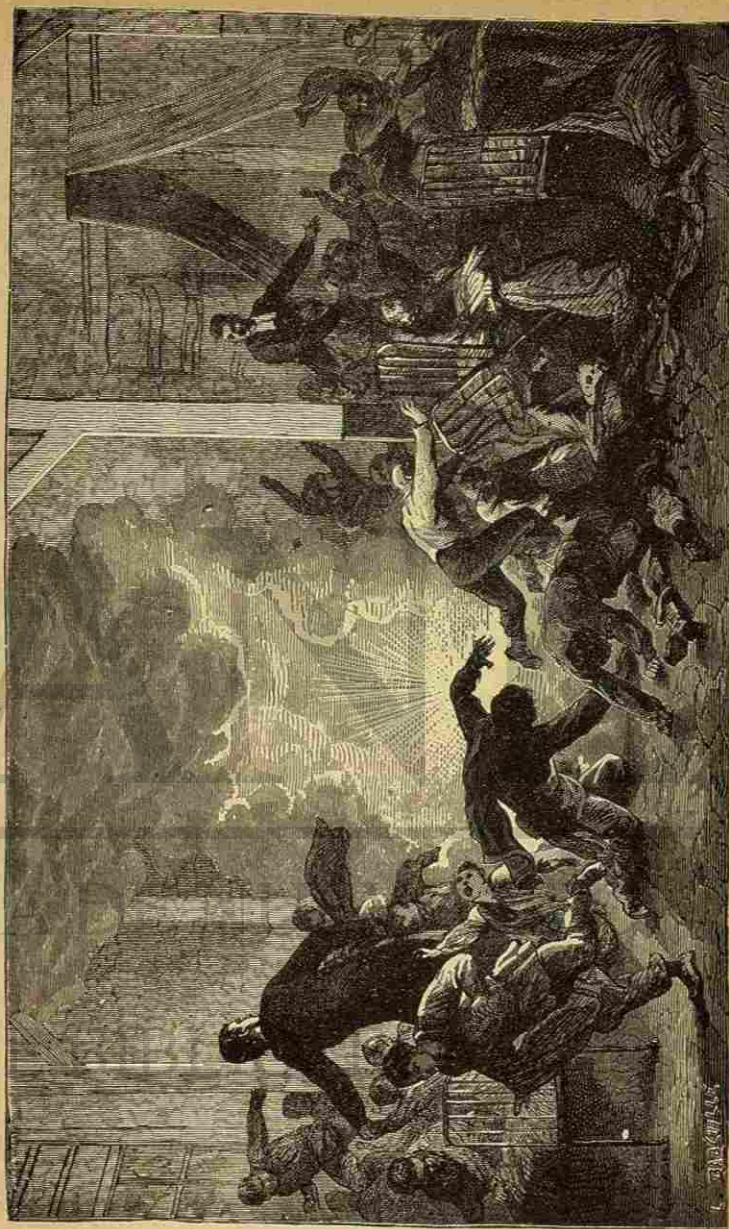
The bombardment of Paris, contrary to the usages of civilized war, had not been announced beforehand; and this unforeseen act excited the indignation and roused the energy of the whole population.

General Trochu made a last desperate effort to break through the investment of the capital, and to march on Versailles by Mont Valerien. Such was the origin of the battle of Buzenval, where the National Guard, eighty battalions strong, displayed incredible bravery. But, when an army is wanting in discipline, in regular organization and in competent officers of intelligence and experience, mere bravery increases the disaster.

At Buzenval, as at Champigny and Bourget, the Brothers did their duty simply and nobly.

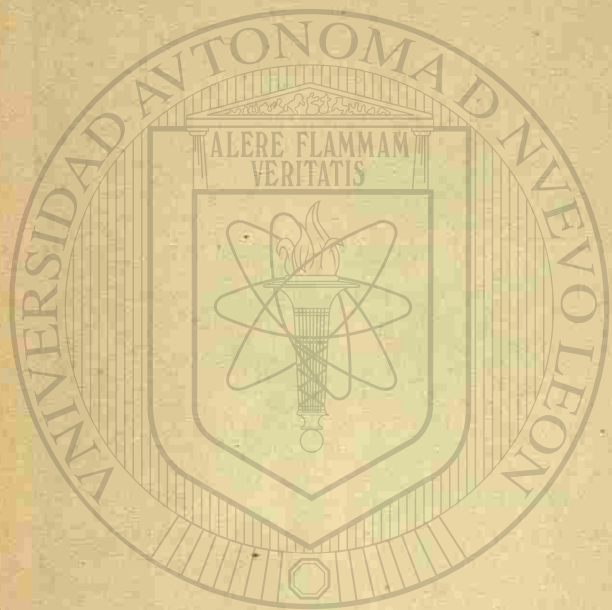
On the 19th of January, about seven A. M., they assembled in the courtyard of the Tuileries. Thence they directed their course towards Rueil, where the Press committee had established an ambulance.

The battle began: shells fell on every side. The Brothers formed two divisions; the first was sent to the Fouilleuse farm and La Bergerie, where they picked up forty wounded; the second was directed towards the park of Buzenval, the lower part of which had been carried by the National Guard, supported by a regiment of the line.



THE BURSTING OF A SHELL IN THE DORMITORY OF ST. NICHOLAS'S COLLEGE, VAUGIRARD ST.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

The enemy, concealed behind walls and crenellated houses, held out sternly till evening, despite the converging fires of Mont Valerien, and the batteries which the French troops had succeeded in posting on some of the heights. The balls rained on that part of the park, but the Brothers did not quail before the danger. With admirable coolness they gave every possible assistance. Their task became more laborious, owing to the fearful state of the roads, after the heavy falls of snow and rain, over which the wounded had to be conveyed great distances. They strove to soothe and relieve the sufferers, and at Champigny they shared their food with the combatants. They placed the wounded in a house near Rueil, on the Buzenval side. Three shells fell on that provisional ambulance in the space of a few hours.

On the battle-fields, the Brothers were a real army of succor and devotedness. Their conduct inspired respect and admiration, and furnished some of the most touching pages of the siege of Paris. At Buzenval the soldiers called them their "Guardian Angels."

A major of the National Guard, a friend of Major Mottu, the persecutor of the Brothers, showed himself strongly impressed by what he saw done by the black gowns. "Are those the Brothers?" he asked of a subaltern officer. "How brave they are! They go out under the fire with a radiant countenance, regardless of death, which snatches victims all around them. I was an inveterate enemy of theirs, but now I confess I was wrong. Henceforth I will always take their part, for I am convinced they are genuine patriots, and that France has need of them."

Not only France, but every country where there are young to instruct, poor to relieve, and the sorrowful to comfort, needs Brothers. May God, therefore, in His mercy, widely extend this beneficent Order of Christian teachers.



Some days before, the same major had said to his men, between two exercises: "I should be glad if all the religious people in the country could be placed in front of the Prussian guns, so that we might get rid of them." His wish had been partly granted; the Brothers at Buzenval were placed right before the Prussian guns; the major was there, too, but it was to be made sensible of his error, and, as they passed, to salute the religious stretcher-bearers, and, in their person, the cross of Jesus Christ.

On the 20th the French army effected its retreat. The troops were harassed by twelve hours' hard fighting, and by marches of the preceding nights, intended to conceal the movements of concentration. The French loss was serious. Numbers of the wounded were left in the power of the Prussians, who carried them off and had them taken to Versailles.

The Saturday and Sunday following, a certain number of Brothers returned to the battle-field; the others were engaged in the ambulances, caring for the wounded. They lent their aid in burying the soldiers of the line, and the mobile guards who fell in that struggle which was to result in the capitulation of Paris.

Their last act was the interment of some soldiers, in a field situated to the right of the road leading from Malmaison to Garches, while the dead national guardsmen were brought to the ambulance wagons to be conveyed to Paris.

The Reverend chaplain of Mont Valerien presided at the pious and mournful ceremony; Brother Philippe, the venerable Superior-General, was likewise present. After the *De Profundis*, the priest blessed the common grave and the bodies of the brave men who lay therein. The Brothers knelt beside the open trench, and with hearts full of faith, love, sorrow and resignation, poured forth their soul in prayer for

the dead. A small wooden cross was placed over the grave. May that cross remain on the funeral mound, to tell the passer-by, in its symbolical language, that the future is not dependent upon brute force scientifically directed, teaching that noble faith begets noble actions, and in the light of faith alone shall nations prosper and attain their true glory.

*A Former Pupil.*

Whilst the roar of musketry mingled with the crashing of shells and the booming of cannon, a Brother was quietly pursuing his office of mercy. A battalion of zouaves passed close beside him. An old pupil recognized him, and ran to shake hands with him. At the same moment a bomb burst at the Brother's feet and struck the zouave, who fell into the arms of his former teacher. The latter, instantly, in spite of the bails whizzing around him, carried the young man to a ruined farmhouse, at the imminent risk of paying dearly for his courageous devotedness. Thank God, the teacher escaped unhurt, and his former pupil did not die of his wound.

*No Passage.*

A little before the close of hostilities, an English ambulance approached Champigny; two Brothers were with it; it was ten P. M. They advanced to the last French barricade, and asked the captain of mobiles in command of the post if they could go beyond to seek the wounded, or take up those who were still on the field of battle.

"I have no objection," said the officer; "only, I wish you to observe that, hostilities not having ceased, it is imprudent to expose yourselves thus, for the Prussian barricade is not far from ours." The ambulance hesitated a moment, its keeper asking whether they should retrace their steps, or



finish what they had begun. It was decided worth running the risk of a stray bullet for the sake of saving some poor wounded. A Brother carried the flag of Geneva; his companion and one of the ambulance men followed with a stretcher.

They passed the barricade crying: "Ambulance! Ambulance!" Suddenly a light flashed from the Prussian barricade: a shot was fired. The Brothers and the official stopped. The latter called out: "Ambulance! do not fire!"

"Stop!" replied a voice, with pure French accent.

The attendants of the ambulance stood for some minutes attentive to the fusillade going on to the right and left. The situation was critical. Tired of waiting, they inquired if they might advance.

"Not yet," said the same voice; "we have sent to consult our officers."

Four or five minutes passed. At length they heard the words:—

"One may approach; the others remain back."

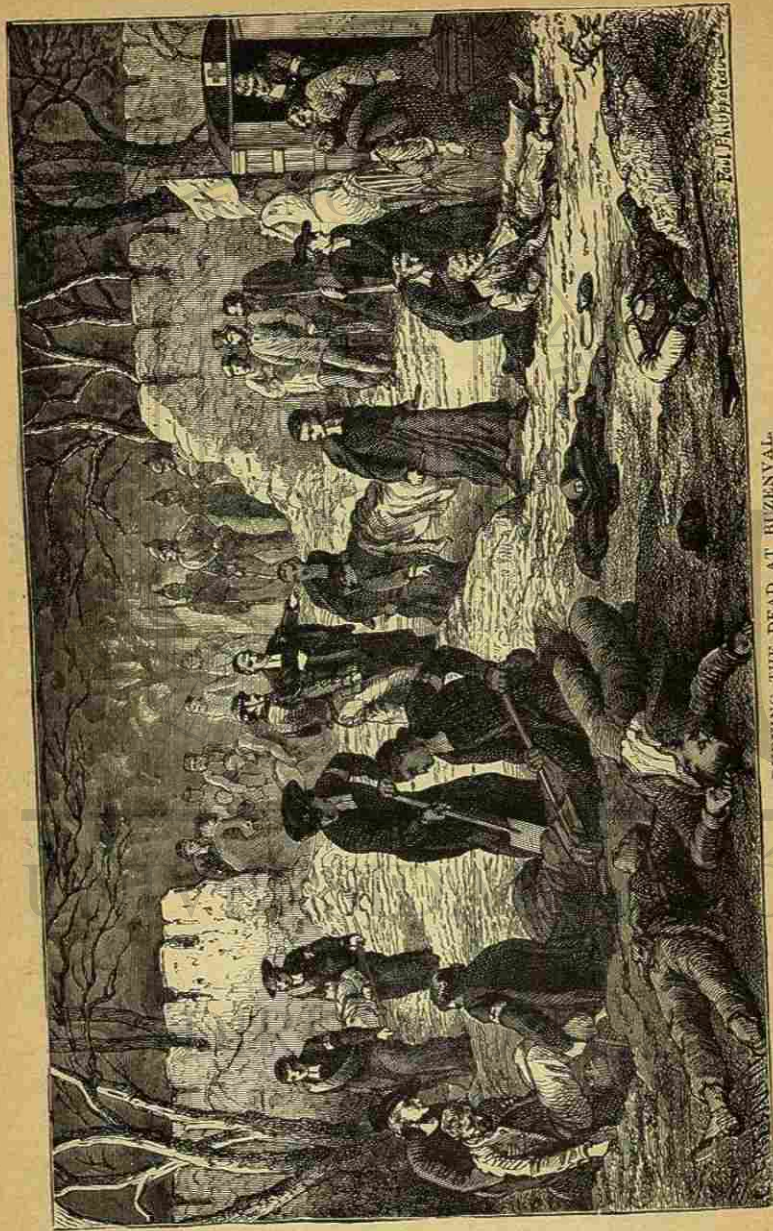
The official had an interview with the Prussian officer of the post, who, whilst refusing liberty to pass, caused five French wounded soldiers to be given to the ambulance party.

The Brothers returned to their lines happy in having done good, even at the risk of their lives.

*An Hour on the Battle Field.*

On the 2d of December, a company of Brothers, with a doctor and Abbé Renaudière, went towards Créteil and Champigny. Between three and four P. M. they reached the centre of the battle, near Villiers, where the Brothers divided into squads. One of these, having at its head a





BURYING THE DEAD AT BUZENVAL.

young American doctor and the Abbé Renaudière, went as far as the outposts without meeting any wounded. There, a French captain pointed out some to the Brothers.

They crossed the trench; the surgeon led the way, with the Abbé Renaudière on his right. Near them walked Brother Hyacinthe, bearing the ambulance flag.

The last of the four stretchers had passed the trench, where some French soldiers had taken shelter from the Prussian balls, when one, whizzing through the air, buried itself within a step of the ambulance attendants. This was a signal that the party was too large. Three of the stretchers had to be taken back. Five hundred paces farther, a wounded Frenchman was found lying face down in the mud, but still alive. He was taken away, and attended to by the surgeon, while Abbé Renaudière and Brother Hyacinthe went back to continue their search. A little farther on, quite close to a Prussian crouched in the ditch, a poor French soldier was groaning in pain; the bone of his right leg was shattered; he had been vainly expecting help since eight o'clock A. M. His last morsel of biscuit had been shared with the Prussian, who, unable to move, and, like the other, despairing of relief, had covered his head with some kind of cloth, and was awaiting death. These unhappy men were about to be relieved, when four balls came flying through the air, quite near the priest and the Brother.

"Hearing the whizzing of the balls," writes Brother Hyacinthe, "Abbé Renaudière, thinking the fire would be continued, threw himself on the ground. 'Are you wounded?' I cried. 'No!' That *No* made me breathe again. To retreat was impossible. We might be killed a hundred times before we could reach our own outposts. Moreover, I did not like the idea of receiving Prussian bullets from behind;



I would rather give them my breast to riddle. I confess, for some moments I felt a secret joy in the thought that I was going to show our enemies how, under the walls of Paris, a son of France, a Christian Brother, knew how to die relieving the wounded. This lofty joy I experienced, as I suddenly marched right towards them. And, to give them a sure aim, I walked in the very middle of the road, holding my flag aloft. I expected every moment to receive a bullet. I was disappointed; they did not fire."

The Abbé Renaudière followed the zealous Brother, facing death. After some parleying with a Prussian officer, they advanced to where a French soldier was lying badly wounded. With difficulty they raised him up, and assisted him to return. The kind religious begged the Prussian to go with him to the relief of their wounded soldier dying in the ditch. As soon as they reached the spot, Brother Hyacinthe jumped into the trench where he was crouched, and the Abbé raised the cloth that covered his face.

Poor fellow! he was at first terribly frightened when he saw the black-robed figure. But the Brother, smiling kindly, gave him some wine and water to drink. With surprise and gratitude, he looked at his unknown benefactors. Two of his comrades, who had come to seek him, thankfully received a share of the wine and water, and the remainder was given to the wounded man. In this the dear Brother gave the Prussians a lesson in Christian charity and benevolence.

Each one then went his way, with the exception of the soldier with the broken leg. He had to remain where he was, but was consoled with the promise of their speedy return.

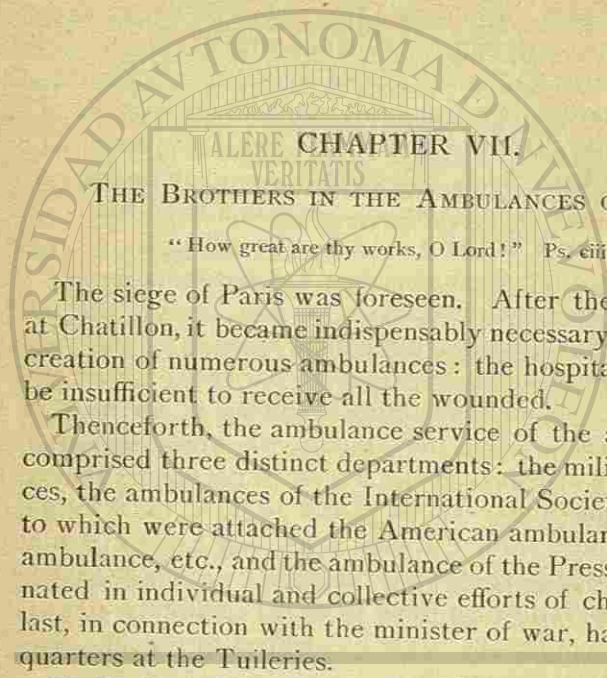
On reaching the trenches, the first thing Brother Hyacinthe heard was a cry of indignation: a Prussian ball had just struck a soldier about ten paces from him, right in the fore-

head. The Abbé ran to him, for he was dying. Brother Hyacinthe a third time crossed the ditch with two of his colleagues, bearing a stretcher: he was going to the wounded man. The latter was hardly placed on the stretcher when the bullets began to whistle again, this time taking the ambulance on its left flank. But the men of God preserved their calmness and coolness. They had generously made the sacrifice of their lives on leaving their beloved community; they continued their march, without heeding the balls passing over their heads as if the ambulance flag had been a target.

The stretcher was cumbersome, the body heavy, the way long and rough. At last the Brothers reached the trenches; there a soldier came to their aid. All four carried the stretcher, the wounded man himself holding up the flag. At the second trench, seeing the difficulty the stretcher-carriers experienced in crossing the ditch, despite the danger they incurred with the bullets whistling around them, the Brothers took the wounded soldier in their arms, and carried him to the carriage which conveyed him to Paris. On reaching Paris themselves, they returned to their community, tired in body, but glad at heart. They had helped to save the lives of several of their countrymen.







CHAPTER VII.

THE BROTHERS IN THE AMBULANCES OF PARIS.

“How great are thy works, O Lord!” Ps. ciii. 24.

The siege of Paris was foreseen. After the engagements at Chatillon, it became indispensably necessary to think of the creation of numerous ambulances: the hospitals would soon be insufficient to receive all the wounded.

Thenceforth, the ambulance service of the army of Paris comprised three distinct departments: the military ambulances, the ambulances of the International Society of Geneva, to which were attached the American ambulance, the Italian ambulance, etc., and the ambulance of the Press, which originated in individual and collective efforts of charity. These last, in connection with the minister of war, had their headquarters at the Tuileries.

On the line of investment, five posts at regular distances, composed of doctors and stretcher-carriers in sufficient numbers, and provided with the materials necessary for the first dressing of wounds, were in operation from the month of October. These posts were also furnished, for the removal of the sick and wounded, with temporary beds, and means of rapid and comfortable conveyance.

With the organization of these ambulances commenced, for the Brothers, that long campaign of devotedness which excited the admiration of all, and proved, once more, that

patriotism and religion, far from being incompatible, combine and harmonize admirably in the heart of man.

“It is absolutely necessary,” said the committee of the Press ambulance, “to make an appeal to intelligent persons to care for the sick or wounded in our hospitals, to give them nourishment and medicine at proper times. The first care of the committee, unlike other relief societies, was to remove secular women from our wards and to keep them in the laundry; not that the woman of the world lacks the qualities necessary for the services required by the wounded, but because she brings with her the cares of her family and of her own private affairs, that she is surrounded by relations and friends who often seriously interfere with the discharge of her duty in relation to the sick.

“The religious, on the contrary, disengaged from all the cares of life, has but one thought and one end: it is that of realizing, in the most perfect manner possible, the ideal which fills her soul: devotion and sacrifice. For all these reasons, the Sisters were preferred to women of the world.

“To aid the Sisters, it was necessary to have male nurses, active, devoted, animated with the same sentiments as the Sisters, under whose direction they were to be placed. We, therefore, made an appeal to the Christian Brothers. We are happy to say they nobly responded to our call. Not only did from 250 to 300 Brothers accompany us to the battle-field, but 225 to 250 of them served as nurses or infirmarians; these, with the Sisters of Hope (*Sœurs de l'Espérance*), constituted a model hospital, and we can safely affirm that, whether in a moral or physical point of view, nowhere did the victims of the war receive greater care or attention than in our ambulance.” Who can ever tell the sublime acts, the touching sacrifices of self-immolation, those kind religious accomplished during the six months of the siege?



The Brothers gave up to the wounded their dormitories, refectories, study-halls, in fact, all the best apartments in their houses. In those spacious dwellings the air circulated freely; the beds were not crowded together as in the hospitals, the patients felt at home, and their religious attendants bent over their couches with the reverence and respect ever testified by the true disciples of Jesus Christ for those who suffer.

*The Eastern Ambulance.*

The Brothers first took care of the fatigued or wounded soldiers in the temporary establishment known as the "Ambulances of the Northern and Eastern Railroads." In the Eastern ambulance, established in the Brothers' house in the Faubourg St. Martin, under the patronage of Count de Flavigny, 1186 wounded soldiers received, from the 18th till the 26th of August, the chief care their state required.

Twenty-five Brothers were there employed. Some watched by night for the trains bringing in the soldiers. On the arrival of these trains, the religious were all at work helping to convey the wounded to their hospital, assisting the doctors to dress the wounds of those brought in, and giving, with tender care, the necessary remedies and refreshments.

From that provisional ambulance the wounded were next day transferred to the several hospitals of the city.

By the 14th of September, 1831 soldiers or mobiles had lodged in the ambulance. Of all these, there were none who showed themselves hostile to religious ideas. At meal-time these brave fellows were not ashamed to make the sign of the cross; it was plain it was something they had been accustomed to do from childhood. They were regular at their morning and evening prayers. Their crucifixes, scapulars

and medals were prized as only the truly pious can prize these precious reminders of God's mercy, and the loving care our Blessed Lady has for her clients. When shown to the chapel, they reverently knelt down in the holy place, and on leaving it, tearfully remarked: "Oh, how much better it is to be here than in the barracks!"

The thought of God was cheering and consoling to their heart. Many edifying instances of faith and piety and religious resignation were seen during those sad days in that ambulance of the Brothers in the Faubourg of St. Martin.

The Prussians were now advancing on Paris in three columns. Communications with outside points were cut off; the explosions which were heard in rapid succession gave sorrowful notice to the capital that, in a few hours, the last of the bridges would be destroyed and Paris encircled by a belt of fire.

The provisional ambulance at the railroad station could be of no further use, and was, therefore, to be broken up; but the Brothers, whose charity could not remain a single day inactive during the long months of the siege, thought of a purpose to which it might be put. On the 13th of September, the revered Brother Philippe, hearing it was in contemplation to form an ambulance for the employes of the railroad who might be wounded in defending the station and the company's property, wrote, offering the Brothers to take charge of it. The offer was thankfully accepted in a courteous letter from the director of the railroad companies.

*The Ambulance of the Northern Dépôt.*

The provisional ambulance of the Northern Dépôt was established on the 26th of August, and remained open till the 14th of September, the time of the investment. During the



first four days, it received 400 soldiers who had escaped from the disasters of Wissemburg, Sedan, etc.

From the 30th of August till the 5th of September, it received 594, without counting 1500 mobile guards from Champagne, to whom the Brothers gave refreshments. The gentleness and patience of those young soldiers were truly edifying.

A pleasing incident occurred to the Brothers. Two generals were the first to receive their charitable care. As the Brother Director was excusing himself to these superior officers for the poor accommodation they had for them, being obliged to give them soup from coarse, common bowls, one of the gentlemen graciously said: "It is true the vessel is a very common one, but one thing is very fine, Brother, as we all know well, although you may not be conscious of it; and that is, the care you Brothers have taken, and are taking, of our soldiers in the ambulance, and on the battle-field: it is *simply admirable!*"

We cannot refrain from recording a conversation between the Brother Director and a young soldier, a child of the South. Let not the enemies of Christianity be mistaken: through all the obstacles, the changes, the faults of time, there is a progress of Christian faith, of Christian strength, a progress which, though incomplete, is real and fruit-bearing, full of vitality and hope for the future.

"Where do you come from?" asked the Brother Director.

"From the department of the Gard."

"What do you wish to eat?"

"What the Church allows on days of abstinence."

"Well! you can eat meat; it is past midnight, and in Paris there is leave for meat on Saturday."

"But I don't belong to Paris, and meat is not allowed on

Saturday in my diocese. I will content myself with a piece of bread."

Directions were given to bring him some bread and wine. "No wine, if you please," said the soldier. "I never drink it. I mean to keep up the old custom now, so that I may have nothing to repent of in case the good God brings me safe home again."

"You are mad," said a lieutenant; "you are exhausted with fatigue. To-morrow you may have to fight; you must keep up your strength, so you had better take a glass of wine."

"Lieutenant," said the abstemious man, respectfully, "is a soldier to break his word? If you had promised to drink no wine, would you drink it? Besides, the not drinking it does me no harm; you see I enjoy excellent health, and am never sick."

It was useless to argue the question with this admirable soldier, who strikingly reproduced in his own person the type of the ancient Gauls. He was served with bread and water. Before taking this more than frugal repast, he stood straight up, and, before all present, soldiers, doctors, and Brothers, blessed himself and said his grace in a low voice, but with piety and recollection. He then sat down to his bread and water with the simplicity of ancient times. "My friend," said the Brother Director to him, "it is good not to have human respect, but it is also wise to avoid all affectation in our practices of piety. Could you not have said your grace in a way that would not attract so much attention?"

"Perhaps you are right, Brother; but, then, there are so many cowards now-a-days who don't want to do anything for God, that I have long made up my mind to practise my religion in public as well as in private. Every day I see



people who are not ashamed to do evil: why should I be ashamed to do my duty as a Christian? Our fathers knew not the weakness of our times. I have resolved to show myself a Christian wherever I am. So much the worse for others if they don't do the same. At the day of judgment they will be more to be pitied than I." The Brother was astonished to find in a common soldier such lofty ideas on the subject of religion. He took pleasure in eliciting his honest replies.

"You have been a soldier before?" resumed the Director.

"Yes, for seven years."

"Did you act then as you now do?"

"Precisely. God has always been good to me. I have not to reproach myself with being ungrateful to Him."

"Had you no taunts or sarcasms to endure from your comrades?"

"Some, at first: my blood used to rise. But my firmness soon brought it to an end. When they saw I was in earnest about serving God, they ceased to annoy me."

"Are you glad to be called out again?"

"One is always glad to serve his country. I should be a bad Frenchman if I complained of marching against the enemy."

"Are your father and mother living?"

"Alas! no, I lost them early; but I console myself by thinking that their pilgrimage is over, and that they see God in heaven."

"What do you do for a living?"

"I have been a servant thirteen years in the same family. They took me back at the end of my term of service, and when I was leaving them the last time, they told me my place would be ready for me when I returned."

"Are you not afraid of dying?"

"Afraid of dying! A Christian need not dread the end of his miseries. I do not run to seek death, but neither do I fear to meet it, for I believe in the immortality of the soul."

Much more could be told of this brave soldier, whose piety and intelligence were a delight to the Brothers, and whose example was worthy to be followed by all his comrades.

The Northern Railroad ambulance was divided into five apartments: a large kitchen, two refectories, and two dormitories; the larger of the latter for the soldiers, the smaller for the officers. Some camp beds were placed in a separate room for the Brothers, when their duty permitted them a little rest. The whole service was divided amongst the Brothers: some were occupied with the wounded; others had charge of the kitchen and refectory; and each one, in his own department, discharged his duty so admirably, that, while nearly 4000 soldiers were received in the ambulance, no complaint was ever heard.

They considered the Brothers as their true friends. The Turcos had a very particular respect for them, and often, when no one else could control their fierce temper, a look or word from one of the Brothers was sufficient to appease their anger.

*Ambulance of the Legion of Honor (St. Denis).*

At the news of the disasters of the army, and that the Prussians were marching on Paris, the ladies of the Legion of Honor sent their pupils home to their families, and took the necessary steps to form, in two of their magnificent halls, an ambulance of sixty to eighty beds. They requested the Very Reverend Brother Philippe to give them ten or twelve Brothers to act as nurses. Although the post was likely to



be one of considerable danger, the Brothers did not hesitate ; on the 8th of September, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, eighty of them set out for St. Denis, where they were to join four other Brothers who were teaching in the town.

At first, the Legion of Honor ambulance was under the direction of the lady superintendent, but, on the 17th of September, the military authorities took possession of the establishment, proposing to establish there an ambulance of five or six hundred beds, and which, in case of a battle in the neighborhood, might receive twelve or fifteen hundred wounded.

Thenceforward, the situation of the Brothers was very different: they became mere auxiliaries, without any definite charge, and were placed in a false and uncertain position. Actuated by charity alone, they surmounted all obstacles, complied with every requirement, and did all the good that the occasion permitted. With what eagerness they seconded the chaplains in their holy ministry! How joyfully they assisted at the services in the chapel of the establishment! How they loved to chant the praises of God under those arches which had re-echoed with the voices of so many illustrious religious in days gone by!

By the 20th of October, the number of wounded was so much reduced that the Brothers were permitted to return to their classes in Paris, and to serve in some of the city ambulances that were still in the care of the congregation. On leaving the Legion of Honor ambulance, they received the thanks of the physicians and directors, together with a written certificate of the services they had rendered there. The lady superintendent also wrote to express her high appreciation of their intelligent and devoted labors in that ambulance.

*Ambulance of Passy.*

In the month of August, the Brothers received, in their boarding-school at Passy, one hundred and fifty old men, previously lodged in the hospitals. They afterwards established an ambulance of one hundred and fifty beds, which were constantly occupied. Twelve hundred soldiers, attended by the Brothers alone, were cured in this ambulance of Passy. They cared for the souls as well as the bodies of their patients; it was the delight of the soldiers, as soon as they were able, to join them in their religious exercises in the chapel.

The community of Passy had the misfortune to lose, during the siege, one of its most promising members, Brother Agilée Léon, scarcely twenty-one years of age. This excellent young man, beloved by all, was as fervent a religious as he was a good teacher; he was the joy of his brethren, and the consolation of his esteemed Director. One day, from his bed of pain, he heard the cannon roaring more violently than usual. Reminded thus of the woes of his country, he slowly spoke these words: "My God, I offer thee my sickness, my sufferings, my life, for the deliverance of France." He died, calm and serene, on the 21st of December.

*The St. Maurice Ambulance.*

The Saint Maurice ambulance, founded in the Mother-house, under the patronage of the Duchess of Magenta, wife of Marshal McMahon, became from the outset one of the chief ambulances of the Press. There, as at Passy, the Brothers acted as infirmarians. In a few days they had a regular hospital service in full operation.

Before the battles fought around Paris, it was only fever patients that were received there; but, in consequence of



the influx of wounded, it became necessary to get up some eighty-five beds for the surgical department. "The thing was done in a twinkling," says Dr. Decaisne; "the eighty-five beds were immediately occupied, and, in a few hours, the Brothers had provided everything that was wanted, and were dressing the wounds of our brave soldiers just as if they had never done anything else. Nothing was wanting except a surgeon, when Providence, pitying the anxiety of the poor Brothers, sent them, just in time, a man whom we have all learned to love and admire, Ricord himself, first in skill as in goodness of heart. The illustrious practitioner did, in a few hours, all that was most urgently necessary, so that we were enabled to wait till next day for the surgeon appointed to take charge of the ambulance."

In that blessed house, till then consecrated to prayer and seclusion, the young and the old vied with each other in zeal and devotedness to make the poor wounded in some degree forget their suffering.

The venerable Superior-General, Brother Philippe, forgetting his fourscore years, himself attended the sick, consoling and strengthening them with a simplicity, genial kindness, and exquisite gentleness that captivated all hearts.

He received the wounded on their arrival, helped to carry them to their beds, and undress them. Every day he distributed some little delicacy among them, contriving all sorts of things to please them. He rejoiced when rewards were granted to his dear wounded.\* He, so austere and so forgetful of self, feared not to recommend to the authorities those of his patients who had distinguished themselves on the battle-field. He publicly honored them before their

\* Three crosses of Honor and several medals were awarded to the wounded of Oudinot street.

comrades. He got up a little festival after each distribution of rewards. When he appeared in the wards, every face beamed with joy. He stopped at every bed, and had a kind, loving word for each patient. He propagated the Catholic faith by means of charity, presenting in his own venerable person the true type of the Divine Comforter, Jesus Christ.

And when the wounded, whom he had received with affectionate cordiality, were cured and about to leave, he had for each some words of encouragement, and a fatherly blessing. He pointed out the line of duty, and planted in the hearts of all the germs of those deeds that make illustrious citizens.

The 1st of January was a solemn day in the Oudinot street ambulance. After Mass, all the soldiers who were able to rise, assembled in the grand hall of the house. There a sergeant-major of the Côte d'Or mobiles, decorated for his gallant conduct at Champigny, in the name of all the patients of the ambulance read to Brother Philippe an address expressive of their admiration for his unbounded charity, and their gratitude for the many favors they had received at his hands and the hands of all the Brothers.

At its conclusion, Brother Philippe, in his gentle, endearing way, thanked them for their expressions of kindness and good will.

Count Sérurier, vice-president of the Relief Society, and delegate of the minister of war and of the navy, wrote to Brother Philippe wishing him, his worthy assistant, and all the Brothers of Oudinot street, a happy New Year. In common with all France, he was penetrated with admiration, veneration and gratitude for the example of patriotism and abnegation which the Institute was giving in the trials and afflictions of their country. The charity of the Brothers



of Oudinot street did not confine itself within the walls of their own house; it extended to all the misfortunes of the capital. On the last days of December, Brother Philippe sent to M. Arnaud (of Ariège) a piece of black cloth to make clothing for the poor of the seventh ward. "I return you thanks," wrote the mayor to the venerable Superior, "for the piece of excellent cloth you have sent us for the poor of our ward. We are the more indebted to you that you are covering them with your own garments."

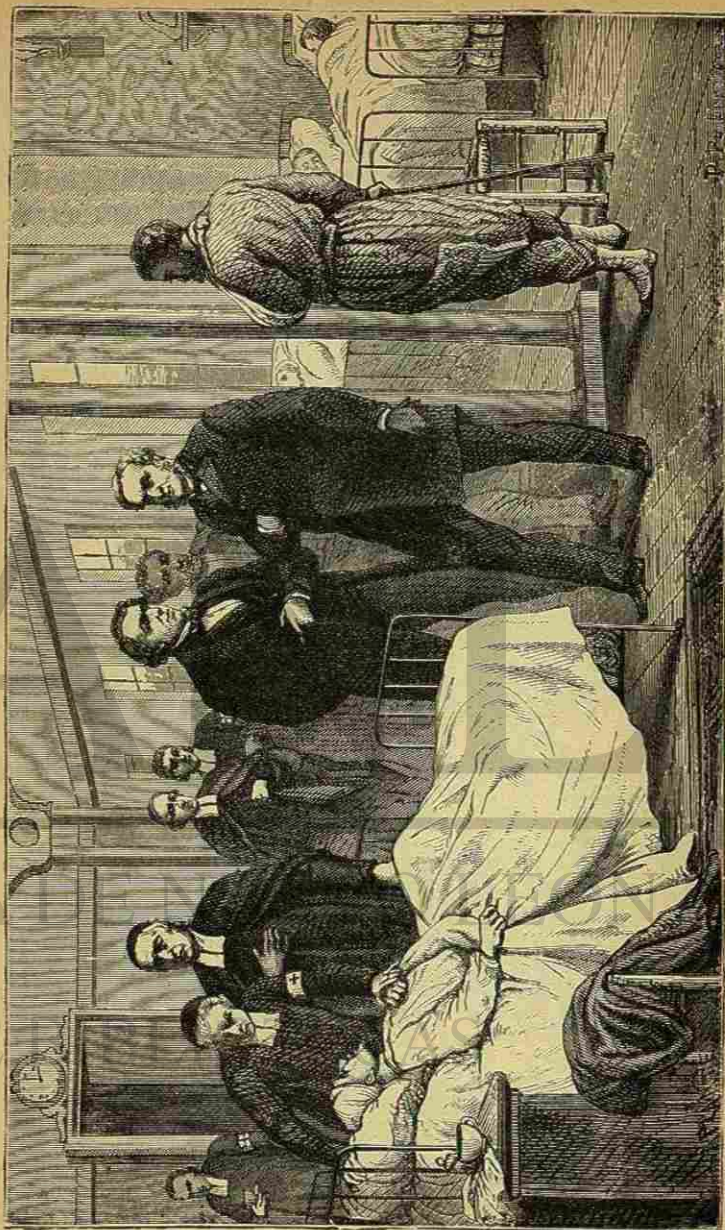
On the 12th of January, desirous of contributing as far as he could towards the purchase of woollen clothing for the army of Paris, Brother Philippe sent M. Arnaud a cheque for 1000 francs for that object. This generous donation was acknowledged by letters of thanks from the magistrate of the district, and from the Relief Society.

On the 18th of January, Brother Philippe sent a similar sum for the relief of the seventh ward. The charity of the Brothers grew with the miseries of the people.

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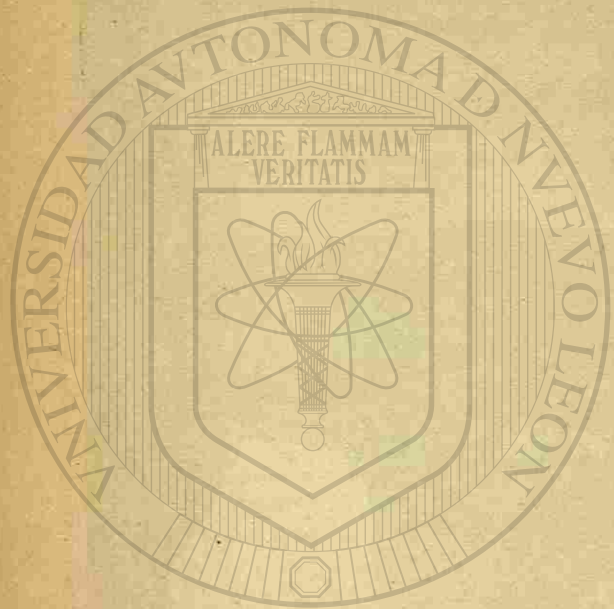
During the Commune, the committee of the Press ambulance kept up two services in the St. Maurice ambulance, one of medicine, and one of surgery.

In the last days of the struggle, the pavilions at Longchamps, involved in a network of barricades, and threatened by the bombs and shells from Mont Valerien, had to be evacuated. M. Cotte, director of the Longchamps ambulance, demanded of the authorities the Mother-house of the Brothers in Oudinot street. On the 19th and 20th of May, M. Demarquay installed there his different services and an immense quantity of ambulance stores, with a view to prevent their being taken by the Federals. The very same evening,



DOCTORS RECORD AND DEMARQUAY IN CONSULTATION.



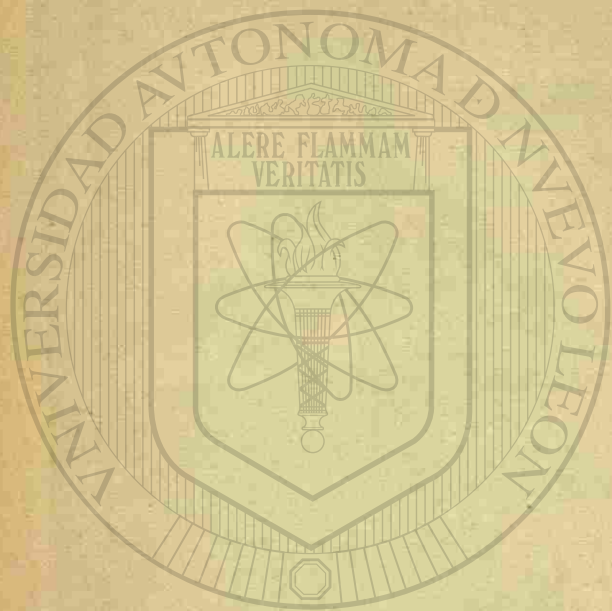


UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE



DR. RICORD DECORATING BROTHER PHILIPPE AT THE ST. MAURICE AMBULANCE.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

a company of the 122d Federals invaded the Mother-house, demanding the *concealed Brothers!* This time the Communists had to bend before the firmness of the gentlemen of the Press ambulance. They withdrew, saying they would return on the morrow. In face of all the Brothers had done and were doing for their country in her hour of need, comment on such dastardly conduct is unnecessary. But the days of the insurrection were numbered. On the 21st of May, the army of Versailles entered the city by the St. Cloud gate. The wounded were soon after taken from Oudinot street to Longchamps, and the Brothers again took possession of their house. Eleven hundred and eighteen sick and wounded had been taken care of in the St. Maurice ambulance.

The following letter of Dr. Horteloup will give some idea of the estimation in which the Brothers of the St. Maurice ambulance were held, and how highly their services were valued:

"I am happy to have again an opportunity of writing of the Brothers of Oudinot street as they deserve. After my friend, M. Ricord, had established an ambulance in the Mother-house of the Christian Brothers, I was for seven months amongst them, and I can truly say, greater devotedness, zeal, charity, and self-abnegation, could not possibly be shown.

"You should have seen the activity of those dear Brothers, transformed into stretcher-carriers, running hither and thither on the field of battle, picking up the wounded, while shot and shell rained around them.

"They had asked it as a favor to go out on the field; and neither the wounds which several of them had received, nor the death of others, could paralyze their energies or dampen their courage. Their chief is a model who might well in-



spire them, for he never quailed either before the enemy's cannon, or the envoys of the Commune: I have seen him as cool amid flying shells, as when he was telling hard truths to the messengers of Assi and of Raoul Rigault.

"When speaking thus, we must not forget Brother Archange, Brother Exupérien, and so many others who, in those most trying circumstances, proved themselves possessed of the highest talents as organizers, administrators, and managers.

"See, above all, Brother Philippe, the good and excellent Superior-General. He is modesty personified; he is the living portrait of the man described by Horace:

*Justum et tenacem propositi virum. . . .  
Et si tractum illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinae.*

"I can see him now running to me at the moment when a shell, breaking into a dormitory near my wards, had shaken the whole house and broken several windows. 'You are not hurt, dear doctor?' says he; 'I was afraid you were wounded.'—'How could I be afraid in such good company?' said I laughing, and shaking his outstretched hand, as I pointed to a fine portrait of him by Horace Vernet, which hung in that hall. He smiled and turned away, while I quietly continued my visit to the patients.

"When the ambulance was closed by superior orders, I received not a word of thanks from the authorities; but the Brothers amply made up for it, for they all testified the regret they felt in seeing me no longer every morning, and that regret I shared from the bottom of my heart. I shall cherish as long as I live the recollection of my attendance in that house, and I hope the Brothers will not forget me.

"B. HORTELOUP,

*"Honorary Physician, Hotel Dieu, Paris."*

*Ambulance attached to that of St. Maurice.*

On the 17th of January, Mgr. Bäuer asked the Most Reverend Brother Philippe for some Brothers to serve in an ambulance opened in University street by the Press committee, and where the sick had as yet had no help.

Several Brothers were immediately detached from the St. Maurice ambulance. They found in two unheated rooms, in 159 University street, some sixty sick persons suffering from cold and hunger, without any sort of relief. Part of the Brothers, regardless of the Prussian shells that were raining from all quarters, and the great severity of the weather, retraced their way to the Mother-house. The nearly exhausted pharmacy and provisions of the St. Maurice ambulance were placed at their disposal. Laden with a sufficient quantity of medicines and refreshments, the Brothers went back with lighter hearts to their poor patients so anxiously expecting their return.

Amongst the Brothers employed in the University street ambulance, although all were devoted in their apostolate of charity, there was one whose name cannot be passed over in silence. This was Brother Amadeus Marie. Being charged, like so many of his brethren, with hospital duty, he distinguished himself by the most remarkable instances of heroic devotion.

Amongst other charitable acts, was the saving of the life of a mobile guardsman, the father of six children: his skull had been fractured; his case had been reluctantly pronounced hopeless by the doctors. Brother Amadeus resolved that, with God's help, the poor man should not die; and so constant was his attention to him, so skilful, so efficient his care, that the patient actually recovered, and soon returned to his home, blessing God and the dear Brother Amadeus.



Many other remarkable instances are on record of the indefatigable zeal and indomitable energy which this heroic son of De La Salle brought to the service of his sick and wounded countrymen. The doctors disputed among themselves as to who should have Brother Amadeus; always content, always smiling, he imparted to the patients somewhat of his own happy nature. He was the honor and the angel of the house.

On the 3d of February, the sick were removed from the University street ambulance to that of Oudinot street, carrying with them the warmest remembrance of the Brothers who had so well cared for them there.

*St. Paul Ambulance.*

The ambulance of St. Paul, under the Press committee, was almost entirely filled with sick and wounded during the latter half of the siege, dating from the battles of Champigny. After those terrible days, the number of beds had to be increased. The Brothers here had double duty to perform, for the classes in the St. Paul school were kept up during the siege. Those who were not employed in teaching never left the bedside of the patients day or night, acting by turns as nurse, reader, servant, cook, and preacher too, for, as may be well imagined, they had special care of souls. They lit up with a ray of hope the sickness and suffering with which the war had peopled their houses. How kind and affectionate they were to the Breton mobiles! They grieved with them; they wept with them; they fought their home-sickness by sharing it, talking to them unceasingly of the moors and gray hamlets of old Bretagne, that country of faith, and of trust in God!

To the ambulance of St. Paul was attached Brother Guil-

laume's famous canteen-kitchen. About the middle of September, the municipality of the fourth ward requested the Brother Director of St. Paul's commercial school to organize a canteen-kitchen. The Brothers, notwithstanding the cares of the ambulance and the labors of the school, accepted the charge of providing for the wants of the poor population of the district. With Brother William's wonderful executive abilities, all was easy, even what to others might seem impracticable; and so it was speedily in working order. God alone knows how this excellent religious managed to obtain the necessary provisions at such a time, but he did it. As many as three thousand persons were served there in one day. During the whole time of the siege, Brother William rose every morning at three o'clock, so as to have his cooking done, and all in readiness to commence the distribution at eight o'clock precisely.

*Arts and Trades' Ambulance.*

This ambulance was installed on the 1st of September and placed at the disposal of Dr. Ricord, who took charge of organizing the whole medical service. Two Sisters from the Convent of Hope (*de l'Espérance*) and seven Brothers of the Christian Schools gave their intelligent and devoted attention to the wounded.

The Brothers showed themselves both brave and gentle. To them were due the perfect order that reigned in the wards, and the home air one breathed there. Their rule was mild and paternal. They were kind to all, thoughtful, charitable, attentive. They ennobled with their help, and still more with their prayers, the cause to which they were devoted.

The military ambulance of St. Clotilde, which was opened in the house of the ladies of that name, on the 15th of



September, remained in operation six months, that is to say, till the April following. The Brothers of St. Margaret's school were placed at the disposal of the authorities to take care of the wounded, who were placed in their class-rooms. While they were busily engaged in organizing their ambulance, a new mayor was appointed for the eleventh ward, and with him new ideas, anti-religious principles, were imposed on the people of the Faubourg St. Antoine.

On the 19th of September, a free-thinking dame presented herself at St. Margaret's, and introduced herself as the directress of the ambulance which the Brothers had arranged in their class-rooms. She had the impudence to declare *she* would allow the Brothers to serve in the ambulance on condition that they *did not speak of religion to the patients, offer them neither crucifix nor holy water, nor introduce a priest among them.*

There was a refinement of cruelty in making such a demand of the Brothers *in their own house*, to say nothing of the black ingratitude and the detestable spirit of tyranny it manifested. As may well be supposed, the Brothers made no impious bargain to let Frenchmen, marked with the seal of baptism, die in their own house without God, without hope. Having thus failed to establish an ambulance in their own school-house, as had been intended, the Brothers offered their services in seven different ambulances, among others, in that of the ladies of St. Clotilde, No. 99 Reuilly street.

In this ambulance they took care of 144 sick and wounded soldiers, nearly all of whom recovered. The convalescents heard Mass on Sundays in the parish church, where they edified every one by their gravity and recollection. The heroic virtues, the unchanging mildness of the dear Brothers, brought about numerous conversions.

On the 4th of March, the Superioress of St. Clotilde wrote to Brother Dagobertus, Director of St. Marguerite:

“MY VERY DEAR BROTHER DIRECTOR:

“When your dear Brothers left the St. Clotilde ambulance, I requested them to convey to you the expression of our gratitude. I am sure they have duly delivered my message; nevertheless, I feel I ought to thank you myself for your kindness in lending us your excellent Brothers to help us care for the souls and bodies of our dear sick and wounded.

“It was a heavenly mission they fulfilled to those good soldiers, who loved them with all their heart. What they would not tell you themselves, I write for your consolation. Your Brothers have left among us an odor of virtue which shall follow us everywhere, to encourage us in trying days. Never shall we lose the remembrance of their perfect abnegation, their charity—so humble, so simple, so devoted. You are happy, dear Brother, to possess such religious.

“I beg you to permit a pious exchange of prayers and good works to be established between our two communities: we can give you but little, 'tis true, but, I assure you, it will be from our heart.

“Be so good as to accept, etc.

“MARIE PAULINE,

“Superioress.”

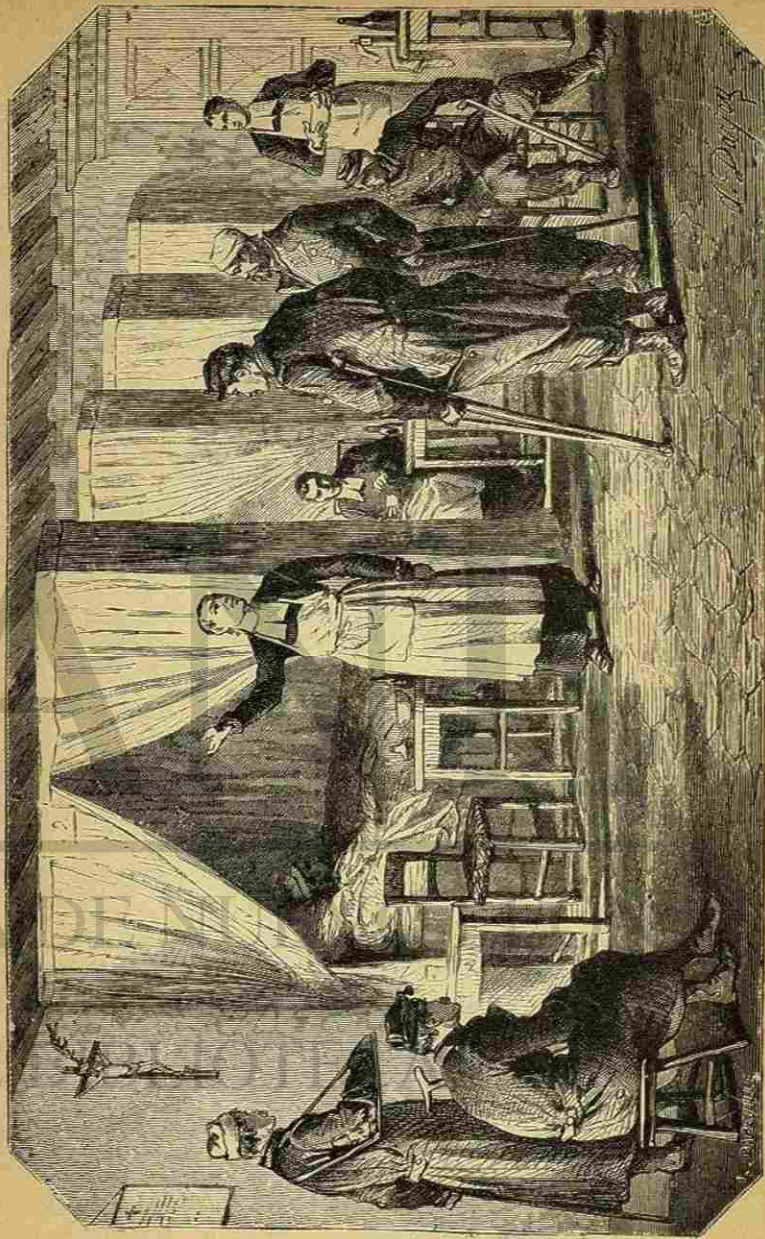
The Brothers' ambulance of Grenelle was organized on the last of August, under the military authorities, as a branch of the Gros Caillou hospital. The number of soldiers admitted into this ambulance was 680. The forty who died whilst the Brothers were in charge, all received the last sacraments. Most of those cured made their peace with God before leaving the house.



A soldier, named Blanc Adrien, arrived at the ambulance about the middle of September; he was attacked by the black small-pox. In a few days he was reduced to the last extremity, having lost all bodily strength. "There is nothing more to be done," said Dr. Audhoui; "this patient's body is in such a state of putrefaction, that in twelve hours he will have ceased to live." The Brother in charge of the patient insisted on knowing if something else could not be tried. "I tell you he is already in a hopeless state. Nothing would be of any use," replied the doctor; but he added: "Still, if any one had the courage to pierce all the pustules, and afterwards wash him lightly with water, he might possibly recover. But I doubt it."

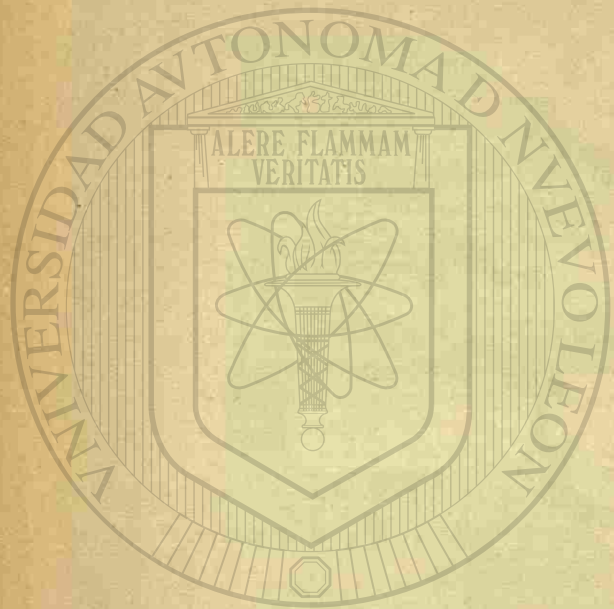
The Brother at once hastened to make a little bistoury, as thin as possible. In a few minutes he went to work, having no opposition from the patient, who was perfectly insensible. The witnesses of this tedious operation appeared astonished at the devotion of the heroic religious. A soldier exclaimed in admiration, "I would not do that work for 100 francs an hour!" "And I," said the Brother Infirmarian, "would not do it for a million; but for God's sake I do it with pleasure!" The disciple of the Venerable De La Salle silences in himself all the suggestions of natural repugnance; he devotes himself for God and his fellowmen. Blanc Adrien recovered; during his convalescence the doctor often reminded him that he owed his life to the courage of the Brother Infirmarian. The poor fellow needed no reminder of the fact; he showed himself truly sensible of his obligation to the charitable religious.

In the Bullier ambulance, established by the military authorities, eleven Brothers entered as nurses. After a while this ambulance became so exposed to danger from the shells



4 soldier exclaimed in admiration: "I would not do that work for one hundred francs an hour!"—"And I," said the Brother Infirmarian—"I would not do it for a million; but for God's sake I do it with pleasure."





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of the besiegers, that it was found necessary to remove it to the meadows of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. This ambulance was closed on the 8th of March. About 500 sick and wounded were there attended by the Brothers, and some forty prepared for death.

In what was called the *Irish* ambulance of the Press committee, so called because it was opened in the Irish College, the Brothers were in charge, and showed themselves truly admirable in generous self-devotedness and heroic charity.

In this ambulance, Brother Berrier died a martyr to the service of the sick and wounded. For fully four or five months he remained, at the peril of his life, in a fever ward where the patients would have no other but him to attend them. He sank at last under the disease he had so often combated in others. He received Holy Communion with great fervor and peace, and died murmuring the sweet name of Jesus. Dear Brother Berrier was lamented by all. The patients mourned for one who had so tenderly nursed them. The doctors were loud in praise of a Brother who was, they said, God-like in his charity; the administrator of the Irish foundations wished his name to have an honored place in the annals of the siege of Paris.

The following ambulances of Paris were also served by the Brothers: that of Tournefort, established in the house of the Ladies of Mercy; that of the *Société des Dépôts et de Comptes Courants*; the ambulance *de la Paix*; that of *Notre Dame de la Plaisance*, and that of the *Ministère de la Justice*, Place Vendôme. In that of St. Nicholas d'Issy, some remarkable occurrences took place. On the 18th of March, liberty, honor, law, and institutions fell into the hands of the men who had assumed power; it was the reign of crime in idiocy, and hatred in fear. On the 1st of May, the St. Nicholas house was



invaded by the Federalists. The Brothers sent the boarders home; the shells fired from the surrounding heights rendered the place untenable. The infirmary, converted into an ambulance, received over one hundred and fifty men of the national guard, who were taken to Paris after the first dressing. The grand hall became an amphitheatre; a great number of dead were exposed there. The "Defenders of the Republic," then the 64th, 172d, and 248th battalions, successively lodged in the establishment. Another battalion also came there, but had to fly before the regular army. The Brothers boarded the staff and prepared the food for the common Federalists. Those wretches established a magazine of powder and projectiles in the cellars. They carried off mattresses, bolsters, and coverlets, which were never seen again. The horse belonging to the house was likewise stolen in the name of the Commune.

In the Press ambulances established in other parts of the city, the Brothers of the Christian Schools left touching memories of Catholic zeal and charity. Day and night they attended the sick with unwearying care, and that perfect self-devotedness which is characteristic of their Order, and a part of their very life.

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M. DE LA GRANGERIE, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE PRESS AMBULANCE, ADDRESSING THE CONVALESCENTS IN ONE OF THE PAVILIONS OF LONGCHAMPS.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE LONGCHAMPS PAVILIONS.

It was on the 19th of January that the Longchamps Pavilions were placed at the disposal of the Press ambulances. M. Ricord, charged with the entire organization, at once asked Brother Philippe for a considerable number of Brothers to act as nurses, and he himself presided at their installation. The great hospital was but a short time unoccupied. Brother Exupérien, Director of Novices in Paris, was placed in charge as chief manager.

The natural kindness of the Brothers made them soon gain the confidence of the sick. Who could resist religious so gentle and charitable? The Brothers were to the sick what the Apostles were to the first Christians. Dr. Ricord, when doing the honors of the ambulance to visitors, never failed to pay a tribute to the merit of his infirmarians. "The Brothers have done everything for us," he would say; "without them we could not have done half so much good, even with double the staff we have."

A Brother once asked him whether things were going on to his satisfaction. "My dear Brother," he answered in the kindest tone, "you do much more than we expected. Your devotedness surprises us. Ah! there is in the religious sentiment a strength, an elevation, a grandeur, that subdues and astonishes me."

Dr. Demarquay spoke in no less flattering terms. "What



should we have done without the Brothers?" he exclaimed. "It is they who have enabled us to do good on so vast a scale."

The work at Longchamps was laborious by day, but it was much more so by night. Many of the wounded required unceasing care. Yet all these duties, painful as they might be, were faithfully discharged. It was consoling to the Brother Director to find, in his nightly rounds, all his Brothers at their post: this one watching by the bedside of a wounded man, that one praying for the soldiers; here, another attending to the stoves; all ready, at the first signal, to hasten to any patient who might require their assistance.

The number of the wounded, the arrangement of the wards, the concourse of intelligent and devoted men, allowed many things to be done at Longchamps that would have been difficult, or even impracticable, elsewhere. To instruct and improve the moral condition of the soldiers, while amusing them, conferences were held at Longchamps, at which all the wounded who were able to do so regularly attended. M. de la Grangerie, secretary-general of the Press ambulances, kindly undertook to give lectures, twice a week, on the history of France . . . . Other discourses on Natural History, Industry, Travels, etc., were successfully given, to the great satisfaction of the numerous staff of the Longchamps ambulance, and also that of Decamp street, who asked permission to be present on these occasions. Numerous games were also introduced by the Brothers, ever anxious to cheer and amuse the convalescents.

The soldiers showed themselves religiously disposed. At their request, the hospital rule was enforced in the ambulance. Morning and evening, before and after meals, a short prayer was said aloud by a Brother in every ward; all the wound-

ed joined, and not the slightest irreverence was ever shown. On Sunday, holy Mass was said at the most convenient hour. Those able to rise, never failed to be present. It was touching to see those poor, infirm men, with their crutches, their arms in a sling, their heads bandaged, praying calmly in the holy place, following the service with interest, and joining with fervor in the hymns that were sung. Dr. Ricord, on witnessing the scene, was deeply moved. "Oh how beautiful is religion!" he exclaimed; "what a comforting and saving influence it exercises on souls! If Mottu were here now, he would not be so ready to take down the crucifix."

When the insurrection of March 18th broke out, the Longchamps Pavilions contained 500, between sick, wounded and convalescents. The Press committee found itself in a very embarrassing and critical position, by the installation in the Hotel de Ville of a usurping and criminal power. Dr. Ricord was enjoying a few days of well-earned rest in the country. In his absence, his friend, Dr. Demarquay, had taken charge, and he judged it best to continue at Longchamps, even under the inauspicious reign of the Commune, the charitable mission of the Press.

The victims of this fratricidal war, and most of their relatives, cherished the strongest prejudices against the Brothers. Some said: "They will give us up to the Versaillists; they will put us in prison;" others: "They'll make us go to confession; they will take no care of us." Numerous complaints were carried to the Commune; spies on spies were sent, and investigation after investigation made. At last the truth broke on those darkened eyes, and the Communists began to do justice to the heroic nurses of the sick and the wounded. By patience, kindness, and charity, the Brothers



disarmed their enemies, their detractors; their great policy consisted in the fulfilment of the Gospel precept: "Do good to all." The most fanatical Communists were the object of the greatest care, the most delicate attention. Esteem and affection soon replaced distrust and hatred. Strange to say, not only the private guardsmen, but the officers and commanders shared these sentiments of gratitude and admiration for the devoted Brothers.

In the first days of April, some half score of officers of the Commune visited the Longchamps ambulance. They inspected the several pavilions with an air of great authority. In one ward nearly full of national guards, the commander of the party found himself face to face with one of his comrades: "Do you want anything?" "My dear sir," said the man in the bed, "we are all of opinion here that we would not be so well taken care of anywhere else." All the others declared the same; the agent of the municipal authorities had to bow to the Brother Director in token of satisfaction.

Some days after, Citizen Ostyn, a member of the Commune, went likewise on a visit of inspection to Longchamps. He saw the order and cleanliness of everything, and heard the unanimous testimony of all the National Guards in favor of the Brothers.

A major of Montmartre, wounded in both legs, asked to speak with him. "Citizen," said he, in a loud voice, in presence of Dr. Demarquay, M. de la Grangerie, and several others, "I have to complain." Every one looked astonished. "Of what?" demanded Ostyn. "The Brothers are too good to us; they spoil us. Their kindness and attention are beyond all bounds." Hearing the same testimony from all, Citizen Ostyn was compelled to thank the Brothers for their care of the patients, without regard to opinions. Alas! here

below nothing but misery is complete. On the 18th of April, the dear religious were to receive the reward of their zeal. They were ordered to quit the Longchamps ambulance. "No more priests! no more religious!" such was the cry of the hydra. The churches were profaned, the ministers of the altar imprisoned. God was to be torn from the hearts of the people, in order to govern them better; say rather, that they might be tyrannized over more easily. Little did they care for their welfare, or their comfort. After having forbidden the Brothers entrance to the schools, they next drove them from the bedside of the sick and wounded. The Brothers that had watched over them so faithfully, so tenderly, that had soothed and lightened their darkest hours, and by their devotedness had led them again to health, or, when they were to die, smoothed their passage to eternity! No wonder the expulsion of these holy, self-sacrificing men from the Longchamps ambulance threw all the patients, especially the Federals, into the utmost consternation. All were urgent in their entreaties that the Brothers might be restored to them. Petitions were signed in every ward. It was curious to see men, so recently the supporters and defenders of an anti-religious cause, demanding the assistance of those who served them in the name of religion.

Knowing that Citizen Roussel, delegated to the ambulances, had broken all the crucifixes in other ambulances, it was thought wise to take away those of Longchamps, fearing to provoke an odious profanation. The Commune turned a deaf ear to the threats and entreaties of their own sick and wounded at Longchamps. A Garibaldian of very advanced opinions would not remain at Longchamps after the Brothers' expulsion. He had himself at once removed to the ambulance of the Grand Orient. Interesting himself in three



young Brothers who had been extremely kind to him, he resolved to facilitate their escape from Paris. Unable to write himself, he dictated a letter addressed to the commissary of the Menilmontant district. The letter had its effect. The commissary gave the passport necessary for leaving Paris. The three *protégés* of the grateful Garibaldian succeeded in getting safely away from the city, which was then but a vast prison, soon to become a field of slaughter.

Religious service was suspended in Longchamps from the 18th of March till the 23d of May. During that time, how many wounded appeared before God! Almost all these men would have died a Christian death, had they been cared for by the Brothers.

Ten other ambulances in Paris had no other nurses, no other attendants, than the worthy sons of the Venerable De La Salle. No suffering was too great for them to relieve, no act of devotedness went beyond their will. These were the incomparable men whom the Communists strove to banish from the schools and the camps. To break the harmony of society with religion, is to deny the natural instinct of the heart, and to reach, by the deification of man, the last extreme of human folly. They who know not how to invoke God, end, sooner or later, by being the slaves of a despot; it is for atheistical people that tyrants are made. "If a nation wishes to be free," says De Tocqueville, "it must have belief; and if it have not faith, it must *serve*."

A remarkable cure was effected in the Longchamps ambulance, through the intercession of the Venerable Jean Baptiste De La Salle. A young soldier, terribly wounded, was brought to the ambulance; at first his case seemed to progress favorably; then grave symptoms set in, and the surgeons gave up all hope of saving him. One of them said

nothing short of a miracle could cure him, and, he added, he had never seen one performed. A Brother, standing at the patient's bed, heard the remark. The word *miracle* roused his faith. He had a filial reverence for the Founder of his Order. "Who knows," thought he, "but Providence may have brought this about in order to manifest anew the power and glory of that great servant of God?" From the back of a picture he got a piece of the habit of his blessed Father. With this precious relic, he went to the patient, and while he told him that human science admitted itself powerless to save him, still he believed he might be cured. "God is the master of science and of life," he said. "He sometimes grants to his Saints the power of raising the dead, and of bringing back to life and health those whom men despaired of saving. Have confidence in our blessed Father; he has already wrought miracles, and we are all going to beg of him to work one for you."

The patient listened with attention, and was most willing to place himself under the protection of the patron of youth. He piously received the last sacraments, and put all his trust in heaven. The precious relic was applied to his wounds. Soon after he sank into a refreshing sleep. During the night the Brothers faithfully prayed and watched over him. The next morning the doctors were amazed at the change in his condition. All the threatening symptoms were gone and he was pronounced out of danger. By the time the novena which the Brothers made for him was finished, he was able to be up. Filled with profound gratitude to the Venerable Jean Baptiste De La Salle, he returned cured to his family, on the very day the Brothers were expelled from Longchamps by the Commune!



CHAPTER IX.  
THE PROVINCES, AMBULANCES OF THE BOARDING SCHOOLS  
AND NOVITIATES.\*

I.—*Lyons.*

On the 14th of October, the Brothers of the boarding-school of Lyons opened, in their establishment of the Lazarists, an ambulance of more than one hundred beds, which remained in operation for something over seven months. This ambulance might be considered a branch of the military hospital. Six hundred and ninety-eight soldiers were taken care of in it. A portion of the expense was defrayed by the Relief Committee, but the greater part of the burden fell on the boarding-school. There, as elsewhere, the Brothers gave their services gratuitously, discharging every duty required of them with the greatest fidelity and efficiency. Three of them fell ill; and one, the holy Brother Parace, afterwards died of complicated pleuro-pneumonia, brought on by his exhausting labor in the ambulance.

Of the twenty soldiers who died there, not one refused the last sacraments, and there was a funeral service for each in the school chapel, at which the chaplain officiated. Mass was said every Sunday in the ambulance hall, all the patients assisting. Almost all received the Scapular; they were happy to have beads, crosses and medals. It is the prayers of

\* We class under this head all the ambulances in which the Brothers furnished bedding.

the victims, united to the merit of their sacrifice, which obtain for nations the grace of being regenerated by the baptism of blood.

Meanwhile, the red flag was hoisted on the City Hall of Lyons. The demagogues would fain dethrone God in the Rome of the Gauls. The Brothers, notwithstanding their patriotism and devotedness, were twelve times summoned to give up their house; the Director of the boarding-school, Brother Jean Imbert, withstood them all with a firmness that was worthy of all praise. His ambulance, justly considered the first in Lyons, was the material means used by Providence to defeat the projects of the enemies of religion.

On the 15th of May, Brother Jean Imbert received a letter of thanks for his valuable co-operation, from the vice-president of the Relief Committee, in the name of all the members.

II.—*Toulouse.*

On the 2d of December the Brothers of Toulouse, without interrupting their classes, esteemed themselves happy in being placed at the head of two ambulances, one of seventy beds in the Novitiate, the other in the spacious dormitories of St. Joseph's boarding-school. The former continued in operation till the 11th of March, and received 183 soldiers. Six novices were charged with the service of the wards, others coming to their aid when circumstances required it.

The religious sentiment was remarkable amongst those brave soldiers. At Christmas a great number went of their own accord to confession, and received Holy Communion at the midnight Mass. Two, who were unable to rise, begged the chaplain to bring them the Holy Communion.

Nine soldiers died in this ambulance, all of whom, with edifying piety, received the last sacraments. The death of



a veteran named Jacques Antoine Proust, of the 9th artillery, deserves special mention.

This worthy soldier was in his fifty-sixth year; after an honorable service of several years, he had retired on a pension to his native place, a small town of La Vendée, where, having also a situation as under-steward in a hospital, he lived in peace and comfort. No sooner did he hear, however, of the war with Prussia, than his brave heart throbbed with the martial ardor of former days. Considering neither his declining years nor his premature infirmities, the effect of former hardships, he thought only of being useful to his country, and took service again as a volunteer, giving up his situation and also his pension. But he soon found himself unequal to the rugged life men lead in time of war. He had scarcely joined his regiment at Toulouse when he was prostrated by an illness to which he had long been at times subject.

Conveyed to the Novitiate ambulance, he showed himself, beyond all others, a man of order, duty and faith, a true son of La Vendée.

His fine qualities soon obtained for M. Proust great influence among the other patients, all of whom loved him, and called him by the endearing name of "father."

Notwithstanding all the care bestowed upon him, his malady grew worse from day to day, and it soon became apparent that the closing scene was drawing near. Thenceforth he thought only of the great work of preparing for eternity. Although he had been one of the first to approach the holy table at Christmas, he wished to make a general confession, for which he prepared himself with the greatest care. After his confession, he had no other wish than that of meeting his God. He ceased not to manifest this desire either by words

or signs, expressive of the burning love that filled his ardent soul. When the chaplain brought him the Holy Viaticum, his faith appeared in all its lustre. Oppressed and enfeebled as he was, he would not remain on his couch. He had to be placed in an arm-chair in the middle of the hall.

Clothed in his uniform, and almost in the death-agony, he awaited the Desired of his heart. The Brother Infirmarians were making some little preparations for the supreme rite. "I do not deserve that," said he, faintly. "But it is for the good God who is coming to you," said a Brother. "Oh, for God," said he, "we can never do enough."

In presence of the Divine Eucharist, Jacques Proust mustered his last remains of strength to ask pardon of his comrades for any bad example or any offence he might have given them. On his part, he forgave every one from his heart. When the priest, raising the Host, said, "Behold the Lamb of God," his love prevailed over the weakness of his body: he rose with an ardor almost miraculous, made a step forward, holding his eyes fixed upon his Saviour, and prostrated himself on the ground, striking his breast, and clasping his hands as if to embrace his Beloved: "Come, Divine Jesus," he exclaimed, "come, take my soul to the communion of thy saints!"

Tears were streaming from every eye during this affecting scene. From this moment, neither the heart nor the mind of Proust had aught to do with earthly things. After a long thanksgiving, he requested the Brother Director to recite aloud the prayers for the dying. The novices and all the convalescent soldiers knelt around the bed of the dying man. The prayers were hardly ended, he himself joining in heart, when, after kissing the Brother Director's hand, the brave Vendéan looked at the sorrowing friends around him, point-



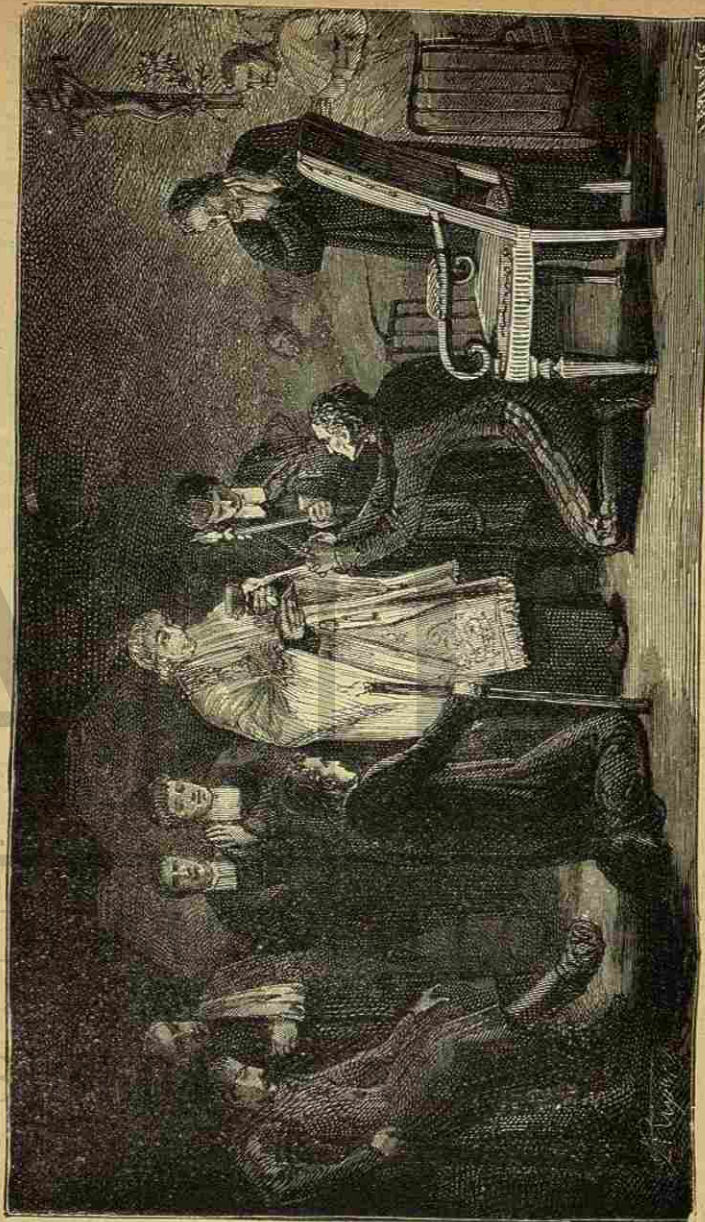
ed upwards to heaven, as though appointing a rendezvous there, and calmly slept in the Lord.

St. Joseph's ambulance remained in operation from the 2d of December till the 4th of March; it received 234 sick and wounded. Those poor young men, harassed with fighting, marching and counter-marching, and suffering much from the severe cold to which they had been exposed, arrived worn out with fatigue. What they wanted more than food was rest. At sight of the clean white beds which had been prepared for them, they were rejoiced, and deemed themselves happy in having fallen into the Brothers' hands. The Director of the ambulance, Brother Hector, soon gained the hearts of all the patients by his ever watchful care and unceasing devotedness to their comfort and improvement. Brother Jécomène rendered most important services in the ambulance by his rare ability and great skill in attending the sick. Through his admirable treatment, the arm of a former pupil of the Brothers in Marseilles was saved, after Dr. Molinier had decided that it must be amputated.

The ambulance of the Agricultural Society was given in charge to the Brothers. It was opened on the 23d of December. In it three hundred and nine sick and wounded were cared for.

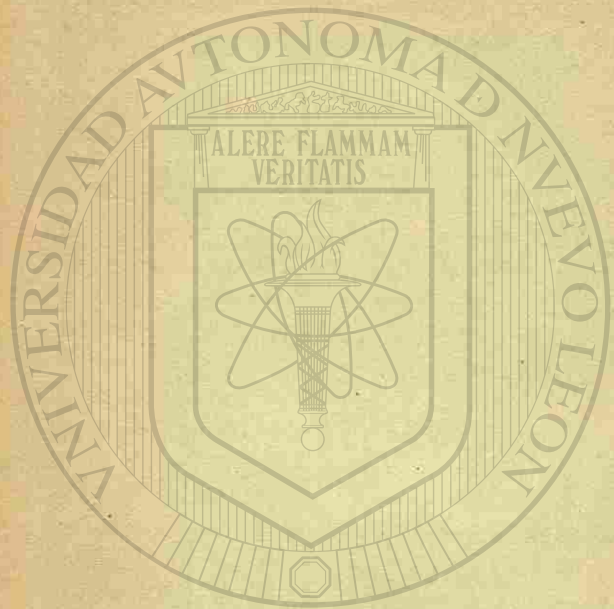
M. Carrère, reporter of the managing committee of the ambulances, thus expressed himself on the subject:—

“To the great credit of the Christian Brothers, it may be said that none of those who were snatched from us by death were taken unawares; prepared by the venerable and holy Brother Joseph, the last hour of those brave young men was a subject of touching edification.” The Agricultural Society, on the report of the commission, passed a vote of thanks to the Brothers. The ambulance closed on the 13th of April, 1871.



JACQUES ANTOINE PROUST RECEIVING THE HOLY VIATICUM





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The Foundry ambulance was also in charge of the Brothers. Canon Duilhé, of St. Projet, director of the work, in a report to the ladies of Toulouse and the Archbishop, expressed himself in the following terms:—

“ We have done our best to provide for the corporal wants of our dear wounded, but we have never forgotten to give the first place in our thoughts to their spiritual needs. We knew healing the wounds of the soul does not hurt those of the body ; that, on the contrary, science, joining hands with religion by the sick-bed, is exalted in its curative powers. Nothing is more consoling in this respect than the work in Toulouse. The religious establishments have been the first to consecrate their dwellings, their means, their time, to the care of the sick and wounded. They have imposed heavy sacrifices upon themselves. Need I say that in such asylums every nurse is an apostle ?

“ At the very moment when people were talking of proscribing them, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, not content with converting their principal residence into a hospital, were transforming themselves, at the first call, into model infirmarians.”

As may be seen, the Brothers of Toulouse shrank from no sacrifice, and their patriotism, like their devotedness, was equal to every emergency. And to think that, in such circumstances, the members of the municipal commission issued a warrant of proscription against these same Brothers, as being of no use in society !

Law, liberty, the wishes of families, the dearest interests of youth, were trampled under foot by the magistrates of Toulouse. In their revolt against God and humanity, they respected nothing,—neither services rendered, nor rights acquired, nor freedom of conscience. The municipal govern-



ment of Toulouse had always honored the devotedness of the Brothers; but these violent demolishers could not live without breaking the venerable traditions which make nations great. What did they care for honor, justice or gratitude? the rights of the people, or the welfare of the country?

### III.—*Dijon.*

During the fight at Dijon, on the 30th of October, the flag of the Geneva convention, hoisted over the Brothers' boarding-school, became, as it were, the signal of hope for many families, who brought their children and old people thither. The fearful roar of the cannon was no longer heard. The city had surrendered.

The very evening of the battle, soldiers and national guards, dangerously wounded, were brought to the Brothers' ambulance, which, from that day forward, was never without wounded to take care of. One of the greatest difficulties was to provide food for the patients in the ambulance, for thirty boarders who remained in the house, besides all the externs. Provisions were becoming scarce; the sharpshooters let none pass in, and the Prussians took care that none went out of the city. All around Dijon, fighting occurred almost daily. Thus, there was a time when the numerous inmates of the boarding-school were in actual want. Some friends lent wheat to Brother Pol-de-Léon, and as soon as he could get out, he hastened off in search of provisions, notwithstanding the severity of the weather and the unsettled state of affairs. It was on one of these expeditions that he was made prisoner at Sombernon. After some little delay, he succeeded in obtaining his release.

The Garibaldians were very numerous in the Brothers'

ambulance. Like the Turcos, they were all a little disconcerted at first at finding themselves in a religious house; but they were so well cared for by the Brothers that their astonishment soon gave way, and they contemplated having all the Garibaldians brought to the Brothers' house. This project was in part executed.

The conduct of the Brothers in the ambulances and on the field opened the eyes of many. People began to appreciate them at their real value. Their praise was on every lip; it was beginning to be understood that religion is the source of true devotedness.

Five hundred patients, of all nations, of every class, and of all grades, had been treated in the Brothers' ambulance. It remained in operation from the 26th of August till the 15th of March.

The zeal of the Brothers of Dijon extended to ambulances out of their own city. The following fact deserves special mention: At Beaune an ambulance had been established for small-pox patients, who required not only a hospital, but certain cares that no one dared give them. The magistrates of the town begged the Brothers to take charge of it. Brother Romble, a zealous and courageous man, cheerfully accepted the dangerous post. With some of his brethren he hastened to the relief of the small-pox patients. The good God doubly blessed them. Not only did they cure, with one single exception, every patient, but their own health never suffered in the least.

### IV.—*Chalons-sur-Saône.*

The Brothers of Chalons-sur-Saône served four stationary ambulances during the war:—

1. The Brothers' ambulance in their boarding-school,



Minim street. This ambulance had fifty-five beds and was in operation for about seven months. It received 332 sick and wounded patients.

2. The college ambulance contained fifty beds, but was only two months in operation, from the 16th of November till the 16th of January. Two or three Brothers, assisted during the day by hospital nuns, took care of one hundred and ninety-eight sick and wounded.

3. The Sisters of Nevers' ambulance. Two or three Brothers, assisted by a few of the Sisters of Nevers, tended one hundred and forty-six patients. This ambulance, containing forty beds, was still open on the 10th of March.

4. The Dominican ambulance, established in the domicile of the cloistered religious of that Order. Sixty-two sick and wounded soldiers were there cared for by the Brothers, and a few of the nuns. This ambulance, commenced when that of the college closed, was open till the middle of March. The soldiers who died in these ambulances received the last sacraments with the best dispositions.

Notwithstanding the labors of the Brothers in attending the soldiers, their classes in Chalons, though reduced one-half, were never discontinued. It is needless to say that the Brothers performed their services nobly, and left a grateful remembrance in the hearts of the people.

#### V.—*Orléans.*

On the 7th of August, the boarding-school of Our Lady of Nazareth, in Orléans, was placed at the disposal of the Prefect of the Loiret, to be converted into an ambulance. The Brothers' offer being accepted, patients were forthwith sent, and by the 5th of December one hundred and thirty-one beds were occupied.

The ambulance remained open till the 25th of March, 1871. The total number of patients treated was 250, of whom 130 were Germans. The house furnished all the bedding, and, from the 13th of October till the 8th of December, boarded all the patients at its own expense. The Brothers did all the hospital duty themselves. They lost only seven wounded,—five Frenchmen and two Germans.

After the evacuation of Orléans by the Bavarians, the military authorities asked some Brothers of the boarding-school community to conduct the *Gendarmerie* ambulance. They found the ambulance in the most deplorable condition. They had to re-organize it entirely. The Brothers charged with this task worked wonders, and made a model ambulance.

Seven Brothers from the St. Bonose community were employed in various ambulances for the space of four months. The Brothers of the parish of St. Martin d'Olivet, near Orléans, also took care of the wounded in their house.

#### VI.—*Dreux.*

For eighteen days of August and September, St. Peter's boarding-school in Dreux lodged 225 soldiers of the 51st of the Line. About the end of September, an ambulance, of which Brother Apollonis was Director, was established in the house. This ambulance continued in operation till the 25th of March, under the title of the "International."

On the 20th of November, three days after the last engagement at Dreux, there were in it one hundred wounded. The importance of this house increased. The Prussians respected it. Neighbors and friends there hid any valuables which they feared to keep at home. About the 1st of December the Brothers began to try to recover the French convalescents from the Prussians. Through their kindness and



urbanity they gained the good will of the head physician, a formidable Teuton, who was dreaded by all Dreux. They offered him their services for the conveyance of his convalescent patients to Versailles. Their offer was gladly accepted. Four times they went to Versailles and once to Noudan with the German wounded. In token of his gratitude, the gruff doctor agreed not to send the French convalescents in whom the Brothers were interested to Germany. As they had carried the German wounded to Versailles and Noudan, so now they brought the French convalescents into Normandy, within the French lines. Who can tell the joy of these poor soldiers at being again restored to their country and friends, or their gratitude to their faithful deliverers?

#### VII.—*Marseilles.*

Brother Trivier, Director of the boarding-school on the St. Charles Road, offered sixty beds in the first days of September. The offer was accepted, and, by the 30th of December, all the beds were occupied. Six Brothers were especially attached to the ambulance. The government allowed one franc per day for every patient. This was, of course, very insufficient remuneration, but the Brothers made no complaint. Two chaplains took care of the spiritual welfare of the soldiers. Many of them approached the sacraments, and none died without them. The number of patients received in this ambulance up to the month of March was 182.

Another ambulance at Chartreux, *Rue Jardin des Plantes*, was also attended by the Christian Brothers.

#### VIII.—*Vienne.*

The Brothers' ambulance at Vienne (Isère) commenced on November 15th, and closed on the 1st of the following April.

One hundred and eleven sick and wounded were there taken care of. Only one soldier died there of typhoid fever; the others all returned to their several regiments cured. Two Brothers were exclusively employed in the ambulance, but all the Brothers belonging to the house assisted when their services were required. Three Brothers were attacked by the small-pox, two of whom died.

The sub-inspector of the 22d military division wrote to the Brother Director as follows:—

"I beg you to accept my thanks for the great care you took of the patients treated in your establishment, and to convey to the Brother Sub-Director who had charge of the ambulance, and also to the Brother in charge of the wards, the expression of my gratitude for the great kindness shown to the soldiers all the time your ambulance was in operation.

"Accept, etc.

"For the Military Inspector,

"L. LEFEUVRE,

"*Officer in Command.*"

#### IX.—*Niort.*

On the 13th of December the Brothers received forty-eight wounded in their ambulance at Niort. Notwithstanding their increased labors, they still continued their school. The poor soldiers arrived exhausted with fatigue and privation. They found in the Brothers the kindest friends, the tenderest nurses. When they were able to leave the ambulance, some to return to the camp, others to go home to their families, they tearfully bade adieu to those who had so faithfully watched over them, and promised never to forget the favors they had received. The Brothers' parting gifts



of crosses, beads, and medals were gratefully accepted, and down to the latest day of life will be fondly cherished.

"We have reason to be satisfied," wrote the Brother Director of the ambulance, "because we did what little we could to promote this patriotic work: we would have wished to do more, so as to come a little nearer to the heroic devotedness of which our Brothers in Paris have given so magnificent an example."

#### X.—*Villefranche (Rhône).*

The Brothers of Villefranche, like their brethren in other cities, rendered all the services they could. The sick and wounded were carefully attended to, at the same time that they still kept up their classes. Their ambulance was open from December 19th till the 31st of March.

#### XI.—*Nantes.*

On the 2d of November, some weeks after the re-opening of the classes, fifty sick and wounded were divided between the boarding-school infirmary and the new buildings intended for the infirmary of the Novitiate. Those two ambulances were in operation till the 26th of January, and were a great consolation to the Brothers. The patients, some sixty in number, followed, with edifying devotion, the exercises of a retreat given to the pupils in the latter part of November.

The Madeleine ambulance was established in the school directed by the Brothers in that parish. It opened on the 7th of November, received successively 220 patients, and closed on the 10th of March following.

Letters of thanks were addressed to the Brother Director by the military authorities of the city and district.

#### XII.—*Avignon, La Motte, etc.*

The Brothers of Avignon organized an ambulance which was soon filled by the sick and wounded. Most of the patients were Turcos. Their sergeant, on his arrival in Africa, wrote a most grateful letter to the Brother Director. The ambulance received altogether 129 soldiers, not a single one of whom died.

The ambulance of the boarding-school of La Motte (Savoy) began on February 1st. Of the eighty-one soldiers treated, the greater number had been frozen. Several of these poor young men, former pupils of the Brothers of Jussey, said to their comrades, while being taken to the hospital: "Oh, we shall be well treated there!" Only two died, and these did not pass away unprepared.

On the 14th of January the community house of Caen, transformed into an ambulance, received thirty patients. Two or three Brothers were constantly engaged in attending to them.

The free school of the Brothers of Nolay (Côte d'Or) also had its ambulance, the patients being chiefly soldiers suffering from cold and hunger. Finally, we will mention the Brothers' Normal School in Aurillac. The members of this community furnished, together with the house, *their whole supply of bedding and cooking utensils for an ambulance, and went themselves to take up their quarters in some neighboring ruins.*



## CHAPTER X.

### AMBULANCES ESTABLISHED IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES.

#### I.—*Bordeaux.*

In the ambulances mentioned in the preceding chapter, the Brothers furnished the bedding; in those of which we are about to speak, beds, mattresses, pillows, sheets, quilts, etc., were sent from outside, either by the relief committees, or by zealous and charitable persons.

Ambulances were established in every parish of Bordeaux by the International Committee, through the agency of the several pastors. The parishes of Notre Dame and Saint Seurin combined to get up an ambulance, which they quartered in the Christian school, *Rue de la Trésorerie*. It was only a hall adjoining the chapel that was asked by the committee for the purpose; but Brother Leonardus, Director of the house, thinking that the hall had neither light nor air enough, gave also the chapel for the sick and wounded. When remonstrated with by some of the committee, who observed that the chapel would be spoiled, Brother Leonardus insisted that the chapel should be taken for the ambulance.

Had he acted otherwise, he afterwards wrote, he would have feared the displeasure of his divine Lord, whose merciful heart would have been pained to have his own poor ones sick and suffering so near his tabernacle, without sufficient light or air to facilitate their recovery.

The first wounded who arrived were covered with mud and blood, and most of them grievously wounded.

The Sisters of Charity, whose convent was not far from the school-house, took charge of the linen, the preparation of food, medicine, etc. The unhappy victims of war seemed deeply sensible of the cares lavished upon them. It was not hard to induce them to say their morning and evening prayers. Every soldier who was at all able to do so, assisted regularly at Mass. Religion sanctified the last moments of those who sank under their wounds, and enabled others to bear their pain with a fortitude that tended greatly to their recovery.

One poor fellow, who had received a most painful wound (a ball having entered his mouth, cut through the tongue, and passed out through the lower jaw), was saved, and even his speech restored by long and ceaseless care. He suffered terribly. One evening a Brother, stooping down, whispered in his ear: "You suffer much?" He painfully raised his hand towards the image of Jesus crucified, which hung over his bed, as if to say, "He suffered more still!"

The mortal remains of those who died in the ambulance were not carried coldly or carelessly to their last resting-place. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul always sent a numerous deputation to the funeral of those poor soldiers who died far away from their home and kindred; the Brothers also attended their funeral, and the people appeared much affected by this last mark of love and respect for the lamented defenders of the country.

The Brothers' ambulance received the most distinguished visitors, amongst others, His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop, and His Honor the Mayor. The former went to every bed, addressed some kind words to each patient, and



asked them to pray for peace and their speedy restoration to their families. Before retiring, the Archbishop knelt on the floor of the hall, begging of God the safety and the resurrection of France; he then gave fifty francs to the Brother Director, to procure some little delicacy for each of the patients.

The total number of sick and wounded received in this ambulance was 200. It was in operation nearly seven months. There were only seven deaths.

The ambulance of St. Eloi's Christian School, composed of thirty beds, commenced on Christmas Day, 1870, and closed on the 26th of April. It received one hundred and one patients, eight of whom died, furnished with all the rites of the Church. Two Sisters of Charity, with some respectable matrons of the city, took care of the wounded. The Brothers had charge of the management, together with the materials of the ambulance, and had all the responsibility. St. Eloi's school-house being large, the classes continued without interruption.

The soldiers loved the company of the Brothers. "Ah!" said one of them one day to Brother Director, after receiving Holy Communion — "Ah! if we were always amongst people like you, if we were reminded now and then of our *duties*, instead of hearing always of our *rights*, we would be much better than we are, for the French soldier is always good when leaving home. It is the barracks that spoil him; idleness is always there, and vice is pretty sure to follow. Those who are Christians hardly dare to show it."

His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop visited this ambulance too, and gave the same donation as in the one before mentioned. In fact, he visited, in the same way, each of the sixty-four ambulances established in the city.

## II.—*Mer (Loir-et-Cher).*

In September, the three class-rooms of the Brothers were converted into an ambulance. The first patients arrived on the 22d of the same month. The Brothers and Sisters divided between them the labors of the infirmary. The ambulance flags drew together a multitude of fatigued and suffering Frenchmen; the Brothers could only relieve their most pressing wants. Meanwhile, touched with compassion for so much misery, they sought means to relieve a great number of unfortunates: the children's asylum and the Sisters' school threw open their doors. These three establishments, being close together, formed but one vast ambulance under the direction of Brother Alipius; 200 sick and wounded were soon gathered into it. Four Brothers and four Sisters had to suffice for all, both day and night.

The fatigue was excessive, the danger imminent in the midst of contagious diseases. Brother Abercien Joseph lost his life through his charity and devotedness. He was seized with the most virulent type of small-pox, so that, from the very first, all hope of saving him was abandoned. Two other Brothers suffered seriously, and the Sisters, one after another, had to leave the ambulance for a while.

What of all this, if they could only have relieved every misery? But alas! even food was wanting for the convalescents, and had to be begged from door to door, or obtained by running hither and thither after some official. Dysentery, typhoid fever, varioloid, measles, etc., made sad havoc.

About the 4th of December, after the defeat at Orléans, the wounded arrived in great numbers. From the 7th till the 10th they were brought in by the hundred. The Brothers knew not what to do with those whom it was impossible



to receive. They dressed their wounds, gave them all some nourishment, and conveyed them to the dépôt.

From the 5th to the 15th, they were night and day without rest. They never undressed; the poor wounded did not leave them time. 1000 soldiers stayed in the ambulance, and 5000 at least received passing aid.

Besides the three establishments above mentioned, there was a hall, near the church, especially intended for small-pox patients. It was under the direction of the Brothers and Sisters. The number of deaths in these ambulances was about 200.

The chief physician of the 20th Hanoverian Division, having seen the Brothers of Mer at work, urged Brother Alipius to accept an appointment as director of a hospital in Prussia.

### III.—*Dunkerque.*

From the 12th of November till the 20th of February, the Brothers of Dunkerque had charge of two ambulances of fifty beds each. They alone attended to the patients, and had all the care of the cooking, clothing, cleaning, etc. Six Brothers were employed, who relieved each other by turns, so as not to interfere with the classes; two sat up every night with the patients.

Four hundred and ninety wounded were received in these two ambulances, which were supported by a benevolent committee. The last of January, the Inspector-General of Ambulances visited the Brothers, and was delighted with the favorable condition of the wards. The mayor, previously prejudiced against religious congregations, became, thenceforward, a warm friend of the Brothers. A vote of thanks for their valuable services was passed by the municipal council.

### IV.—*Montargis.*

After the battles of Ladon, Mézières, Juranville, etc., the Brother Director of Montargis hastened to place his house and its whole staff at the disposal of the Society for the Relief of the Wounded. His offer was gladly accepted; on the 3d of December this ambulance had twenty-five beds occupied.

The Brothers, acting by turns as teachers and nurses, only quitted their class-room to go into the ambulance, cheerfully sacrificing their sleep to care for the patients. Forty-five wounded were treated by them, some of whom were brought to them in a dying condition from previous neglect—their wounds, in some instances, not having been dressed for fifteen days. The task it was to wash and dress such wounds may well be imagined!

### V.—*Levier (Doubs).*

On the 26th of January, a portion of Bourbaki's routed army arrived at Levier, leaving four or five hundred sick to be cared for. As the temporary ambulances increased in numbers, the mayor gave Brother Director charge of their organization. This worthy religious acquitted himself of the charitable task with zeal and devotedness. He went from house to house soliciting bedding, clothing, and other articles indispensably necessary for the sick, some of whom were lying on straw. Sixty soldiers were placed in the Brothers' ambulance; for several days only rice and potatoes could be got for them; bread and provisions of all kinds were rendered scarce by the crowds of soldiers thronging into the place. The Prussians marched in pursuit of Bourbaki's army. On the 29th, the Germans arrived and took possession of the town and its vicinity. They were there in thousands for



about a week. 3000 French soldiers were brought prisoners to Levier. Exhausted with hunger and fatigue, they passed the night in the church and its precincts, although the cold was excessive. On the 5th of January, the Brother Director, in his great charity, hastened to relieve them. He gave the poor captives provisions, clothing, and every comfort he could procure for them.

With the exception of a young Brother who fell sick in attending the wounded, none of the Levier community had beds for three weeks. Nearly all the expenses of the ambulance were defrayed by the Brothers themselves.

#### VI.—*Saint Sever (sur l'Adour).*

The 16th of December was the first arrival of the wounded at the Brothers' ambulance at St. Sever. From that date till the 20th of March it was constantly occupied.

The number of wounded arriving every day varied from fifteen to fifty. The Brothers' house was a *transient* ambulance. The wounded, at least those not grievously injured, did not remain at St. Sever. They were sent, after a few days, perhaps hours, to some other locality. The expense of this ambulance was in part sustained by the community. Two of the Brothers, broken down by continual and exhausting labor, were taken ill, and did not for some time recover.

The municipality gave up one wing of the Lyceum to be used as a school, so that the classes might not be interrupted. The winter was exceptionally severe; the Lyceum was a considerable distance from the ambulance, and the Brothers, in their unselfish devotion, were continually going from one to the other, multiplying themselves at once for teaching and for the service of the sick and wounded.

#### VII.—*La Charité.*

The class-rooms of the Christian schools of La Charité were, on the 18th of December, converted into an ambulance of eighty-four beds. This was no sooner opened than it was crowded with patients, of whom there were as many as 200 at a time, some in beds, others on straw, and so closely packed together that nurses could hardly pass from one ward to another; and yet there were four other ambulances in the town. That of the Brothers was considered a hospital, and was furnished accordingly. Private charity also contributed its share. The care the Brothers took of the patients was proverbial. The mayor once said to Brother Jasime: "I send you a great number of patients, because I know they are better with you than anywhere else." The ambulance continued till the 6th of March, and received 746 sick and wounded soldiers. It registered thirty-four deaths.

The principal military authorities and the Inspectors-General of ambulances complimented the Brothers highly on the admirable manner in which their ambulance was kept, notwithstanding the vast number of patients there treated.

#### VIII.—*Bonnétable (Sarthe).*

On the 17th of January, the Brothers of Bonnétable opened an ambulance in their establishment. Some of the patients first brought in had been eight days disabled, and their wounds had been dressed but once in all that time.

The Brothers for the first days defrayed the expenses themselves; then they were obliged to appeal to the mayor for bread and meat. As for the wine, preserves, and other delicacies, the Brother Director went and begged them for his patients himself. "I have gone all through Bonnétable," he writes, "with my apron, my basket, which I called 'the Provi-



dence basket,' and my purse, which I called the 'ambulance purse,' and never did I go home dissatisfied; my basket and my purse received something wherever I went. I was even able to assist nearly all the French soldiers on their return home, and to give them some little help for their most pressing wants after they reached their families." Five soldiers died at Bonnétable. The Brother Director went twice to Alençon with the wounded from L'Orne. The ambulance was closed on the 22d of February. The mayor, in the name of the city, thanked the Christian Brothers for their services, and the prefect of La Sarthe addressed the following letter to Brother Hiérax:

"SIR:

"LE MANS, *April 15th, 1871.*

"The mayor of Bonnétable has informed me of your patriotic devotedness during the occupation of the town by the enemy, in attending the sick and wounded of both armies, and in facilitating the escape of a French prisoner.

"I hasten, dear sir, to offer my sincere thanks for your admirable conduct, and beg to offer at the same time the assurance of my high consideration.

"C. TASSIN,

"*Prefect.*"

IX.—*Falaise.*

The Brothers' house at Falaise served as an ambulance from the 24th of January till the 1st of June. It was conducted by the Sisters of Mercy. The school was transferred to a hall of the college, and the Brothers cared for the sick before and after class. The number of patients, mostly mobiles, was 280. Brother Hion, steward of the house, fell a victim to his zeal. He died of small-pox, of which twelve were ill

at the same time. The *Journal de Falaise* of February 25th gives the following account of the obsequies of this holy religious:

"On Sunday last, death suddenly deprived the Christian Brothers' ambulance of one of its most active and zealous attendants. Ever since the opening of this ambulance, Brother Hion, like his brethren in Paris, devoted himself unceasingly, night and day, to the care of our wounded soldiers.

"Hence it was that on Sunday a great crowd of sorrow-stricken people, amongst whom were officials, persons high in authority, soldiers and citizens, thronged the church of Our Lady of Guibray, to assist at his obsequies, and to pay the last tribute of respect to a courageous citizen who had fallen a victim to his self-devotedness. The pall-bearers were: the first vice-president of the Municipal Commission of Falaise; two directors of the general hospital, viz., the Marquisesd' Eyragues and de Cloch, and M. Choisy, professor of rhetoric, their associate in the direction of the ambulances.

"A touchingly beautiful discourse was delivered by the pastor of the church of Guibray, and a collection was taken up for the benefit of the patients in the ambulances."

X.—*Ornans, Libourne, etc.*

The ambulance of the Brothers' school in Ornans opened on the 28th of January. Its first instalment of patients was forty soldiers from Bourbaki's army. It was dependent on that of the seminary, the Reverend Superior of which paid all the expenses. Three Brothers attended the sick and served also in the kitchen, and 168 soldiers were treated.

The Brothers of Libourne gave up five of their class-rooms for ambulance purposes. This was a branch of the hospi-



tal; it lasted six months and received 160 soldiers, six of whom died consoled with the rites of the Church.

The community of Sables opened its ambulance on the 6th of January, and continued in operation till the 9th of March. Everything possible was done for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the patients. The Brothers' classes, in the meanwhile, were not interrupted.

At Pezens (Aude), the Countess de Pins organized an ambulance of twenty beds in the Brothers' school; the Brother Director was made its chief manager. The first sick arrived on the 26th of November; the last quitted the establishment about the middle of March.

The soldiers recovered health of soul and body. The whole parish was edified by seeing them receive Holy Communion on Christmas Day. For two of them, it was their first Communion. The Brothers of Montpellier, while waiting for the ambulance they had fitted up in their class-rooms to be occupied, attended one every night some distance from their house. About the end of January they received thirty-four patients. Through their holy influence thirty soldiers approached the sacred table. At Lisieux, the Brothers opened an ambulance of forty beds in their house. Thirty-nine wounded arrived on the 15th of September. From the 8th of October, patients were continually coming in, most of them suffering from small-pox or typhoid fever. Three of the Brothers took the small-pox, one of whom died. The ambulance ranked as a hospital.

At Armentières, an ambulance was established in St. Joseph's school. About 80 patients were received here, all of whom were attended by the Brothers. Every soldier in this ambulance made it a point to approach the sacraments.

From the 11th of January till the 25th of March, three

Brothers were continually employed in the ambulance established in their house at Clerval. At the request of the Mayor, the Brother Director took charge of all the ambulances in the neighborhood. He had to supply medicine, provisions, and linen for 256 patients.

The communities of Cadillac and Taillan (Gironde), Trevent, Cognac, Tours, Mehun (Cher), Grasse, La Rochelle, Châteaurenard (Bouches du Rhone), Cambrai, Molay, and Narbonne, had also ambulances established in their houses, and nearly all continued their classes at the same time. This list is far from being complete. God alone knows the whole, for the Brothers have no desire to make public the full extent of their services to the sick and wounded, and the sacrifices they made in their behalf.



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## CHAPTER XI.

### OUTSIDE AMBULANCES.

#### I.—*Nimes.*

December, 1870, Mgr. Plantier and the Mayor of Nimes organized an ambulance in the barracks, and placed it in charge of the Christian Brothers. Two hundred and sixty-five soldiers were here cared for. Seventeen sank under their sufferings, but they previously had the happiness of receiving the last sacraments.

A high government official, after dwelling at length on all the Brothers of Nimes had done for the sick and wounded, thus concludes his letter:—

“That the blessing of their Divine Master seconded their efforts, was clearly manifested in the consoling results, and their faith, which had been mainly instrumental in the foundation of the barracks ambulance, may be said to have obtained in this respect, as in all others, the desired success.

“The co-operation of the Christian Brothers has been of incalculable benefit to this ambulance. To it we are mainly indebted for the general sympathy manifested in behalf of the work. The board of managers, having seen this exemplified from day to day, are happy to bear testimony to the fact, and publicly to express their gratitude to the revered Brothers. Its members will ever cherish the remembrance of the solid and modest virtues of which they have been

witnesses, and the writer of this letter will ever esteem it an honor to have had even a small share in their great work of charity.”

Dear Brother Pereal Gabriel died of small-pox contracted whilst attending the sick in the ambulances. The city of Nimes claimed the honor of defraying the expenses of the funeral, which was conducted with much pomp and solemnity.

At a meeting of the city commissioners, Dr. Perrier, who presided, paid a high compliment to the Brothers attached to his medical staff.

“Never,” said he, “were the sick in our hospitals better cared for. On the battle-field, and in our ambulances, the worthy sons of the Venerable De La Salle are ever ready at the post of charity and of sacrifice.”

#### II.—*Chartres.*

On the 6th of December, after the battle of Loigny, the ambulances of the city of Chartres set out for Loigny, with a great number of carts laden with bread and provisions for the wounded, who were huddled together in such dwellings as were left standing. About 1000 patients were brought into Chartres. Of these, eighty Frenchmen were lodged in the Theatre ambulance, which was served by the Brothers from the 10th of December till the 27th of February. Nowhere else did the Brothers endure more hardships than in this ambulance, where fourteen of their number were employed. The weather was so severe that the place could not be properly aired; the consequence was, that, although none of them were actually stricken down with illness, these ever faithful friends of the sick and wounded were themselves reduced to a sad state of debility and emaciation. Em-



ployed in all kinds of work about the ambulance, their clothes, too, bore evident marks of the hard usage these poor, patient toilers in the service of God and their country endured.

### III.—*Cherbourg.*

January 7th, the Brothers were officially called to replace the military nurses in the casino of the sea-baths. Most of the patients in the ambulance being ill of small-pox, the attendance there was extremely dangerous. But this did not deter the Brothers. They were on their feet night and day. In eight or ten days, the town-mayor decided to transfer them to the military hospital within the Arsenal enclosure. His reason for doing so was, there being fewer patients in the casino (one hundred and four), the zeal of the Brothers would be more usefully exerted in the great Arsenal ambulance, numbering over 600 patients. The director of the casino made efforts to retain his nurses, but the authorities persisted in their design, and he was forced to submit. The patients were grieved when they heard the intelligence and could hardly be consoled at their loss.

On the 18th of January, the Brothers arrived at the Arsenal ambulance. They were at once introduced to the medical committee, composed of nine physicians and four apothecaries. The government manager decreed to them at the same time the title of "Ward-Majors," adding: "These gentlemen have too much modesty and humility to accept epaulets; but remember, they are entitled to wear them."

The soldiers showed the greatest joy on seeing the Brothers, whom they already knew.

During the seven weeks the Brothers remained in the Arsenal ambulance, each one paid the forfeit of his devotion,

Four fell sick from excessive fatigue; two others contracted scarlatina, then prevalent in the ambulance; the youngest, Brother Augebert Francis, died after seventeen days' suffering; the other happily recovered. He was hardly convalescent, when the municipal authorities demanded their teachers back to resume their classes. To the credit of the military and medical authorities be it said, nothing was left undone to preserve or restore the health of the Brothers. The director of the ambulance cordially thanked them for the care they had taken of the soldiers, and at the casino the poor patients mourned and grieved at the departure of the friends who had taught them so many holy lessons.

### IV.—*Besançon.*

St. John's community, not having a place suitable for the establishment of an ambulance, took part in the service of those already in the city. The re-opening of the classes, about the middle of September, deprived the patients of their continuous attendance. They nevertheless devoted all their spare hours to the sick and wounded, by night as well as by day. Two of them sank under this double labor: Brother Rosmond, on the 24th of January, and Brother Andéolian, on the 7th of February. The survivors still endeavored to supply every want, and succeeded admirably, thanks to the thoughtful care, unceasing activity, and boundless devotedness of Brother Johannes, Director of the community.

Towards the end of January, the sick and wounded increasing rapidly in numbers, the Cardinal Archbishop offered a portion of his house for the establishment of an ambulance: Brother Johannes was requested to take charge of it. Bedding and other necessary articles had become extremely



scarce, but in less than a week, however, Brother Johannes had taken in thirty-five patients, upon whom he bestowed the most unceasing care until the end of April.

V.—*St. Quentin.*

For more than two months, five Brothers went, every day, to dress the wounds and take care of the sick and wounded soldiers in the hospital. They nursed about 300, of whom a large fraction were Germans.

The administrative commission of the hospitals, in its sitting of November 25th, 1870, passed a vote of thanks to the Brothers. This was conveyed to them in an official letter.

VI.—*Nuits.*

From the beginning of September till the 20th of March, the Brothers of Nuits, without interrupting their classes, attended the numerous wounded of the International ambulance established in that place. The first soldiers received in the ambulance were from Wissemburg and Freschwiller. After the battle of Nuits (December 18th), nearly eight thousand men, some German and others French, were found more or less injured. From all sides the wounded were arriving at the ambulance; most of them belonged to the 1st Legion of the Rhine, some to the Garonne battalion, commanded by the Marquis de Carayon Latour. The Brothers multiplied their efforts to minister to all.

VII.—*Montluçon.*

During the month of December Montluçon saw six ambulances organized, almost all of them attended by religious, and containing nearly two thousand sick and wounded. The pastor of St. Paul's established one in his parish. The

Sisters of Charity sufficed for the day service; for two months the Brothers sat up there, two by two, every night. This additional labor did not disturb the good order of the school-classes, attended by 700 pupils.

About the middle of January, the director of the ambulance established in the college having fallen ill, the mayor thought of the Brothers to replace him. However, he shrank from making the proposal, fearing to overtax the strength and self-devotedness of his teachers. The Brothers, made aware of this by the pastor of Notre Dame, did not hesitate a moment; they offered at once to take charge of the college ambulance, however laborious it might be. They remained day and night among the patients, breathing the unwholesome air of two dormitories where there were seventy-five soldiers, some attacked by small-pox, others by virulent fevers, and the greater number suffering from pulmonary diseases. In two months, in both ambulances, the Brothers cared for two hundred and fifty-five sick and wounded soldiers, without apprehension, and with a devotedness that could only be inspired by supernatural motives. And the good God blessed them, for none were injuriously affected by their arduous labors. Brother Octavian, the Director, was a perfect model of self-denial and Christian charity.

VIII.—*Baupaume (Pas-de-Calais).*

After the battles of January 2d and 3d, the Brothers offered their services to the *Servantes de Marie*, who had established an ambulance for the French and Prussian wounded in the old barracks.

The wounded were livid with the cold when taken from the wagons. It was pitiful to hear them cry out for their



turn. The help of the soldiers was required in removing them to the wards prepared for them. The Brothers prepared the ambulance soup in their own kitchen; they furnished linen, mattresses, provisions, and many other necessary articles, and they were consoled by seeing the salutary effects of Divine mercy. In their ambulance, which lasted seven weeks and received five hundred soldiers, not one Catholic died without having received the last sacraments.

IX.—*Marlioz (Savoÿ).*

On the 10th of February, an ambulance was opened by the Relief Society in the thermal establishment at Marlioz. Brothers from Aix and St. Julien had charge of it. The dressings, the provisions, in short, the whole responsibility, devolved on the Brothers, who discharged their arduous duties in such a manner that all the journals of the country spoke warmly in their praise.

Ninety-eight soldiers were treated in this ambulance, which was open till the 20th of May. The physician in charge, Dr. Guillaud, wrote a long and cordial letter of thanks to Brother Philippe, for the service rendered by the Brothers; in this he stated that he only expressed the opinions and shared the gratitude of the president and other officers of the Relief Committee of Marlioz.

X.—*Chambéry, Evian, etc.*

At Chambéry, an ambulance-dépôt was established near the railroad station for the sick and wounded, when the French soldiers were in crowds taking refuge in Switzerland. Thence, after some days' care, they were conveyed to the ambulances or hospitals. In this ambulance the Brothers

did only night duty, from six o'clock in the evening till seven in the morning.

The ambulance of Evian (Upper Savoy) was crowded about the middle of February with sick and wounded from the army of the East. The mayor, Baron Blonay, wrote to the Brother Director of Chambéry for two Brother-infirmarians to take care of the soldiers. "The Brothers of the Christian Schools," said he, "have been everywhere admirable for the wounded, and I hope you will kindly grant my request." Two religious were immediately sent, one from Thonon, the other from Chambéry.

The Brothers of Mâcon attended by night in two of the city ambulances. Their attendance continued from the 5th of January till the 7th of March. The double labor of teaching and nursing told on some of the Brothers. Their health failed, and it was some time before they recovered.

At Nogent-le-Rotrou, the Brothers did night duty in two ambulances. A vote of thanks to them was passed by the Relief Society, and conveyed by letter of the president to the Brother Director of Nogent.

While continuing his class, the Brother Director of Sables, assisted by the Brother Steward, took charge of the night service in an ambulance established in the castle of the Duchess de Chevreuse. This service was continued during the Prussian occupation. Many a time the Brothers were under the necessity of scaling the walls to cross the enemy's post, in order to visit the French wounded. But no accident befel them, for they whom God guards are well guarded. "I cannot sufficiently thank the Brothers for the service they rendered to my ambulance," writes the Duchess de Chevreuse; "I know it was for the honor and glory of God they thus devoted themselves, but I am none the less grateful to them."



At Pesme (Haute-Saône) the Brothers attended forty wounded for two months, in the ambulance of the Sisters of Charity. Three Brothers were attacked by small-pox; two fell victims to that frightful disease; another succumbed from fatigue, and was sent home for a while to recruit his health.

At Beaune, Saumur, Hennebon (Morbihan), Meaux, Séez, and St. Amand, they did all they possibly could for the poor sick and wounded soldiers. They watched with them, wrote letters to their families for them, and comforted them as only they could.

We have abridged our account of the work of the Brothers in order to avoid tiresome repetition. How many touching acts, how much concealed suffering, have found no place in these cold statistics! All their merits are known only to God. He alone knows all the names and all the virtues which were voluntarily concealed from the eyes of men. Blessed be the holy religious who poured out so exhaustless a stream of charity on their suffering brethren! Blessed be they on earth and in heaven!

## CHAPTER XII.

### IMPROVISED AMBULANCES. THE SMALL-POX PATIENTS.

#### I.—*Sully (Saône-et-Loire).*

The Brothers of this little town had not a regular ambulance, but an infirmary for such passing soldiers as fell sick among the inhabitants. It was open in the most inclement season of the year, and lasted till the 20th of January. Two Brothers were continually employed in it; those engaged in the schools assisted when they could. In this new species of ambulance, the Brothers had to provide everything. The village being crowded with soldiers, the inhabitants could give no assistance, each family having a certain number of soldiers to lodge. It was mid-winter; provisions of all kinds were extremely scarce, and little or nothing was done by the authorities, whether civil or military, to provide for the wants of the sick and wounded. All was left to the Brother Director, and two of the Brothers went a considerable distance, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, to obtain the necessary food and medicine for the infirmary.

#### II.—*Chinon.*

On the 28th of December, the Christian School of Chinon lodged over 200 soldiers of the army of the Loire. Next day fourteen of them were unable to follow their corps. The



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Brother Director sent immediately for a physician. He declared those soldiers were not able to continue their march, and must be sent at once to the hospital. But the Hotel Dieu was already overcrowded; the Brother Director, moved with compassion, hastened to transform his house into an ambulance. One soldier had small-pox. Fearing lest it should attack the others, Brother Director gave up his own room and bed to him.

Provisions were supplied by the community, with the exception of the meat and bread, which were furnished by the town, some days after the opening of the ambulance. Hundreds of mobiles in turn experienced the affectionate care and cordial kindness of the Christian Brothers of Chinon. The doctors were surprised at their skill in dressing wounds and attending the sick. When the soldiers left, it was touching to see the parting between them and the Brothers.

Letters of grateful acknowledgment and high appreciation were addressed to the Brother Director by the two physicians who attended to the ambulance, by the sub-prefect of the Department, and by the mayor of Chinon. The sub-prefect's letter is very interesting and we therefore insert it here:—

“CHINON, *March 21st, 1871.*”

“DEAR BROTHER DIRECTOR:

“I do but express the feeling of the whole town of Chinon, in bearing testimony to the devotedness, patriotism, and courage, shown by you and your Brothers amid the sad afflictions which have come upon France.

“From the beginning of September till quite recently your house has been open to the soldiers of the republic;

you have cared for and encouraged those who were going to fight for their country; you have bestowed upon the sick and wounded the most touching, the most intelligent care, depriving yourselves of everything, in order to give some relief to their sufferings, and even giving up your own beds and sleeping-rooms to those whose state might endanger the health of their companions by contagion. You have often deprived yourselves of the necessaries of life, to give comfort to our wounded.

“Receive, etc.

C. V. CHAPELLE, *Sub-Prefect.*”

### III.—*Lure.*

The engagements of Etobon-Chénebier occurred on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of January. After these battles, more than 1000 sick and wounded were brought here. The city ambulances were insufficient; new ones had to be improvised.

The Brothers' school received fifty-seven soldiers, most of them with frostbitten feet. It was no easy matter for the Brothers to provide accommodation for these poor fellows, and they only did so by making up mattresses of soft straw: the linen for these they obtained by tearing up and washing some army shelter-tents. The ambulance lasted till the 9th of March.

### IV.—*Morteaux, Questembert, etc.*

At Morteaux the Brothers opened an ambulance in their class-rooms on the 29th of January, into which forty-seven soldiers from Bourbaki's army were admitted. These patients were kept for five days at the sole expense of the Brothers.

On the 2d of February they were removed to Lyons; the same evening the Prussians entered the town in pursuit of the retreating French army.



On February the 4th, the Brother Director caused his house to be again made an ambulance, so as to shelter and take care of some twenty French soldiers who still remained in the place. The four Brothers composing the community discharged all the duties of this ambulance. Their labors were so arduous, that by the time the patients left, all four were sick.

At Questembert (Morbihan) eight wounded soldiers were taken in, boarded and attended by the Brothers at their own expense. These soldiers were moved even to tears by the kind attention they received. "True devotedness," said they, "is only to be met with in religious communities; we shall never forget how our lives have been saved here by the charitable care of the good Brothers."

The community of Valognes boarded and took care of from 200 to 250 soldiers, at their own expense, from December till February. They did all they could to comfort and encourage them. In Beaume-les-Dames, the Brother Director during the winter received some patients in one of his class-rooms. He took the greatest care of them, and provided for all their wants at the expense of the house.

After the defeat of Orléans, the hospital of Chateauneuf (Cher) being no longer able to accommodate all the wounded who were coming in, the managers sent thirty of them on an average for a month at a time to the Christian school. The Brothers blessed the Lord, who permitted them to take care of His suffering members, and to lay some sacrifices on the altar of their country.

In the beginning of the war, the Brothers of Montpellier placed themselves at the disposal of the authorities, and offered the building of the *Ceuvre de la Jeunesse*, belonging to the Institute, for an ambulance.

Meanwhile, they performed the night-duty in an ambulance at some distance from the community-house. Towards the end of January, they at length received twenty-four patients, whom they attended with the most unceasing care. By the enlightened zeal and untiring efforts of Abbé Paillet, and the Brothers' instruction, they had the happiness of seeing thirty of their dear sick approach the holy Table.

#### *Small-Pox Ambulances.*

##### *I.—Besançon.*

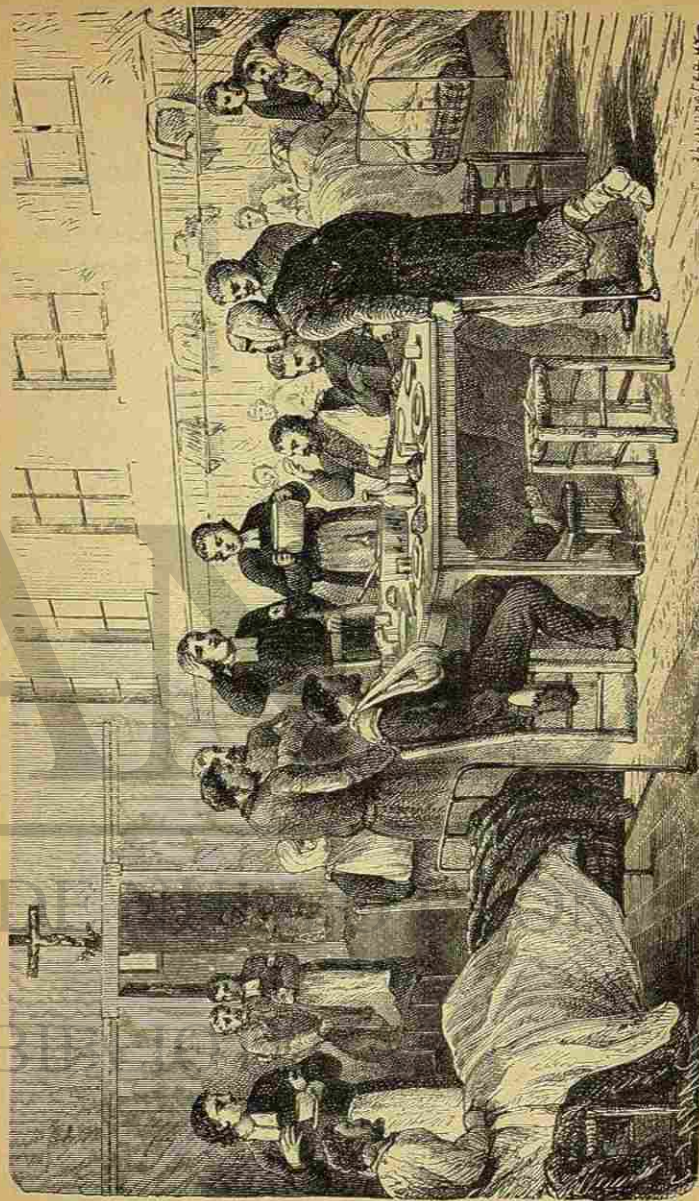
General Cambriels, in his retreat from the Vosges, turned aside to Besançon to re-organize and complete his army, and established his headquarters in the St. Claude Novitiate, about the 12th of October. After Cambriels came Crouzat, who likewise occupied the establishment. The enemy had followed close upon Cambriels, and, by the 20th of October, he was at the gates of Besançon. The situation was becoming critical, and it would have been imprudent to expose the deaf and dumb pupils, and the young novices, to the dangers of a siege; these were sent either to their families, or to some other communities.

This step enabled the ambulance to be opened in such parts of the house as the headquarters left free. On the 25th of October, the first wounded came; others followed on the 27th, 30th, and 31st of the same month. By the 9th of November, all the beds were occupied, to the number of thirty-seven. This figure varied till the end of December, when Bourbaki marched on Belfort. The troops, exhausted with fatigue, deprived of even the commonest necessities of life, exposed to a cold of fifteen to twenty degrees below zero, crowded all the ambulances. St. Claude's was quite full; the number



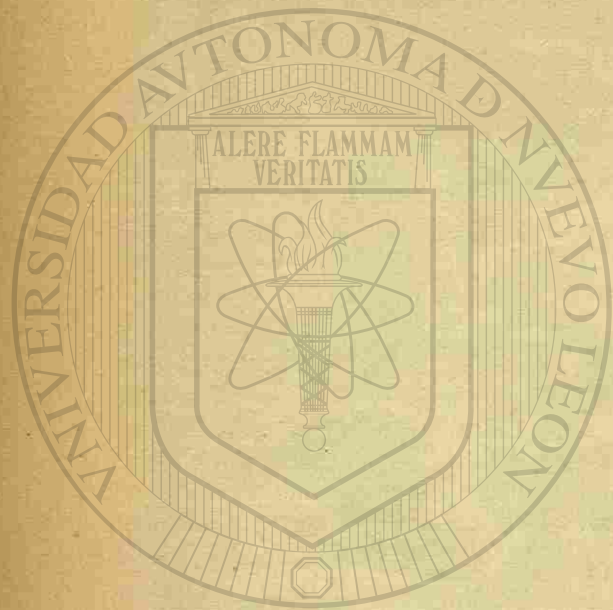
of its patients soon rose from forty to one hundred and twenty; the dormitories of the novitiate, the class-room and refectory of the deaf and dumb, the Brother Director's sleeping-room, and all the available Brothers' cells, were occupied; the beds were doubled. And yet many were glad to sleep on straw ticks improvised for the occasion. Such a gathering of sick people could not fail to engender contagious diseases. The small-pox broke out in November, and began at once to make fearful havoc; typhus came next. The ravages of both were frightful: every day some were carried off, and in the course of a few weeks the number of deaths reached ninety-five. Everywhere were seen either dead or dying, the ambulance becoming one vast charnel-house; and yet, every day, a crowd of exhausted soldiers presented themselves for admission. About the 25th of January, they came in hundreds at a time; but, sad to relate, there was not a corner to give them, not a bed, not a vacant spot! It was then that Dr. Delacroix conceived the idea of fitting up a deserted house in the neighborhood as an ambulance, where some fifty were received and taken care of. To this branch house were thenceforth removed such patients as were beginning to recover, while the worst cases were always received and treated at St. Claude's. In this way there was a daily exchange going on between the two establishments.

Things continued thus till the 15th of February, when the departure of Bourbaki's army relieved Besancon. The number of patients in the ambulance, though not so great, was still considerable. About the 10th of March, the Military Inspector warmly thanked the staff of the St. Claude ambulance for the care they had lavished on the sick, and informed the Brother Director that, on the 15th of the same month, all the patients would be removed to St. Ferréol. The evac-



GRACE BEFORE MEALS AT THE AMBULANCE OF ST. CLAUDE-LES-BESANCON.





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uation took place on the day specified; and the sixty patients then remaining in the ambulance were conveyed in carriages or in litters to their new destination. The doctor, chaplain, and all the Brothers, accompanied the patients, to see them comfortably settled at St. Ferréol. When the parting came at last, it was truly affecting. The poor patients vied with one another as to who should have the last shake-hands, the last kind word, from the devoted friends who had so long watched over them.

The ambulance had existed from the 25th of October, 1870, till the 15th of March, 1871, and had received five hundred and eighty patients. The service of this great ambulance was necessarily very trying to the St. Claude community. Each one paid his own tribute of sickness and suffering; night and day they were found by the bedside of their patients. Death and disease struck down some of their number. The much loved Brother Auguste died of the black small-pox; three others were confined to their beds by small-pox or typhus.

Amid all their sufferings, it was consoling to see how eagerly the soldiers returned to the God from whom they might have wandered away in the reckless life of the camp. Confessions and communions were frequent; very few of them went from the ambulance, or died there, without receiving the sacraments of penance and the eucharist. None of the sick, when in danger of death, refused the helps of religion; many asked for them of their own accord. In the midst of the most violent pain, they were often heard praying, half aloud, offering their sufferings to God, and in the most touching manner imploring the assistance of heaven and the protection of Mary.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONTINUATION OF THE SMALL-POX AMBULANCES.

#### THE GERMAN CONTINGENT.

##### I.—*Clemancy.*

For two months and a half, the Brothers of the free school of Clemancy conducted the ambulance for small-pox patients. They were up all night in a pestilential atmosphere, performing the most trying offices. None but those who have seen the devoted Brothers thus engaged, can form an idea of what they had to suffer. Patients whom even the doctors feared to approach, were raised up and attended by the Brothers with the tenderest care. Never had charity more perfect servants; Brothers Judes, Huras, Nicière and Gildard proved themselves heroes of abnegation and devotedness. The officers were lost in admiration on seeing the tender and anxious solicitude of which their men were the object. An Inspector-General of military hospitals, after a visit to the ambulance, called the Brothers the most virtuous of men; he publicly thanked them for the sublime deeds which they had performed with as much courage as modesty; adding that the entire Institute had deserved well of humanity and of France.

##### II.—*Pauillac (Gironde).*

On the 10th of December, thirty sick soldiers from the army of the Loire arrived at the Brothers' ambulance in

Pauillac. The kind teachers had everything ready for them; every comfort they could procure—medicines, old wine, and, above all, clean, white beds, warm and dry, in well-heated rooms.

From that date till the 15th of March, the beds were always occupied. Most of the soldiers approached the sacraments and were invested with the holy scapular. Only two died, and they as brave soldiers and true Christians. The breaking out of the small-pox in the ambulance and in the town was a great trial for the Brothers. Two of them were attacked by the disease, but God willed that they should recover, and the ambulance went on as usual.

##### III.—*Forges-les-Eaux, Guéret, etc.*

The ambulance established in the Christian School of Forges-les-Eaux lasted from the 10th of October till the 7th of April following. From the 10th of October till December 3d it received only mobiles from the Oise. The first day, the whole twenty beds were occupied; ten small-pox patients were among the number. Two died. In all, seven deaths occurred, five being Prussians.

At Guéret, the Brothers' house was converted into a barrack. The crowding of so many men resulted in small-pox, dysentery, fevers, etc. The Brothers did what they could for all. "We endeavored," said the Brother Director of Guéret, "to soothe the last moments of those who fell victims to disease. They would press our hands, with tears in their eyes, begging us to let their families know what had become of them. We enjoyed the consolation of seeing them die good Christians."

The small town of La Haye-du-Puits lodged altogether about one thousand soldiers. The small-pox broke out, and



carried off one hundred and sixty in a population of fifteen hundred. The Brothers attended some mobiles who were attacked by the disease.

Two Brothers from Corval went to the small-pox ambulance at Clemancy, to assist their Brothers, who were sinking under their fearful task.

At Gray, a Brother took care, night and day, of the small-pox patients in the ambulance; he was often assisted by his superior.

At Vendome, a small-pox ambulance was opened on the 18th of January, in the Brothers' house. It had fifteen beds and continued a month.

Five Brothers of Dun-le-Roi (Cher) did night-duty in the hospital for three months and a half. Some of the patients had small-pox.

At Fresnay, some small-pox patients from the general hospital were given in charge to the Brothers, who attended them with zeal and devotedness.

#### *German Ambulances.*

Nine Brothers from Pothiviers took care, in one of the ambulances, of about six hundred sick or wounded of both nations. Prince Albert of Prussia came with his whole staff, in the name of King William, to thank the Brother charged with the direction of the ambulance. The first patients came in September; the last went out in February.

The day following the battle of Loigny, the Brothers of Chartres took care of the Germans who were conveyed to St. Ferdinand's School. They prepared food for them in a class-room converted into a kitchen. One hundred and seventy Bavarians were immediately under treatment in this ambulance. There were two other ambulances in the Broth-

ers' school-houses; but the religious, being engaged elsewhere, could only attend to them for a few days.

Of all the establishments of Etampes, that of the Brothers was the most severely taxed by the care of the Prussian wounded. From the 1st of November till December 13th, the Brothers were enabled to continue their classes without interruption. But on that day the whole town was crowded with sick and wounded; and the Prussians, taking possession of the Brothers' house, sent them ninety-three wounded, both German and French, to nurse. For fifty-five days after that, the house was but one continued *dépôt* for the wounded. The number of sick and wounded under the care of the Brothers of Etampes amounted to one thousand one hundred.

In September, the district commissioner of Brie-Comte-Robert (Seine-et-Marne) selected the spacious class-rooms of the Christian Schools for an ambulance. The first patients arrived on the 18th of September, and were cared for at the expense of the town till the 3d of October. They were all Germans. Through the winter, the Brothers had either whole or partial charge of one or more ambulances, and it was not till the 5th of March that they found themselves freed from a duty which the rough, abrupt manner of the German soldiers rendered doubly irksome to French religious. Yet they found the patients most grateful for their care and attention; and the German nurses who were sent to assist in serving the ambulances, being good Catholics, gave both edification and consolation to the Brothers by their excellent conduct,—their regularity in assisting at the offices of the Church, and the remarkable skill and recollection with which they joined in the sacred music of the choir.



At Noyon an ambulance was established by the municipal authorities in the class-rooms of the Brothers' school and in a neighboring house. From the 25th of November till January 7th, it received 203 wounded Germans. At Fontainebleau, two Brothers did night-duty in a Prussian ambulance for three months and a half. The ambulance of Albert (Somme), opened on the 24th of December, received sixty-nine Frenchmen and one hundred and three Germans. After the battle of Pont-Noyelles, the Brothers of Albert had to provide, to prepare, and to distribute food to one hundred and seventy-two wounded soldiers who filled their house; it was a very difficult undertaking to procure provisions for so many, when the very necessities of life were scarcely to be had in the vicinity. The patients, German as well as French, warmly thanked the dear Brothers who toiled and cared for them.

At Arbois (Jura), the Brothers undertook the care of four ambulances, but especially of the Prussian section, consisting of seventy beds.

At St. Dizier, the Brothers were employed in their own house in the service of the Prussian wounded. The ambulance continued eighty days and received sixty-eight patients.

We can now contemplate the charity and brotherly love exercised by the Brothers in the services of the ambulances. We are amazed at the vast amount of labor they accomplished; we wonder that human nature could endure so much. It was Heaven, and Heaven alone, that sustained them through it. Like the miracle of the loaves, their strength was increased till it reached all the needs of the sick and wounded around them.

Let us hope that the benefits of Catholic charity will no longer be ignored or calumniated. In the evil times on which we have fallen, all noble hearts need to combine, and associate the living strength of their devotedness for the relief of humanity.



JUANIL

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN



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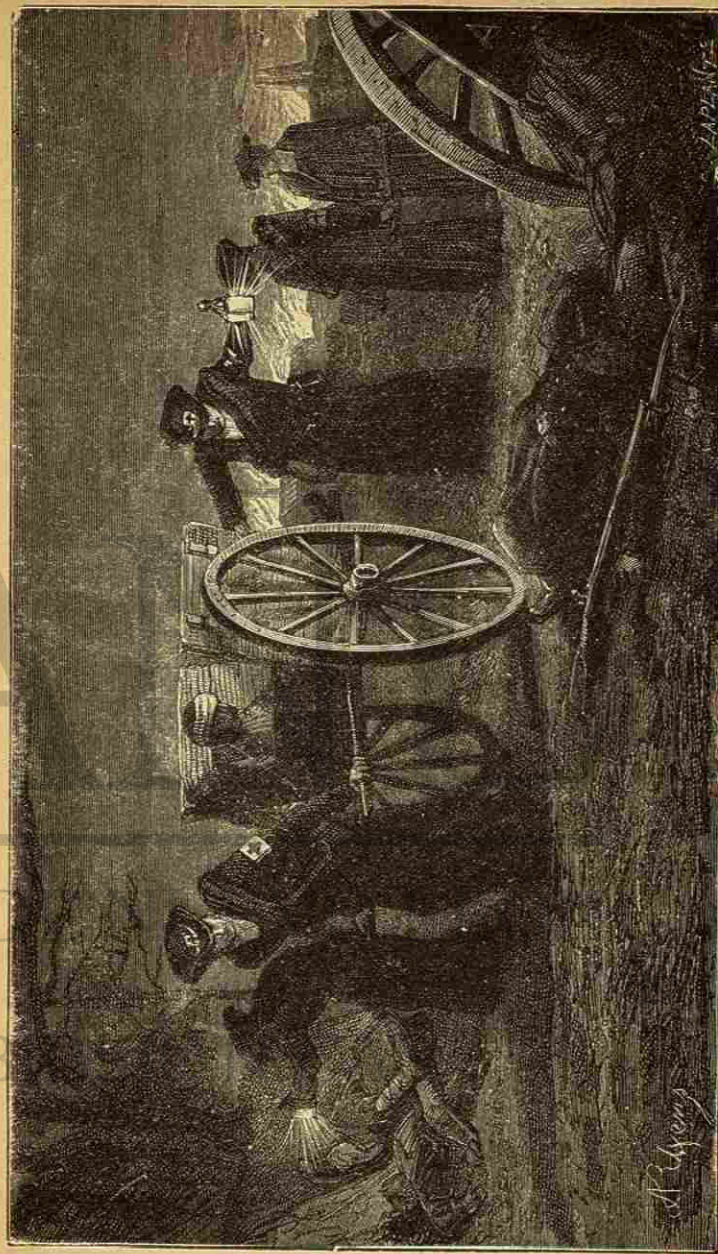
#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### THE BROTHERS OF THE PROVINCES ON THE BATTLE FIELDS.

###### 1.—*Dijon.*

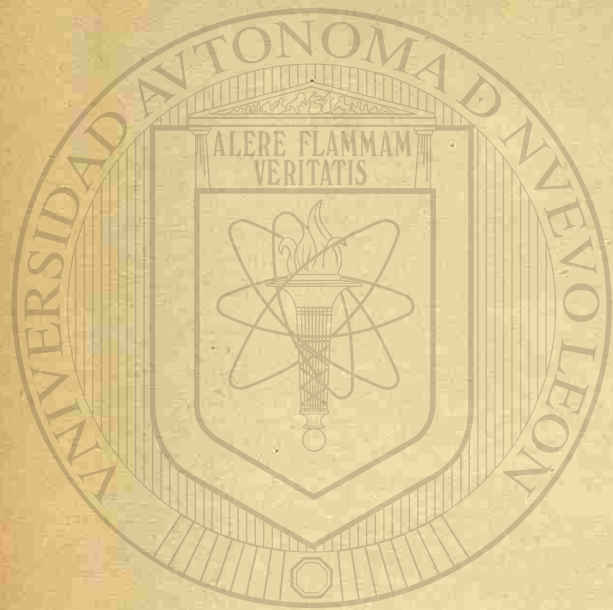
Dijon, an unfortified city, had no means of holding out against the enemy. Nevertheless, the country possessed great natural advantages in its extensive forests and impracticable roads, and if its army had been well organized and under efficient officers, it might have been a difficult matter for the Prussians, unfortified though it was, to take the city.

When the Bavarians were seen on the heights of Talmay and Jancigny (October 27th), strong, warlike, well armed and well disciplined, a general consternation ensued; nothing remained for the despairing French but to plunge into the Vingeanne and try to escape, or else to surrender to the Prussians. A great number adopted the former course; and as the water was not very deep at the time, most of them succeeded in reaching the opposite shore, and carried to Auxonne the sad news of their disaster, deeply indignant at the folly and incapacity of their general. Eight hundred mobile recruits thought it better to lay down their arms, and give themselves up as prisoners. The Committee of Defence decided not to attempt resistance before that city; their decision was a prudent one, all things considered. The soldiers remaining in the city were to set out for Lyons by Gevrey,



BROTHERS REMOVING THE WOUNDED DURING THE NIGHT IN THE SUBURBS OF DIJON.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE

Nuits, etc.; the National Guard was to be disbanded. The soldiers left Dijon grumbling, and solemnly affirming they would never set foot in it again. With its guns and military force, they thought it might at least have made a show of resistance.

The people of Dijon expected from hour to hour to see the Prussians arrive. Every one was astonished when it was understood that the city was arming anew, and was to be defended foot by foot. The soldiers were already at Beaune and Chagny; and the muskets of the National Guards were—no one knew where! perhaps in Lyons.

There was feverish excitement. A warlike spirit breathed all at once on the peaceful Burgundian capital, because some workingmen had come together, and cried out against the surrender of the city. "War! war! death to the Prussians!" was the cry; the prefect and city authorities decided on holding out with such means as they had at their disposal. And these means were much less than they had the day before.

General Fauconnet came back from Beaune, but few of his troops accompanied him: 180 men of the 6th Chasseurs, two or three companies of the 90th and 71st, and a portion of Bertaut's Sharpshooters.

On the 30th of October, the chasseurs moved forward as far as Varois: attacked by superior numbers, they maintained their position till the arrival of the enemy's cannon. When the guns thundered out, they began slowly to retire, keeping the Baden troops at bay, and not allowing themselves to be surrounded, or their lines broken. In this way, at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, they reached the heights of St. Appollinaire. At noon they defiled on Dijon by Montmusard and the Plaine-aux-Roses. Then the re-



call was sounded; seven or eight hundred National Guards ran to arms and went hither and thither, without order, without leaders, right in front of the enemy.

Cannon-shots were booming, the firing became hot, shells fell on the city, and the fight extended all along the line, from St. Peter's Gate to the Plaine-aux-Roses.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, Brother Pol de Léon, with the Abbé Collenet and Brothers Régis and Rufinus, repaired to the field of battle, at St. Peter's Gate, where the firing was most lively. The Brothers took up all the French dead or wounded whom they found at St. Peter's Gate, and on the Place Sauvageot; then they helped to carry away some Baden soldiers, forgotten by their own ambulance. The Brothers remained on the battle field till nightfall.

At the same time, the city, unable to hold out longer, had hoisted a flag of truce: messengers were sent to the enemy's camp; the firing slackened, and then ceased entirely.

At eight o'clock in the evening, a second detachment of Brothers set out with a hand-cart and lanterns to explore the field of battle. The zealous chaplain of the boarding-schools, Reverend M. Migy, and a doctor went with them. They were soon guided on their way by the light of an immense fire; a dozen or so of houses were nearly burned down in the direction of Montmusard; numerous groups were moving about on the boulevards. The Brothers inquired where they might be able to pick up some wounded; they were told to search in the surrounding gardens. There they found only the dead: the wounded had been removed. They walked onward, and soon learned that the German sentries were still there, and it was not safe to venture farther. For the sake of the poor wounded they heeded not the warning. Each one, commending himself to his guardian

angel, continued the search. It was pitch dark; the lanterns lighted only a small space; behind was the fire finishing its work of destruction. The Brothers went up to the Creux-d'Enfer road, searching carefully as they passed along; as before, only dead bodies were found. They then went higher up, to the left, among the vines; the ground was so steep and wet that it was hard to walk. As they approached Montmusard reservoir, they heard some groans. Hastening to the spot whence the sounds seemed to come, they found a member of the National Guard badly wounded. The doctor and priest did what they could to relieve him, and the Brothers gently conveyed him to the city.

The Brothers then set out again in the direction of the farmhouses; there several wounded were found; their wounds were bound up; and, as only one could be removed with one stretcher, the one most in need of immediate assistance was taken first. Again and again, with their precious burdens, the Brothers traversed the wearisome way. Towards day they obtained a little rest. Early the next morning, with their ambulance stretcher, they went back, through a heavy, continuous rain, to the battle field. Alas for the horrors of war! heaps of dead were all around them, but no wounded. The terrible work had been effectually done. Sad and disheartened, little heeding their soaked clothes and the heavy mud of the roads, they retraced their steps to their house, and busied themselves in caring for the wounded that they had brought in the night before.

*Dreux.*

On the 5th of October the battle of Epernon was fought. Next day, the Brother Director of Dreux, with two physicians and several members of the Dreux Committee, went



to the relief of the wounded. Arrived at Epernon about ten o'clock in the morning, the ambulance attendants were badly received by the Prussians, who threatened to arrest them. But they demanded permission in the name of the Geneva Convention. It was reluctantly granted, and they returned with nine wounded.

On Sunday, October 9th, the Germans attacked Dreux by the valley of the Eure; but at Cherisy they perceived they were not sufficiently strong, and fell back on Noudan.

On Monday, the 10th, the enemy returned to the charge, and planted his batteries above Cherisy; he had about 1200 men. The cannon boomed out, the firing was almost continuous in the valley of the Eure. The committee was in permanent sitting at the ambulance; the carriage was kept in readiness.

At four o'clock, it was announced that the Prussians were returning to Noudan, and that Cherisy was on fire. Some Brothers set out with the ambulance carriage; others prepared the beds; every one was cool and collected. Some wounded were brought in, but happily their number was not so great as was feared. The Brothers worked till two o'clock in the morning, trying to extinguish the fires; they saved the baker's flour, then distributed, at their own expense, bread and wine to the mobiles encamped on the road.

From the 1st to the 15th of November, the Brothers made several journeys, either to Verneuil or to Evreux, to remove their convalescents, at the risk of being made prisoners.

On the evening of the 16th, the Prussians were announced as being at Nogent-le-Rio, within a short distance of Dreux. On the 17th, the last great battle was fought at Dreux: by two o'clock all was lost for the French, who fled to-

wards Nonancourt and Aigle. It was not till the middle of the night that the enemy allowed the Brothers to go on the field of battle to pick up the French dead and wounded.

*Coulmiers.*

The army of the Loire, under the command of General d'Aurelle de Paladines, moving on Orléans, fell in with the army of General Von der Tann. On the 9th of November, an engagement took place at Coulmiers. The battle lasted all day with great fury and determination. The young French troops proved themselves full of courage and martial ardor, standing solid, unflinching, beneath a murderous fire; and never shrinking from advancing when the word of command was given. They lay down victorious on the field of battle, after putting General Von der Tann's whole army to flight. Orléans was saved. The night was spent in picking up the wounded. Next day, numerous carriages came from Orléans to remove those who were still on the ground, or had been placed in some of the houses of the neighboring villages. The Brothers of the Christian Schools made themselves remarkable on that day by their indefatigable exertions, and their charitable care of the victims of war; they removed some, consoled and relieved others, with that gentleness, respect, and serenity of mind characteristic of the true friends of humanity. They visited the villages of Champs and Ormeteau, the taking of which had been the signal for the enemy's retreat. Some wounded soldiers, forgotten in a farmhouse at Ormeteau, were brought by them in the evening to the ambulance of Our Lady of Nazareth.

*Attempt to Recover Dijon.*

On the 26th of November, the Garibaldian army raised



a commotion amongst the German troops. Attacked at the small villages of Pâques and Prenois, a short distance from Dijon, the Prussians were beaten all day, and retreated successively to the very walls of the city. According to the wounded brought in that evening to the Brothers' ambulance, the action was not decisive.

Dark night shrouded the combatants. It was forbidden to fire a single shot; the order was given to charge with the bayonet. A terrible conflict ensued; the Prussians fled in all directions; complete success seemed to rest with the French troops. It was not to be. The enemy of the Church need not count on a victory. A battery of mitrailleuses, placed in reserve to cover the retreat of the Germans, suddenly opened fire, and in turn struck terror into the Garibaldian army. The action over, the fields were strewn with the dead and the dying. Next morning, the hospital wagons gathered them up. At six o'clock in the evening, the Brothers of the boarding-school were informed that groans were still heard on the field of battle. Notwithstanding the darkness and the constant rain that was falling, they at once set out in search of the poor wounded.

*Battle of Nuits (Dec. 18th).*

On the 18th of December, Werder went out from Dijon with forty-eight pieces of cannon and twenty-four thousand men, marching in the direction of Nuits. His troops, divided into three columns, were to attack the French at three points simultaneously. General Cremier, apprised of the intended attack on Nuits, fell back immediately on that town. The line of battle he established had its right resting on Boncourt.

Passing by the castle of Berchère and Nuits, it ran up

again to the table-land of Chaux, and terminated on the left by a round eminence, the approaches to which were defended by ravines covered with wood.

The battle commenced at the same time all along the line. Dijon was in the greatest anxiety; every one longed to know the issue of a combat sustained by 9000 Frenchmen, with eighteen pieces of cannon, against an enemy far superior in numbers and in organization. All night, cannon and carriages were passing through the streets; it was said the Germans brought back more than a hundred carriage-loads of wounded. "The Prussians are taken up and cared for; but what becomes of our poor Frenchmen?" said the charitable and patriotic Brothers of Dijon. They set out for Nuits without asking the Prussian authorities for a passport, which would doubtless have been refused. To begin the good work at once, they brought out some wounded, who, being almost recovered, they hoped might be able to make their escape. They commended them to the care of the Most Blessed Virgin and their good angels.

It was with no small difficulty that they were allowed by the Prussian outposts to pass. They, however, at last succeeded, and advanced as quickly as they could.

"A little before we reached Gevrey," writes Brother Marcellian, "we met a troop of cavalry escorting some thirty French prisoners. How our hearts throbbed on seeing those poor young fellows marching silently along, with bent head and downcast eye!

"Standing up, we saluted them with the respect due to misfortune. . . . As soon as we reached Vosne, we asked if there were any wounded; we were taken to a house where there were four. We did all we could for them; but their wounds were so serious that it was necessary to take them to the city.



"At the head of a long and mournful cavalcade we arrived at Nuits. The town was in a state of desolation impossible to describe. Everywhere, remains of weapons, knapsacks, uniforms! The Prussians had broken or burned what they could not take away; the inhabitants were only beginning to venture from the cellars, where they had spent all the preceding day; the column we had met had searched all the houses for soldiers or arms; they had made bonfires of the muskets and knapsacks, and the explosion of the cartouches they had neglected to take with them, made the concealed inhabitants think that the battle was beginning again. The return of the enemy was expected every moment. The inhabitants showed themselves full of compassion for the poor wounded; the question was, who would take care of them? An ambulance was established in almost every house."

The Brothers set out for the field of battle. It was strewn with the dead, whom the Prussians had stripped of everything. In the part the Brothers visited, there were no longer any wounded to be found; farther on, they explored the place where the thick of the fight had been, near the castle of Berchère. At this spot the enemy was repulsed by Colonel Graziani, who was mortally wounded. The French artilleryists shot down with remarkable precision the Prussian masses, whom Werder seemed to offer as a holocaust. When the Brothers were entering the city at nightfall, they perceived, near the *Patron* coffee-house, a number of carriages loaded with wounded. The large hall of the coffee-house, thanks to a thick layer of straw, was converted into an ambulance; the heater of the establishment made the place comfortable for the poor soldiers, so the Brothers concluded there was no need for them to go farther, when there was so much work for them there: the total want of doctors made the vic-

tims doubly interesting. The Brothers accordingly went to work to dress their wounds, and do what they could to relieve them.

It was not long till a physician arrived from Chalons, who completed the Brothers' work. After going to a neighboring ambulance to get some needed refreshment, they spent the whole night amongst the wounded.

The next day they found the streets full of soldiers; some were wounded; others had escaped the search of the Prussians; all were asking the way to Beaune, and, whether on foot or riding, all were hurrying away from the vicinity of the Germans.

The Brothers questioned a poor soldier who could hardly walk. He told them he had passed the night in a neighboring house, where there were ten other wounded soldiers, none of whom had yet had their wounds dressed.

"We hastened to the house," says Brother Marcellian, "and did the best we could for the poor fellows. Happily, their wounds were not serious, and most of our patients were soon able to set out for Beaune, but not without first warmly thanking us for our services. We, also, set out for the same place.

"In the evening, we learned that a Brother had come for us from Dijon. They were uneasy about us in our dear community. The Prussians were in a state of terror and exasperation hard to describe; they had redoubled their precautions. After nine o'clock, no one could go out into the streets; all the posts were doubled. They were seen to be gloomy and restless; when they spoke of Nuits, it was with tears in their eyes. On that bloody day they lost the Prince of Baden, several generals and colonels, a great number of officers, and about seven thousand men. If a few thousand French soldiers



had appeared before the gates of Dijon, the Prussians would have decamped, leaving baggage and wounded in our possession."

On the other hand, the French at Beaune were no less frightened; they thought themselves completely beaten, and spoke about falling back on Chagny. The troops spent their time railing against their commanders. It was strange that re-enforcements had not arrived from Chagny on the day of the battle: and, especially, that a corps of six or seven thousand men had remained at Seurre, only two leagues from Nuits, regardless of the 18th. There again history will answer, and point out that spirit of blindness which everywhere showed itself as the undeniable proof of the Divine chastisement.

The Brothers were not to enter Dijon again without some trouble; they were stopped at Perrigny, and allowed to go no farther. The Brother who had gone to Beaune in search of them, showed the letter of Brother Pol-de-Léon, which had served in the morning as a passport. The Prussian replied that the officers of the post had been punished for not having required a regular permit. They must wait the decision of the superior officer, who was quartered half a league from the village.

At last permission arrived; and before nine o'clock the pilgrims of charity knocked at the door of their community.

Foreseeing that engagements would occur around Dijon, it was agreed to organize a flying ambulance in the boarding-school, in order to bring relief to the wounded on the battle-fields. The Brother Infirmarian remained in the ambulance belonging to the house. But the school-classes were not to be neglected. By some of the Brothers doing an extra share of labor, a certain number might be spared. All the Broth-

ers, without exception, asked to go with the flying ambulance; but all could not be chosen; and as preference is not usually shown in communities, all had to take their chance. Six names were drawn from the vase, and these were allowed to go. This took place on the 26th of December. Next day the Prussians left Dijon; on the 28th, French troops arrived; some days after, Garibaldi ruled the city. The Brothers' flying ambulance was temporarily closed.

#### *The Chalons Ambulance.*

This ambulance was only opened with a view to the battles that might take place in Burgundy. It consisted of a delegate from the International Relief Society, three doctors, two medical students, and four Brothers of the Christian Schools as nurses.

On the formation of the army of Chagny, it went to establish itself in the village of Bully. The camp of Chagny having been brought to the banks of the Loire, it awaited the opportunity of being employed. The first days of December, a council of war was held at Chalons between Garibaldi, Cremier, and Pelissier; new troops, specially formed from the legions of the Rhone, advanced as far as Beaume. The question was to recover Dijon; the little flying ambulance put itself in motion. On the 6th of December, it was at Beaume; on the 15th, at Nuits; it was the only foreign ambulance that followed the army. On the 18th, as we have already stated, Cremier's army was attacked by three Prussian columns from Dijon; it had to fight in disorder. The contest raged furiously all the evening, in the very streets of Nuits. Garibaldi at Autun, and Pelissier at Seurre, hearing the cannon, contented themselves with telegraphing to Mâcon and to Lyons. The Prussians, amazed



at their victory, hastened to regain Dijon. Three Brothers from Chalons, the Brothers of Nuits, and three Brothers from Dijon, assisted the physicians of the city and the ambulance doctor in gathering up the wounded, making the first dressings, and organizing the convoys of sick soldiers for Beaume, Bully and Chagny; they also buried a great number of dead. It was not till four days after the battle that a Lyonnaise ambulance arrived. The military ambulance had beaten a retreat with the army; it returned to Nuits on the fifth day. During that time 500 wounded had been cared for by the ambulance doctor and three local physicians, with the help of the Brothers and some Sisters of Charity.

On the 26th of January, Brother Rogatianus, Director of Chalons, repaired to Dijon, at the request of several families, to bring back the wounded mobiles of the section; seventeen, of whom five were Chalonnese, were enabled to return with them, and were received into the ambulance in the Brothers' Schools.

*Alençon.*

General Lipowski arrived at Alençon on the 14th of January, for the purpose of opposing the march of the Prussians. He had two thousand sharpshooters, a squadron of the 8th Chasseurs, and eight pieces of artillery. He counted, moreover, for the defence of the city, on four thousand mobiles belonging to the country place under his command. On the 15th, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the enemy was within a short distance of Alençon; he advanced in close battalions by the road from Mans. The French fought with energy, and drove back the Germans. The combat lasted till night. Ammunition failed the French, and re-enforcements came to the relief of the Prussians. To persist in defending Alençon

would expose the town to destruction, without being any advantage to the army. During the night, Lipowski effected his retreat to St. Denis. His killed and wounded were considerable, but those of the Prussians were still greater. On the 15th, when the firing had ceased, six Christian Brothers set out in haste for the battle field, to gather up the wounded, whom they brought, through the snow, to the city ambulances. On the 16th, they continued their work of charity. On the 17th, they went, with M. Grollier, an ex-deputy, to remove and bury the dead who were yet lying on the battle field.

"The Brothers of Alençon," said the *Semaine Religieuse* of Sééz, of the 2d of February, "have shown themselves worthy emulators of the Brothers of Paris. Their courageous conduct has excited general admiration." This eulogium, M. Lecointre, mayor of the city, confirmed in a public document signed by his own hand.

*Messigny.*

On the 21st of January, it was rumored in Dijon that there was fighting going on near the city. The Brothers immediately prepared to set out. They were directed to Messigny. Furnished with everything requisite for the first dressings, they hastened on as fast as possible. The cannon thundered loudly on the left; there was every indication of a warm encounter going on towards Talant. They regretted not having gone in that direction. To go back would cause great loss of time; it was not to be thought of. Besides, the scene of action being only a short distance from Dijon, other Brothers would hasten thither on hearing the cannonade. They were not mistaken: the disciples of the Venerable De La Salle were seen as usual on the battle field, tending



the wounded, regardless of danger, while shot and shell rained around them.

Within a league of Messigny, the Brothers met troops who were returning from fighting the Germans. At sight of the ambulance flag and stripes, the soldiers applauded vociferously, and drew up on both sides of the way, to open a passage for the soldiers of charity. "There is something to look at!" they exclaimed; "here come men to assist us!—Long live the Brothers!" (*Vivent les Frères.*) Taking off their caps, they saluted them with enthusiasm. From each new company they met, the Brothers received a fresh broadside of praise and acclamation; sharpshooters from the Isère, chasseurs from the Alps, even Garibaldians,—all opened their ranks. "Bravo!" cried the French; "Evviva!" shouted the Italians; it was a triumph. The modest heroes who were its objects, hurried on as fast as they could, confused and embarrassed by the honor shown them. "You will take good care of our wounded," said some; "We have some dead under a hedge," cried others; "put them aside; we will come for them." Others again said: "Take the names of any of ours you may find; you will recognize them by their gray coats." These demands were accompanied by cordial shaking of the hands and patriotic bravos.

Arrived at Messigny, the Brothers hastened to the battle-field. The French wounded had been almost all removed; the inhabitants had taken them into their houses, but they had not dared to touch the Prussians, or to go into the fields, where many of the Uhlans lay.

The Brothers did what they could for the Prussians, and then busied themselves in burying the dead. They also visited the several ambulances, and took the names of all the wounded, so as to be able to answer the inquiries which had

been made of them. When they found the service was duly organized, and, under the care of the Sisters, the patients well attended to, they set out for Dijon, in order to send physicians and other assistance.

Slowly and cautiously they went their way, continually answering the "Who goes there?" of the sentries. Everywhere the lanterns of the patrolling officers, and the bivouac fires of the men gleaming through the darkness—all denoted that the morrow would not pass without fighting.

*Battle of Talant (Jan. 22d).*

Early in the morning, the Brothers heard Mass and received Holy Communion, so as to be ready for any event; they then set out for Talant.

It had snowed during the night; the cold was piercing; a thick mist prevented seeing beyond a short distance. The enemy were near; they had pillaged some of the village houses nearest the road during the night; it was necessary to move the wounded that remained in the place as soon as possible.

The Brothers hastily finished the loading of some ambulance wagons, which at once started for Dijon. There were still more to take. These they placed with their mattresses on stretchers; but the poor patients were not comfortable, and the bearers greatly fatigued. The Brothers gently put the wounded into a large harvest-cart which happened to be there, yoked themselves to it and set out for Dijon. Carefully avoiding the stones and ruts of the road, they proceeded smoothly enough till they reached the city. Here the rough pavement jarred the soldiers terribly, and they were rejoiced when the Brothers reached the school ambulance and they were transferred to clean, soft beds. Seeing them



comfortably settled, the indefatigable religious returned to the battle field.

The mist had cleared away; the mighty voice of the cannon began to make itself heard. The Prussians occupied two hills of considerable height; one commanded the village of Daix; the other was the hill of Chaumont; the Paris road passes between them. The French artillery was planted on the heights of Talant and Fontaine, right opposite these two, while the space separating the two armies, all planted with vines, was intersected by numerous low walls.

At first, the affair seemed little more than an artillery duel, from which the houses alone were likely to suffer. At length three zouaves and half a score of chasseurs, placing themselves under the leadership of an old veteran, a man of tried courage, glided along the walls unobserved. Arrived at the foot of the declivity, they climbed with gymnastic step, and suddenly appeared on the top before the astonished Prussians, who fled in disorder, supposing themselves attacked by an army of devils. Those brave fellows, calling for help, turned to the left to seize four pieces of artillery; but their comrades did not dare to follow them; this hesitation enabled the Prussians to save their guns. The troops, ashamed of their inactivity, prepared to follow up the bold stroke which had succeeded so well. Those nearest the hill began to climb it; on every side the offensive movement was emphatic. The Brothers marched in the front ranks; there were blood and wounds: bandages and lint were, therefore, in immediate requisition.

The Germans did not remain inactive; from the heights of Daix they opened a well-sustained fire on the French. Whilst the French and Prussian balls were whistling in their ears, the Brothers seated the wounded on a heap of stones, at

the back of a ditch, and, after binding up their wounds, carried them to the wagons, which stood in a sheltered spot a little farther on. They tended the zouave who was the first to climb the heights of Chaumont. Although badly wounded, the brave fellow, contrary to all expectation, was cured, and, after a month's treatment in the ambulance, bore away, as trophies, some large scars, a sabre, a gun, and a helmet taken from the Prussians.

Meanwhile, the French continued their flanking movement; the enemy, fearful of being surrounded, effected his retreat.

The Brothers, prosecuting their charitable work, were informed by a Garibaldian major that the Haute Ville (upper town) ambulance inmates had been massacred that very night by the savage Germans. They afterwards learned the details of this horrible butchery from one of the victims, who only escaped death by keeping himself motionless for twelve hours between a bed and a wall.

The Brothers, by their generous devotedness, won the admiration of all. An officer, intending to compliment them, said: "Well! gentlemen, you are certainly doing your duty this time." Another, standing by, quickly retorted: "Lieutenant, these gentlemen always do their duty." The Brothers smiled and went on with their work.

Having crossed the field of battle, they reached the Changey farm; the road was slippery; the horse that drew the Brothers' vehicle seemed likely to fall at every step. Below Talant they met Ricciotti, at the head of a Garibaldian column. The crowd cried out: "Long live Garibaldi!" But the fugitive of Mentana had not appeared all day. The true hero of the battle was the poor zouave who lay tossing in delirium on his bed of pain, and of whom no one was thinking, so vain and blind is human glory.



*Battle of Pouilly (January 23d).*

On the morning of the 23d of January, the Brothers of Dijon set out again to pick up the French dead still remaining on the field of battle. The mobiles of Aveyron had paid a large tribute; the road was strewn with their bodies as far as the heights of Bonvau. The Brothers were joined by some benevolent men. When the ambulance wagon was full, they started for the city, all besmeared with blood; their hands they washed in the snow, but their clothes remained covered with large red spots.

They were near the Changey farm, when the cry arose: "Save himself who can! haste! haste!" The alarm was given by the scouts, who had caught a distant view of the Uhlans. Each one fled as fast as he could. The Brothers alone continued their march; the overladen horse could go no faster. Several times they looked back to make sure the enemy was not in pursuit, and only breathed freely when they got below Talant. There they covered the bodies with straw, and soon after entered the city with their dismal load.

Again they set out, in the direction of Fontaine. Cannon thundered on the right; they betook themselves to the Langres road. The battle had commenced. The guns of Fontaine, of Montchapel, and of Montmusard were doing wonders, the Prussian artillery making vigorous answer. Garibaldi had established his headquarters in the castle of Pouilly, three kilometres from the city; Ricciotti, with some sharpshooters, occupied the bone-black factory midway between the castle and Dijon; the mobiles lined the railroad embankment. A provisional ambulance had been organized in one of the nearest houses. Two priests from Notre Dame par-

ish were there, administering to the wounded the last rites of the Church, and also assisting in the dressing of the wounds. The principal ambulance was somewhat farther on, in what was called the Capuchin barracks. The Brothers had already taken up some wounded, when from every side was heard the cry: "Fly! fly! save himself who can!" There was the wildest confusion. Pieces of cannon limbered up with the greatest difficulty, and took up a position at a trifling distance from the first houses of the city. A troop of cavalry were seen dashing past, sweeping away all before them; in their midst was seen Garibaldi reclining at his ease in a comfortable carriage. Finding himself no longer safe in the castle of Pouilly, he was hastening to put his precious person under cover, thus throwing the whole army into trouble and discouragement. The mobiles abandoned the railroad embankment. The Prussians, taking advantage of the disturbance, moved forward; they seized the castle deserted by Garibaldi, and there burned several prisoners, amongst whom was a captain of sharpshooters. The French troops were losing ground everywhere; desertion was assuming frightful proportions, when the cavalry, having placed the hero of Aspromonte in a place of safety, re-appeared on the scene and occupied all the exits. The cavalrymen hastened, revolver in hand, to bring back the fugitives, and ruthlessly shot down those who would not obey. These heroic measures succeeded: forced to remain under fire, and receiving at the same time some re-enforcements, the soldiers again resumed their courage. A fearful roll of musketry was heard; the fire, forming a continuous line, was seen advancing or receding according to the evolutions of the fight; the sharp sound of the mitrailleuses broke in on the hoarse rattle of the musketry; the sullen roar of the cannon form-



ed the bass of this dreadful concert. There was half an hour of terrible anxiety; no one knew which side was gaining the advantage.

The Brothers did not take a moment's rest; no sooner had they carried off one wounded soldier, than they hastened for another; thus incessantly coming and going. Balls whistled about them; shells fell within a few paces of their position, and were seen tearing up the ploughed earth, where, happily, few of them exploded. They did not hope to escape, but, addressing fervent prayers to heaven, they continued their work of charity, undaunted by the fear of death.

The terrible arch of fire grew narrower and narrower; the artillery, annoyed by the fog, could not support their troops effectively. On the left, decisive work was going on. Ricciotti held his ground in the factory, which the Prussians had completely surrounded; through the windows, through the apertures in the outer wall, a fearful fire lit up the ranks of the assailants, but nowise diminished their ardor; some even, hoisted by their comrades, had scaled the wall and jumped into the enclosure, where they were quickly pierced with bullets. The Isère sharpshooters and other companies, understanding that the moment was decisive, darted forward simultaneously, crossed the walls, and fell with their bayonets on the Germans. The latter, unable to sustain this shock, fled precipitately, leaving the colors of their (61st) regiment. They were hotly pursued; on every side the trumpets were heard sounding the charge: "Forward! forward!" cried the French; "charge bayonets!" The Prussians fled still more rapidly, and were pursued as far as the heights, where the French took up a strong position. The Brothers, with the stretchers on their shoulders, had follow-

ed every incident of the fight; never quailing for an instant, they were almost alone in lending aid to the poor wounded. Soldiers who were able to walk, dragged themselves to the ambulance, others placed themselves, or were placed, on the stretchers; some died on the way, and were laid as corpses on the ambulance bed.

"Several," writes Brother Marcellian, "arrived safe; and, notwithstanding their excruciating sufferings, thanked us for bringing them to a place of safety. At their wish, we got a priest for them, so that they could receive the last rites of the Church before death, to which, with a firm trust in God, they bowed in humble resignation.

"The moment of danger was past; doctors and nurses arrived in numbers. It was time, for our strength was exhausted, and we bent our steps to our community. During the following days, we went out to take up the French dead. Then it was that Garibaldi issued his famous, or rather infamous, proclamation, in which, boasting he had vanquished the proud Germans, he held up priests and religious to public contempt and execration! This was the reward of our service; the only one we could expect from the excommunicated Italian. We revenged ourselves by redoubling our care of the numerous Garibaldians in our ambulance, and who, for the most part, gave us consolation."

Vengeance rests with God. The glory which the enemies of God and religion assumed to themselves, was of the shortest possible duration: the placards had scarcely been posted up, when it became known that all these attacks on Dijon were mere stratagems of war. It had been expedient to keep the fifty thousand men and one hundred pieces of cannon of Garibaldi's army engaged, whilst Manteuffel's troops were crossing the difficult passes, and, falling on Dôle,



were at one stroke cutting off the retreat and provisioning of Bourbaki's army.

Then Garibaldi fled in all haste, leaving the city, as a last memento, the contribution of a million of francs, in ready money, to Manteuffel.

*Pontarlier.*

On the 24th of January, there remained but one way open to Bourbaki's army, that of Pontarlier, through the Jura Mountains, and even that was threatened on the flank by Manteuffel. General Clinchant succeeded Bourbaki. On the 27th of January, the heads of his columns reached Pontarlier, while the Prussians were already seeking to cut off that single line of retreat. On the 28th, the whole army was in the neighborhood of that town. On the 29th, the enemy attacked them at Chaffois, at Sombacourt, and Planches. On the 31st, General Clinchant addressed his soldiers in these terms:—

“Soldiers of the army of the East :

“Even a few hours since, I had a hope of saving you for the national defence. Our passage to Lyons through the Jura Mountains was safe.

“A fatal error has placed us in a position, the danger of which I will not conceal from you.

“Whilst our faith in the armistice, which had been announced and confirmed to us by our government, bound us to remain inactive, the hostile columns continued their march, took possession of the passes that had been ours, and so cut off our retreat. It is now too late to accomplish the work so interrupted; we are surrounded by superior forces, but I will not give up to Prussia either a man or a gun.

“We are going to ask from Swiss neutrality the protection of its flag; but in this retreat towards the frontier I count on a final effort on your part. Let us, foot by foot, defend the last slopes of our mountains; let us protect the retreat of our artillery, and only retire to a hospitable soil after we shall have saved our stores, ammunition and cannon.

“Soldiers, I count on your energy, your firmness; the country must know that we have all done our duty to the last, and that fate alone compels us to lay down our arms.

“CLINCHANT.”

The departure of the army for Switzerland took place on February 1st. About two o'clock in the afternoon, its rear-guard was attacked in the pass of La Cluse; the firing was at twenty paces; the Germans sustained considerable losses about Pontarlier and on the heights. The French, surrounded on every side, overwhelmed by numbers, fell back, exhausted by fatigue, hunger and cold. But they made their retreat murderous to the enemy; the ground was strewn with Prussian corpses and broken weapons: the snow, red with human blood. During the engagements, the French continued their dismal retreat, which the reserve had the honor of covering.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, the nurses of the fourth international ambulance, accompanied by eight Brothers furnished with stretchers, repaired to the scene of the conflict, and took up French and Germans, whom they brought to the Christian School, about two kilometres distant. This charitable and painful mission was not finished till ten o'clock at night, when the cold was 30 or 40 degrees below zero.



*Ham.*

On December 9th, at six o'clock in the evening, General Lecomte, commander of the first division of the twenty-second corps, arrived at Ham. Here another engagement took place, in which the Prussians capitulated, leaving with the French two hundred and seventy-five prisoners, of whom twelve were officers or engineers. The Brothers of the Christian Schools removed the wounded, and did ambulance duty for ten days.

*Bombardment of Beauregard (Thionville).*

"It was the 22d of November," writes the Brother Director of the boarding-school of Beauregard, "about seven o'clock in the morning: from eighty to one hundred pieces of cannon, posted on all the heights around the square of Thionville, concentrated their fire on that town and threw the population into terror and dismay. Some poor families having no cellars in which to shelter themselves from the bombshells coming in the direction of Beauregard, I had them retire to the cellars of our establishment. These were some fifty in number; beds were taken there, a stove put up, and, till after the surrender of the place, we furnished them with all the necessaries of life. The Holy Sacrament was exposed in one of the cellars, where, from time to time, prayers were offered up for the welfare of all. No more touching sight could be imagined than that priest, those religious, those old people, those children, all united in spirit, in presence of Jesus Christ lovingly with them there in that poor place, dimly lit by the sanctuary lamp. A hundred voices thundered fearfully around; shells whistled above our heads, bringing fire and death to the doomed town. We were reminded of Bethlehem and the Catacombs, and at the

same time had before us a faint yet dreadful image of what the Last Day is to be. It was not hard to recollect one's self: prayer escaped from the lips, or rather from the soul, as a natural and irresistible outpouring, giving comfort and serenity to afflicted, terror-stricken hearts.

"We were in this situation for two days and a half, and two nights. On the morning of the third day (November 25th), perceiving that the fire of the besieging party redoubled its violence, it occurred to us to make application to General Von Kamecke, commander-in-chief of the German army. I spoke to the chaplain about the matter, and it was agreed that we should both go to his headquarters, furnished with a white flag, and escorted by German soldiers. We sent to the General-in-chief the following letter:—

"TO THE GENERAL COMMANDING THE ARMY BEFORE  
THIONVILLE.

"GENERAL:

"We, the minister of a God of charity, and a religious vowed to the practice of that virtue, venture to beg of your Excellency permission to offer in the class-rooms of the school-house of Beauregard, an asylum to the women and children of the town of Thionville.

"Recalling to mind the words of your sovereign, "I make war on the Emperor and his soldiers, and not on the people," we hope that you will have compassion on these innocent victims, who can only weep and die.

"Please to accept, general, etc.

"ALTMAYER, *Chaplain.*

"BROTHER ATHANASIUS, *Director.*"



"The general received the flag-bearers very courteously, but declared he could not accede to their request; he understood such a step on the part of a priest and a religious, but the necessities of war did not permit him to gratify wishes which he fully shared.

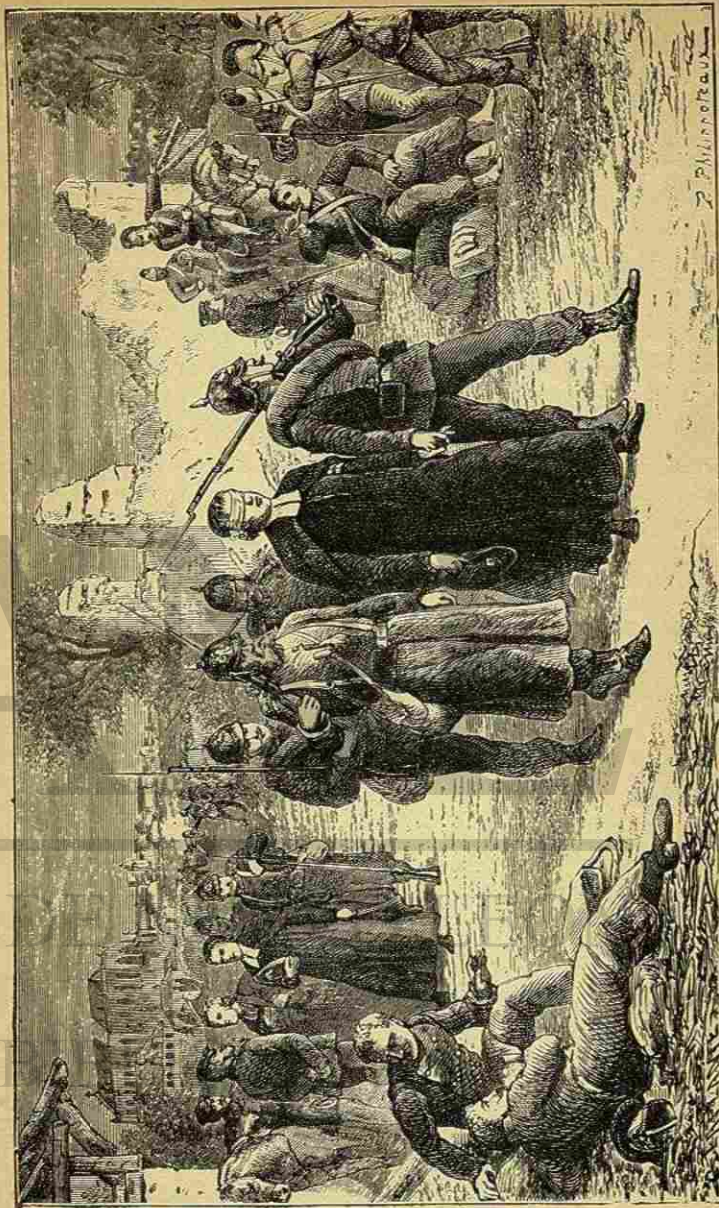
"A great number of the houses had been destroyed, and many others were quite uninhabitable. As soon as the town was open, I wrote to the mayor, offering our class-rooms to those whose houses had been burned. I sent a similar letter to General Von Kamecke, who, by the surrender of the place, had become the only recognized authority.

"The general sent his adjutant the same evening, to commend our generosity, and to say that I might arrange next day with the Prussian officer in command for the execution of my project.

"The mayor and the whole population of Thionville testified the liveliest gratitude. They gladly availed themselves of our offer. The sub-prefect asked to stay at our house while he remained in Thionville. Two families gave us their furniture in charge. Eight others installed themselves in our house, bringing with them what they had been able to snatch from the flames. Finally, some fifty poor persons were sent us, who had lost their all. We provided them with food and what clothing they needed."

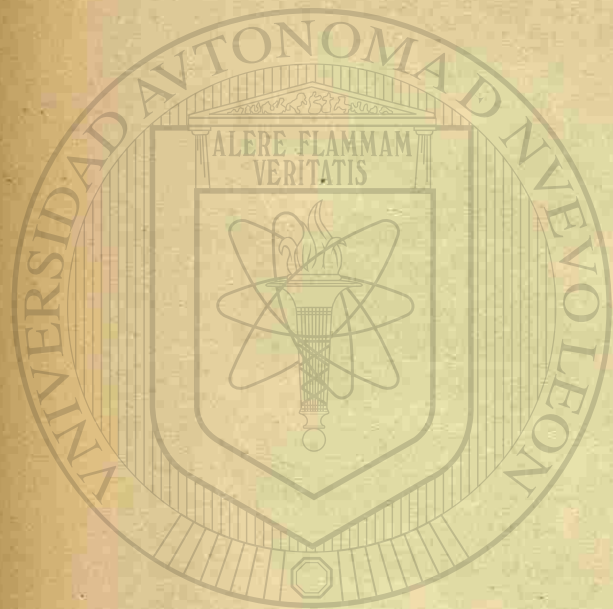
*Péronne.*

On the 1st of December, a company of 100 mobiles took possession of the Brothers' house in Péronne. The classes had been closed by order of the authorities. The orphans of the establishment were with difficulty sent to Epehy. The bombardment of the town commenced on the 28th of December and continued till the 10th of January. Nine field



THE BROTHER DIRECTOR OF BEAUREGARD GOING TO PLEAD WITH THE PRUSSIAN GENERAL IN BEHALF OF THE INHABITANTS OF THIONVILLE





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DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

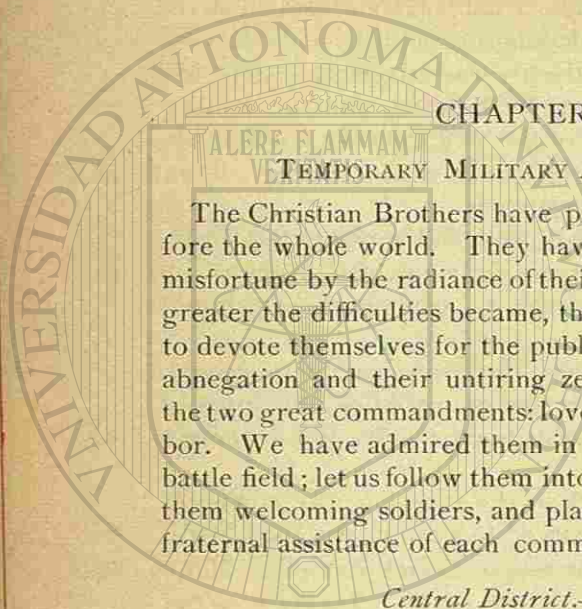
batteries, under the command of Colonel Von Kamecke, were employed in that attack. The brunt was concentrated on the dwellings of the town, neglecting the suburbs and the ramparts: during the first day the fire was extremely violent, and aimed directly at the church, the hospital, and the municipal buildings. The saving of the sick from the hospital was effected under a rain of fire, thanks to the courage of the nuns and a few of the townspeople.

Two recruits were mortally wounded in one of the Brothers' class-rooms. All the others, in terror, sought refuge in the cellar, which was too small to contain them without great crowding.

On the 31st of December, the firing suddenly ceased. Next day there was a suspension of hostilities; the army of the North was marching towards Bapaume: the Prussians had gone to fight them.

January 2d, at ten o'clock in the morning, the bombardment was resumed with renewed fury, and continued without intermission. Every one sought a place of safety. Many took refuge in the casemates of the castle. There, as in the Brothers' cellar, the space was limited. Pressed closely together, men could neither stretch their limbs nor lie down. This martyrdom lasted nine days and a half. Charged with supplying food and drink to more than four hundred persons, the Brothers were obliged to cross a large court-yard twelve or fifteen times a day. When the whistling of a shell was heard, they stretched themselves on the ground and were thus saved from any accident. On the 10th of January, the town capitulated; seventy houses had been completely destroyed, five or six hundred were rendered more or less uninhabitable; some few remained almost uninjured; that of the Brothers was among the fortunate number.





CHAPTER XV.

TEMPORARY MILITARY ACCOMMODATION.

The Christian Brothers have proved their patriotism before the whole world. They have illumined their country's misfortune by the radiance of their ever-active charity. The greater the difficulties became, the more willing were they to devote themselves for the public weal. In their sublime abnegation and their untiring zeal, they nobly carried out the two great commandments: love of God and of their neighbor. We have admired them in the ambulance and on the battle field; let us follow them into their own homes, and see them welcoming soldiers, and placing at their disposal the fraternal assistance of each community.

*Central District.—Nevers.*

The position of Nevers, in the neighborhood of a camp, not far from threatened Departments, made it liable to the frequent passage of troops. From the 12th of September till the 19th of March, the Brothers had successively to lodge mobiles, national guards, mobile recruits, sharpshooters, soldiers of the line, and some Turcos. The number of these troops sometimes reached 300, and was never less than 150.

The following document will show the generous hospitality extended to the soldiers:

"The captain commanding the 5th Company of the First Battalion, stationed in the establishment of the Brothers of

the Christian Schools in Nevers, certifies that during the stay of his company in said establishment, nothing but praise was due to the Brothers, and particularly the Brother Director, who kindly gave the mobile guards the use of bedding, cooking utensils, wood and light. The captain, in his own name and that of the members of his company, is happy to testify his gratitude to them.

"FOULON,  
"Captain in Command."

Another tribute to the Brothers is the letter addressed to the *Journal de la Nièvre* by M. de Lignerolle, chief editor of the *Propagateur de l'Aube*:—

"DEAR BROTHER EDITOR:

"I would be much obliged by your publishing in your journal a few lines relative to the hospitality extended by the Christian Brothers of Nevers to the Aube sharpshooters.

"In their own Department, our men have been sometimes badly enough received, so that we are all the more sensible of the cordial reception given us by the Brothers. Since the month of August, the Brothers of the Christian Schools have unceasingly placed their resources at the disposal of the numerous troops under marching orders. Their patience and their generosity are alike inexhaustible, as all the Aube sharpshooters can bear witness. I would thank you to say so publicly, especially as some evil-minded persons have asserted that we took forcible possession of the Brothers' domicile. Brother Superior, whose amiability and charity are well known, can tell you, if requisite, whether such was the case.

"Accept, etc.

B. R. DE LIGNEROLLE,  
"Chief Editor of the *Propagateur de l'Aube*.  
"Sergeant in the Aube Sharpshooters."



The different corps lodged at the Brothers' house generally left some sick at their departure. These the Brothers cared for with the greatest kindness, washing and mending their clothes and supplying them gratuitously with every necessity till they were entirely cured.

It was not alone to the soldiers lodged in their house that the Brothers extended their hospitality; few days passed during the war, and long after it was over, that some poor soldier in a pitiable condition did not call at their door. It is needless to say they all received every possible assistance, many even in money.

*La Charité.*

From the 10th of October till the 18th of the same month, the Brothers lodged six hundred and eleven soldiers. After that, one hundred and five wounded and convalescent soldiers passed a longer or shorter time with them.

*Clamecy.*

From the 16th to the 30th of November, the Brothers lodged 150 soldiers. Their house was open to the many who crowded the town, and as they were sure of a kind welcome, not a day passed without some of them coming for favors and assistance. From the 15th of November till the 15th of February, the community entertained 400 soldiers, some of them Garibaldians. All, without exception, showed themselves most grateful.

*Château-Chinon.*

During the invasion of the Côte-d'Or, large numbers of the regular army and mobiles came to Château-Chinon. On four different occasions the Brothers lodged a number, and

gave each one, on parting, a franc wherewith to secure the first stage. The Brothers' slender means made this generosity precious, like the widow's mite, in our dear Lord's sight.

*Premery (Nièvre).*

From the 1st of December till the end of March, the Brothers lodged nearly 900 mobiles and recruits. The Brother Director, learning that 3500 had crowded into the town, and knowing that most of the inhabitants could not receive them, hastened to inform the colonel that the community could give hospitality to 200 men. The offer was immediately accepted. "At times my heart bled," wrote the Brother Director of Premery, "at seeing a large number of these poor soldiers, after a march of eight or ten leagues through frost and rain, gathering, faint and exhausted, round the stove, silently eating a piece of bread, sometimes frozen, or soaked with rain. Then I hastened to prepare soup for them, or to give them bread and wine. If we could not always entertain them as we would wish, on account of their great numbers, we at least had always the pleasure of giving them light and warmth. The stoves were kept going all night in each class-room."

In the morning, a large boiler of good soup was made for the poor young fellows, and in its enjoyment they forgot the hunger of the day before. Many of those lodged elsewhere, hearing from their comrades of the kindness of the Brothers, left the places they were in, and went and took up their quarters in the class-rooms of the Christian School.

*Moulins.*

Without interrupting their classes, the Brothers of this district lodged 150 soldiers a day, on an average, for seven



months. These became greatly attached to the Brothers, and when they left, it was like a family parting.

*Chateauroux.*

During the months of August and September, the Brothers gave the use of their community and boarding-school to the authorities, reserving to themselves only the chapel and a detached house at the end of the garden.

For seven weeks they lodged four hundred mobiles. At the time of re-opening the classes, the administration caused the place to be evacuated. But the rooms had become unhealthy by the presence of so many soldiers; the small-pox, spreading in the town, attacked the Brothers; they were all stricken down; two died.

*Gueret.*

On the 28th of August, the military authorities lodged troops in five of the Brothers' class-rooms. Till the 28th of September, three hundred mobiles were located there. Almost to the end of December, troops were coming and going. During the two following months, the house served as barracks for three hundred and fifty recruits belonging to this Department. Till the 28th of May, 1800 men were lodged successively in the Brothers' establishment. "We have felt the effects of the trials which Divine justice had in store for our unfortunate country," said the Brother Director of Gueret. "We, too, for nine months, have had our share in the immense sorrow which has visited our land."

*Henrichemont.*

Nearly all through the war, the Christian School of this locality was used as a lodging for the troops. It sheltered,

on an average, sixty soldiers a day. At first, the Brothers continued their classes in a sort of passage prepared for the purpose, but the number of soldiers increasing, the passage was given up, the pupils were dismissed, and the Brothers devoted themselves wholly to the service of the army.

*Regions of the North and North-West.—Arras.*

This town was often traversed by troops. On account of their number, the soldiers, exhausted by fatigue after the engagements they had to sustain, and by long and painful marches, could hardly obtain lodgings. The Brothers then opened their doors and took them in to the number of a hundred, or a hundred and fifty at a time. Before the close of the war they had thus sheltered over 4000. The *Courrier du Pas-de-Calais*, in its issue of December 1st, 1870, speaks in the most glowing terms of the hospitality extended by the Brothers to the poor, exhausted soldiers.

*Abbeville.*

The military authorities, anxious to resist the invaders, assembled from ten to fifteen thousand mobiles. These at first lodged among the inhabitants; afterwards they were sent to the Brothers, whose establishment was converted into barracks, and the Brothers supplied them with fuel at their own expense.

*Falaise.*

On the 17th of January, 180 recruits arrived at the Brothers' in a state of misery and suffering impossible to describe. For three days they had received neither money nor provisions. The Brothers, in their compassion, did all they could to relieve them; they got them bread, wine, and soup,



besides straw to sleep on. A good fire was kept up the whole night. The next day, with grateful tears, they parted from their kind entertainers.

*Caen.*

On one of the coldest days in winter, it became known in Caen that several soldiers, who had arrived late and unexpectedly, had passed the greater part of the night on the City Hall square. The Brother Director expressed deep regret that the authorities had not sent them to the warm and spacious class-rooms of the Christian School.

Some days later, two hundred and twenty-five arrived. We will let the Bayeux *Semaine Religieuse*, in its issue of December 25th, tell the way in which they were received by the sons of the Venerable De La Salle:

“The hour was late; nevertheless, with their usual activity, the Brothers soon prepared lodgings for twenty-five soldiers. About eight o’clock, they saw a troop of two hundred and fifty men marching into their yard. Far from being discouraged by this unexpected number, the Brothers redoubled their zeal and energy, and ere long there was sufficient convenience ready for the accommodation of all. For that night, at least, they were sheltered from the inclemency of the weather.

“But the Brothers were not content with providing lodging for the poor fellows. They went to work and supplied them with a good supper. Some kind neighbors sent in meat, vegetables, wine and other things needed.

“After supper, the Brothers walked arm in arm with the soldiers in the yard, when the word ‘confession’ happened to be mentioned; one looked at the other; among them were many former pupils of the Brothers, who remembered

the lessons of their devoted teachers. An old sergeant, who had escaped from Sedan, knowing well how to reach the soldiers’ hearts, soon talked them into the cause of duty and conscience. From nine o’clock till midnight four of the city priests were engaged in hearing these confessions.

“At five o’clock next morning the bugle sounded, and our brave fellows, after a comfortable night’s rest, set out for Caen with hearts full of gratitude to their kind hosts. Every squad had a small provision of brandy brought by some generous persons in the neighborhood.”

About the end of December, some three hundred mobiles were again welcomed with the same kindness by the Brothers. Six priests came to the house over-night, and heard the confessions of the greater number. Several of them received Holy Communion at the next Mass; one hundred and twenty received the scapular: the others were already wearing it.

January the 14th, three hundred and thirty-five convalescents or wounded arrived at the Brothers’. Soon after, those who were able to bear the journey were sent home to their families; thirty remained; of these, five died, fortified by the last sacraments of the Church.

Towards the end of February, the Brothers threw open their doors to a great number of soldiers crowding into the city. On the 7th of March, 1871, the mayor wrote to Brother Director:—

“Allow me to thank you for the cordial and devoted assistance which you and your Brothers have given us in the trials through which we have just passed. The spirit of charity inspired you, as it always does. The municipal body beg to tender you their most sincere thanks.

“Believe, dear Brother Director, in my respect and devoted sentiments.

ROULLAND.”



*Avranches.*

On December 26th, the Brothers' free school was used for the reception of mobiles. The Brothers and their boarders had to lodge elsewhere, at a rental of three hundred and fifty francs per month. They had to keep school in two houses, take their meals in a third, and sleep in a fourth.

Some days after this arrangement, two hundred men arrived with certificates for lodging. They were wet, cold and hungry. The Brothers warmed the rooms for them, and gave them wine and supper, but their beds were already occupied by the mobiles. The Brothers went out through the neighborhood and prevailed on the parents of their pupils to take them in. The next morning, they breakfasted at the Brothers', and parted with mutual protestations of good will. That evening a company of one hundred men arrived at their house, and were treated in the same way, and in parting expressed the same gratitude for the kindness shown them.

Vire and Cherbourg did a like work, the latter accommodating over 3000 soldiers within one month.

*Valognes.*

From the 15th of December, the troops moving from or toward the camps of Béneville and Sortoville stopped at the Brothers' for food and lodging. Those that were sick and unable to move on, stayed with the Brothers, and were kindly cared for. Every week, every day, brought new troops; as many as twelve hundred arrived in two days. By the end of February, the Brothers had lodged over three thousand men of all arms, and tended two hundred and fifty sick. Their admirable conduct elicited the praise of all, and several times called forth honorable mention in the military "order of the day."

*Saint-Sauveur-La-Vicomte (Manche).*

From the 21st of September till the 1st of October, the Brothers lodged forty mobiles. On December 10th, the house was turned into a barracks and received, on an average, from 150 to 200 men a day. Between the 10th of January and the 18th, only a few remained, and classes were resumed.

*Western and South-Western Districts.—Nantes.*

From the 26th of January till the end of March, the Brothers' boarding-school ambulance was, by order of the authorities, converted into barracks for the mobile conscripts of the Loire-Inférieure, returned from the engagements about Mans for rest and re-organization. The Brothers quickly fitted up the spacious buildings of the novitiate for five hundred men.

*Mayenne.*

Twenty thousand men were quartered at Mayenne. From the 16th of January till the 26th of February, there were never less than 180 men in the Brothers' house, which had been converted into an Entré dépôt. On several occasions there were 300, and on some days even 400 calling for attention.

"Our house," writes the Brother Director, in his report, "was appointed as the dépôt for detached corps, whose sick we constantly took care of. Every day a good number of men came inquiring for their respective corps, battalion or company. All slept at the house; and those who were without means to procure food, applied at our kitchen, where they always found something to eat and drink, and whatever else they needed."



"The railroad dépôt being in our quarter, we carried thither bread, wine and linen to the dear Sisters, who were nursing over 200 sick that were waiting for the departure of the train for Rennes. During the nine days the zouaves spent in Mayenne, 250 of them were lodged in our house.

"For them, as for all the other soldiers who had preceded them, there were always warm drinks, wine, and other little comforts, which we gave to the sick who could do without the direct treatment of the hospital or ambulance."

The sub-prefect and mayor of Mayenne and the members of the Municipal Government publicly testified their gratitude to the Brothers of the Christian Schools for the kindly care they took of the sick and wounded, and the generous hospitality they extended to the entire army which passed in that vicinity.

*Evron (Mayenne).*

The Brothers of this place, whose schools were closed in September by an arbitrary order of the prefect, lodged a great number of soldiers during the war. In the space of two months over 3000 soldiers succeeded each other in the house, averaging 250 per day.

The expense occasioned by this continual charge of soldiers was borne entirely by the Brothers. This was the way in which they revenged themselves for the cruel and brutal treatment they had received.

*Château-Gonthier.*

For four weeks, the Brothers lodged some 180 soldiers. At Mamers, fifty-one German and French soldiers remained for some time. At Sable (Sarthe), 150 soldiers were received under the hospitable roof of the Christian Brothers.

*Tours.*

The St. Gatien school was turned into a barracks on the 18th of September, 1871; on that day it received 250 soldiers. Companies of 200 to 300 often arrived. By the 2d of October, 2700 men had lodged there. On the 7th, 8th, 9th of October, the Brothers lodged 300 of Charette's army. On the 9th, the fugitive of Mentana, the cowardly insulter of the Sovereign Pontiff and his defenders, arrived in Tours; the faithful zouaves would not expose their glorious uniforms to the gaze of the Garibaldian mob; they stayed indoors all day at St. Gatien's school. The Brothers admired the fine bearing, mildness and politeness of these honorable soldiers, and did all they could to entertain them as they deserved. In the afternoon, Charette reviewed his men in the school-yard; he announced to them that at nightfall they were to set out for the outposts of the army of the Loire. They were delighted with the news, which they received with loud applause. They were pleased for two reasons: first, that they were to march to meet the enemy; and, secondly, that they were to get rid of the ridiculous personage who was about to take command of the Army of the Vosges.

On the 2d of December, eighty soldiers arrived at St. Gatien about seven o'clock in the evening, faint and benumbed with cold and hunger. Several had their feet frozen. The dear Brothers in their tender pity and compassion did all they could to relieve them. Notwithstanding the excessive labors of the day, they did not retire till two o'clock in the morning, and then it was with the consolation of knowing that their guests were comfortable, and enjoying a sweet, refreshing sleep.

*Chinon.*

It was the same with the Brothers of Chinon when, on the



15th of December, the soldiers came to them hungry, cold and wet. To them the Brothers gave up their sleeping-rooms and beds, and spent the night drying the soldiers' clothes. The next morning a comfortable breakfast was prepared, and the Brother Director waited on them himself. On the 17th, the same kindness was rendered to a company of officers and thirty mobiles, the latter of whom stayed with them a week. On the 26th, four officers and two hundred men came.

On the 28th, at eleven o'clock at night, two hundred and twenty soldiers presented themselves, and were kindly and cordially received. The class-rooms were hastily heated, a warm supper served, and after it, the soldiers, exhausted with their long march, sank to sleep.

On the 28th of January, 150 mobile conscripts from La Vienne were lodged in the class-rooms, the officers in the Brothers' apartments. They remained till the armistice.

In Poitiers, the Brothers' boarding-school was for five months used as a barracks. Here, as elsewhere, the Brothers proved themselves the kindest of nurses to the sick and wounded.

In Pithiviers, the Christian Schools served as a lodgement for four hundred mobiles from Savoy. In Chartres, the Brothers lodged one hundred and fifty French cuirassiers for three weeks.

We have followed the Christian Brothers of the Central Districts, of the regions of the North and North-West, and of the Western and South-Western Districts, in their noble deeds of charity and generous hospitality. Their houses were everywhere the poor soldiers' haven of rest. There they found the blessed sons of the Venerable De La Salle ever ready to receive them with a hearty welcome. No

matter how weary they were with their school and ambulance duties, the sight of suffering spurred them on to renewed efforts. They could not rest, nor think of resting, till the cold, hungry soldiers were warmed and fed. They gave them their beds, and when these, owing to the swelling numbers, failed, they improvised others in their class-rooms. These rooms they kept warm, and sat up nights to tend the fires, to dry the wet clothes of the poor men, and, if necessary, to mend them, to prepare them a good, nourishing breakfast; in fine, to smooth as much as possible, by their active charity and tender compassion, the rough path before them. And when these poor fellows, through the hardships they had encountered, fell sick, how lovingly they bent over them, and nursed them back to health and usefulness! Those that were never again to be well, whom the dark-plumed angel stood ready to bear away—with what tender solicitude they prepared them for the last great journey! God bless the Christian Brothers! In those dark days of their country's sorrow and humiliation, how brilliantly their charity shone forth!

As in the Districts mentioned, so in the Villefranche (Rhône), Lyons, Vienne, La Puy, Aurillac, of the middle-South and South, and in Dôle, Ornans, Nolay, Lure, Baumeles-Dames, Clerval (Doubs), Lons-le-Saunier, Saint-Laurent-du-Jura, Levier, Aix-les-Bains (Savoy), Annecy, Saint-Julien (Savoy), Beaune, Mâcon, Sully, Autun and Pontarlier of the Eastern Districts, they showed the same unbounded devotedness, the same heroic charity.

While many whom they so unselfishly served and cared for returned them the warmest gratitude, there were others who were thankless, indifferent, and even brutal and insulting. This the Brothers, in the sweetness and gentleness of their humility, did not mind. They labored not for earthly



praise or reward, so its withholding did not trouble them in the least. But the reckless impiety of some, their daring profanation, as in Autun, filled their souls with grief.

We give a Lyons journal's account of this frightful desecration: "Two days after the invasion of the town by Garibaldi, a company of 150 sharpshooters arrived at the Brothers' house about nine o'clock in the morning. Without showing any order from civil or military authorities, the captain informed the Brother Director that he took possession of the premises, as a Prussian officer would do in a place taken by assault.

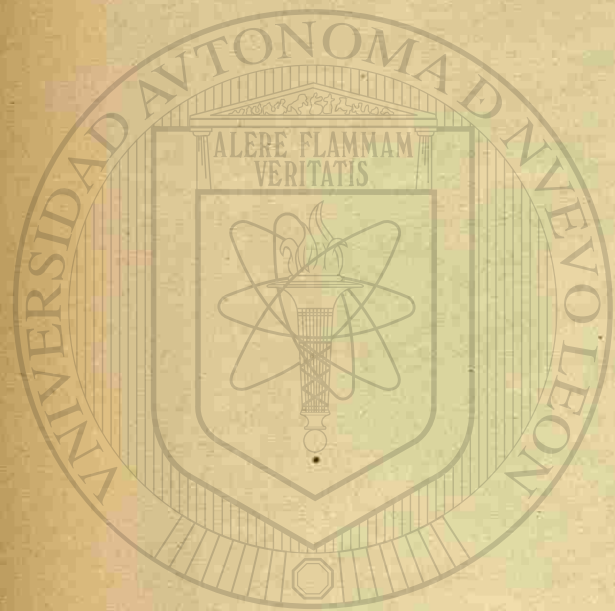
"The Brother, thinking he had to deal with honorable defenders of their country, received them kindly, hastened to send away the children from the four large class-rooms heated by stoves, and to have the benches and tables removed so as to make room for the soldiers. This was all the soldiers wanted; but their chief had other projects.

"To the Brother Director he abruptly said: 'You have another large room; I want to see it.' The large room in question was the chapel. The Brother reluctantly led him thither. He had no sooner entered, than he plainly showed how little he cared for the sanctuaries of religion; in the most peremptory manner he declared he would take immediate possession. The Brother Director begged him to grant a few moments, to make some preparations before the holy place was filled with soldiers. The answer of the Garibaldian was to order the men to go up. In the presence of the fearful profanations that were likely to follow, faith imparted a holy energy to the worthy son of the Venerable De La Salle. With one word he stopped the sharpshooters, and then addressing the chief, asked him if he thought himself in an enemy's country, and by what right he thus treated



GARIBALDIANS REQUESTING THE BROTHERS TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF THEIR WOUNDED.





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French citizens, whom he was bound to defend, and who had welcomed him with the greatest kindness.

“The captain finally granted a reprieve of five minutes. A Brother hurried to a priest, happily near, and requested him to come at once and remove the Blessed Sacrament to another sanctuary where it would be respected. The priest instantly complied with the request; he was an old, infirm man: two titles to the respect of a French officer; two titles to the insults of a Garibaldian! Entering the chapel, he knelt with two Brothers, whilst a third went to the sacristy for a surplice and the key of the tabernacle. The captain, who, with his hat on his head and a cigar in his mouth, had also entered the chapel, took the opportunity to give vent to his impiety.

“‘Eh! what, you are praying to God, I suppose?’ he cried, with a voice husky with passion; ‘I see what you are about—I tell you I’ll have none of your — prayers. My men are cold—I want them in here without delay.’

“The men were cold, yet the unhappy man took them from warm rooms to the chapel, where there was no heat whatever!

“Already had the priest, anxious to get the Blessed Sacrament away from the blasphemies of this demoniac, taken the holy ciborium in his hand, and was hastily leaving the chapel, followed by some Brothers; he hoped that once on the steps outside he would have nothing to fear; but it was there he was to see the Divine Eucharist exposed to the most grievous profanation. This had become the main object of the wretch’s fury, now at its height. Profiting by a moment’s absence of the Director, who had left the staircase to enter the chapel, the captain crowded it, as well as the steps outside, with soldiers, just as though fearing the escape



of an enemy. Fearful of being thrown down, and seeing the Holy Species trampled under foot, or falling into the mud of the yard, the priest stopped in a corner, and let the first wave move on.

"The sharpshooters, who remained in the yard, appeared to understand his thoughts, and stood still. The venerable priest then advanced to descend the stairs, but the wretch, raising his voice, ordered his men, who, through a religious instinct had stopped, to go up immediately. In vain the poor priest said to him with the patience and meekness of Him whom he carried in his hands: 'Would you be good enough, captain, to allow your men to wait a moment till I get down?' The barbarian brutally answered: 'What for? the stairs are for them as well as for you—they are to go up; you go down if you choose!'

"Happily, God came to the aid of His minister; he recollected there was a staircase inside the house. By passing through the Brothers' apartment, he delivered his Divine Master from the wretch's fury.

"It is needless to say that, such being the commanding officer, the Brothers had to suffer every kind of annoyance whilst this party remained in the house; they were, in fact, treated with the grossest indignity, and subjected to continual insults and oppression. The bitterest thought, however, was the treatment their Divine Master had received in their house. But they consoled themselves by thinking that, if God permits the wicked to satisfy their hatred for a time, it is that He may afterwards manifest the more clearly His mercy and power. Men of faith remain calm amid the hardest trials."

What immense numbers the Brothers entertained in Pontarlier! On the 27th of January, by order of the authori-

ties, a battalion of 823 mobiles of the Rhone were stationed in their house; on the 28th, these were replaced by 798 from Nièvre Ariège; and on the 29th 810 soldiers from different corps passed twenty-four hours there, to be followed, in their turn, by 728 other soldiers, who, on the 31st, made way for 735 sick and convalescent soldiers from Besançon, Orans, Morteaux, etc.

These men were, for the most part, without shoes or comfortable clothing, and exposed to a cold of nineteen degrees. No wonder they were all in a state of complete exhaustion.

How could the Brothers, without receiving provisions from the authorities, and with no adequate means of cooking, feed so many?

They did it; all received bread, soup and vegetables, and the fact of their doing it remained a mystery to the public. Brother Ostinian, the Director, might have confessed that all the provisions of the community, together with the bread sent by Swiss charity and benevolence, went to make up the supply; that all the available pots and saucepans were kept permanently on the fire, giving a fresh supply of soup and vegetables every two hours; that the Brothers, to perform such prodigies, slept only an hour or two during the night, by turns, on four beds, which were all they had kept for themselves, all the others being appropriated to the use of the troops; that a box of biscuits, left as a token of gratitude by the mobiles of the Rhone, had multiplied and lasted several days; all this might have been the case, for such facts were daily seen, proving the indefatigable devotedness of the faithful Brothers and the wonders of God's providence.

The sudden arrival, at Pontarlier of 80,000 men surprised the municipal administration, who had not thought, in the midst of the general disorder, to gather provisions in ad-



vance. The consequence was, the bakers were constantly besieged by the resident population to obtain the bread as fast as it was taken from the oven, even before it was fully baked, notwithstanding the presence of the newly arrived, who clamored for and insisted upon receiving their share first.

On the 31st of January, at eleven o'clock in the night, the provisions of the community were exhausted; yet there were 250 soldiers to be fed, who had eaten nothing since morning, or even since the day before. Then two Brothers, who had gone round amongst the bakers, were seen returning at three o'clock in the morning, carrying on their shoulders several baskets of hot bread, which they had obtained by prayers and entreaties.

On the morning of January 31st, when, after the engagements at Sombacour, Chaffois, and Frasné, the Commander-in-chief, Clinchant, could no longer count on the armistice for his army, the healthy men were ordered into Switzerland, for the enemy was almost at their doors.

The entry of the Prussians into the town was really frightful; most of them, over-excited, were uttering fearful yells. Whilst the German troops were passing along the Rue de la Gare, an unusual noise was heard in the Brothers' house; it was the Prussians, who, having broken in the garden gate, were furiously driving out the sick soldiers to swell the number of their prisoners of war. Seeing this, the Director, Brother Ostinian, ran to the spot; he made his own person a rampart for the sick, intimidated the half-drunken Prussians by his looks and words, and rescued the invalids from their hands.

In other places in the town where the sick were being cared for, there was no Brother Ostinian to stand between them and the invaders, and, weak and suffering as they were,

they were ruthlessly torn from their beds, marched to the parish church, and there locked up. For three consecutive days, three thousand of them had no other sustenance than what public compassion gave them; and even that was fatally insufficient, owing to the great scarcity of provisions attendant on the passage of the whole army of the East through the town.

The local history of the war will show that all the religious Orders of Pontarlier devoted themselves with the most affectionate care to the service and relief of thousands of sick soldiers. Till the 27th of February, the Christian Brothers, particularly, bore up well against the unceasing fatigue they had to undergo in an atmosphere so vitiated in various ways. One of them, however, paid with his life for his devotedness to suffering humanity. On the 5th of March, Brother Redeptor-Eugene, aged twenty-four, died, after five days' illness. He had been night and day most assiduous in nursing the sick.

Hence it was that his obsequies, on March 9th, were more like a triumph than a funeral ceremony. The commanding officers of Forts Joux and Larmont sent a detachment of seventy-five men, who headed the line of march, forming a guard of honor on either side of the coffin, which was covered with crowns and carried alternately by civil and military nurses.

All the invalid soldiers of the Pontarlier ambulances who were able to walk, attended the funeral, as did also 350 of the Brothers' pupils; each carrying a wreath of flowers, which was piously laid on his grave. The whole population was represented, every family wishing to pay a last tribute of respect to a young religious who had been sacrificed to charity and humanity.



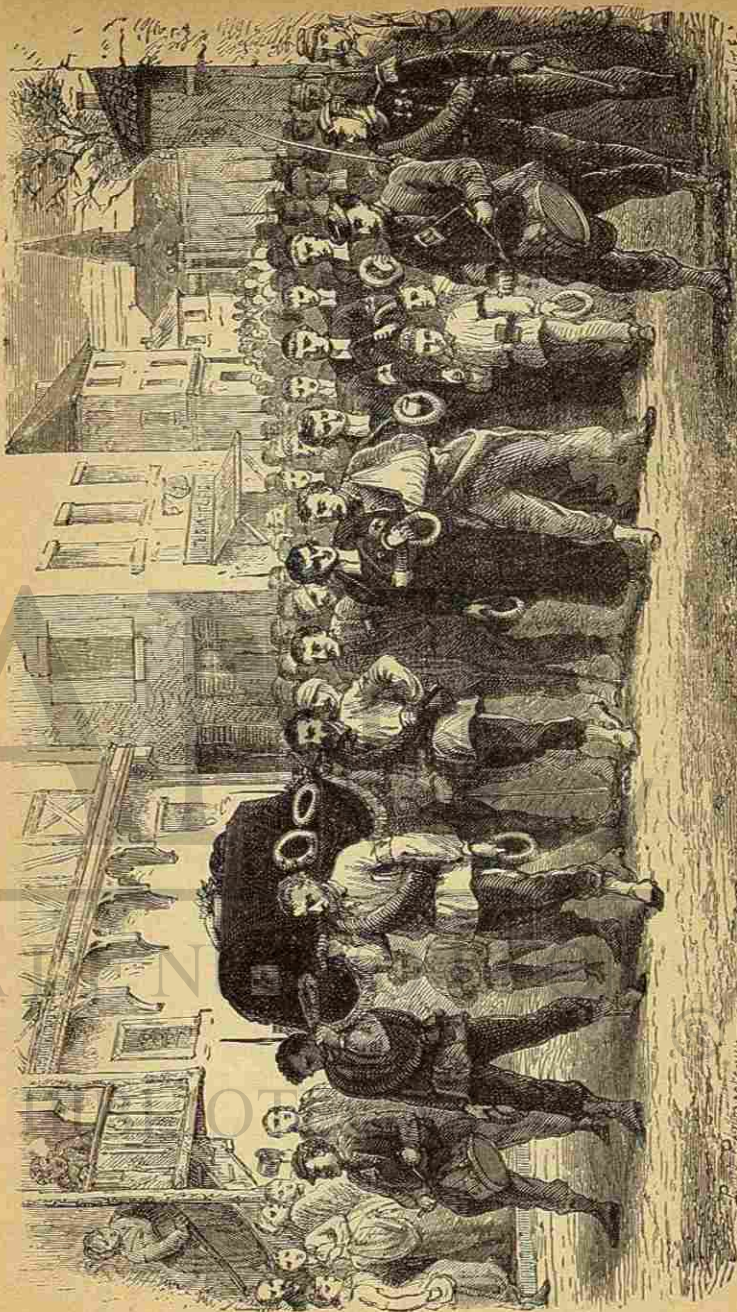
At last, thanks to the cares and labors of the Brothers, the number of sick diminished day by day. By the 10th of March there were only fifty; on the 18th, their house was evacuated; on the 19th, all the officials belonging to the International Ambulance set out for Lyons. It was time the Brothers' extreme labor should end; by the 12th of March, six of them were sick of small-pox and various fevers. The Brother Director was himself hardly able to keep up, but still managed to exercise a watchful care over the dear patients so grievously stricken. But one victim was demanded, however; all the others recovered by the end of April, by which time the house was considered safe to receive pupils, and the classes were resumed.

*Lodging of Prussians.*

If the Christian Brothers in their military lodgments had but the soldiers of their own country, or those that were fighting in her cause, to do for, their devotedness and zeal might be in part attributed to their patriotism. We are now to see them receiving and giving lodgings to the Prussians. Many of the Germans sent to them were kind and agreeable, some very pious and good; but there were others of whom the same could not be said. The Brothers, with a great number of the other inhabitants of the towns occupied by the Prussians, had serious cause of complaint.

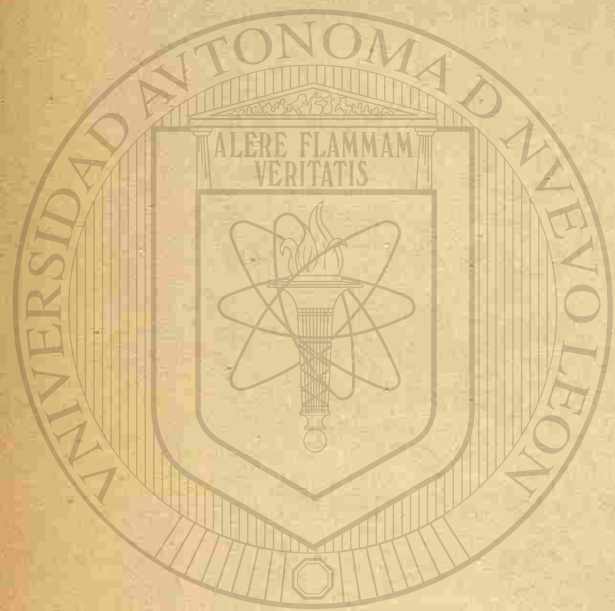
*Beauregard (Thionville).*

The mayor, on the 15th of January, sent word to the Brother Director of Beauregard that the German military authorities wanted several of his class-rooms to be used as barracks. The municipality offered to pay rent for those rooms, and to take charge of the poor people to whom the Brothers



THE FUNERAL OF BROTHER REDEMPTOR EUGÈNE, WHO DIED WHILE ATTENDING THE SMALL-POX PATIENTS.





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had hitherto given hospitality. Brother Director informed the mayor he would willingly lend the rooms without charge, the town having enormous expenses to bear, and added that he was rejoiced to be able to do something to lighten the public burden and help individuals, by lodging soldiers whom the townspeople would otherwise have had to accommodate.

From the 15th till the 20th of March, 1,400 Germans lodged in the Beauregard boarding-school. Dating from the 20th of March, 20,000 had stayed there.

*Saint Dizier (Haute Marne).*

The community here lodged 515 Prussians, of whom twenty-five were officers. For seventy days, a Brother prepared the meals for 125 of these soldiers. The house also furnished stabling for fifty horses. The yards served as a parade-ground for the numerous military barracks of the town.

*Vitry.*

On the 8th of September, 122 Germans took possession of the Brothers' class-rooms. The food, furnished by the town, had to be prepared for them. Then came 150 other soldiers, and afterwards sixty engineers. These last remained eight days; they were rebuilding the railroad bridge, which the French commander had caused to be blown up. ®

*Arbois (Jura).*

On the 3d of February, this establishment had to receive 40 Prussians and 35 horses. Two of the class-rooms and the yard of the house were used as stables; the three other class-rooms were occupied by the men. The soldiers took



possession of all the beds ; the Brothers had to sleep on the floors.

*Baume-les-Dames.*

January 24th, the first day of the Prussian occupation, forty Germans installed themselves in the Brothers' house, wasted the provisions, and took possession of several pieces of furniture.

*Champlitte (Haute-Saône).*

About 300 Prussians occupied the house, at first from the 11th till the 26th of December, then from the 16th till the 18th of January. The heating was at the Brothers' expense. The Germans showed but little regard for the laws of *mine* and *thine*.

*Lure.*

On the 18th of October, 200 Prussians slept in the classrooms of the Christian Brothers' school. From the 2d of November till the 12th of January, 2000 Germans lodged in the house ; from 150 to 200 were almost continually there. The Brothers, who had charge of their cooking, were afoot from before the dawn of day till late at night. The Brother Director, in his charity, would not complain, though they wasted the fuel, and stole all they could lay their hands on. The poor Brothers came near wanting bread, as the Prussians, on their entrance, had taken possession of all the ovens in the town.

*Levier.*

The German army arrived on Sunday, January 29th. It invaded Levier and all the country around. The Brothers had eighty soldiers and several officers to board and lodge for a week.

*Morteau (Doubs).*

On February 2d, the Prussians arrived at Morteau. Forty men were billeted on the Brothers, yet fifty came, and were received without a murmur.

During their stay they repeatedly ransacked every corner of the house, and carried off what provisions they could find. It was vain to complain ; the consequences of invasion had to be borne.

At Poligny, Vesoul, Joigny, Coulommiers, Nemours, Baupaume, Crepy-en-Valois, the Brothers had to contribute to the lodging, and, in a number of instances, to the boarding of the invaders. It was the same at Pithiviers, where their coming was like the swarming of locusts. Not a fruit, not a vegetable was left in the garden, on their departure. Devastation was the only memento they left of their passage.

*Lailly (Loiret).*

On the 7th of December, the Prussians took possession of Lailly ; thirty of them lodged at the Brothers' house ; next day, twenty-five others, and on the 11th, forty arrived. Besides fuel and cooking, the Brothers had to board these troublesome and threatening soldiers, and passed nearly a week without lying down, fearing that the house might be maliciously set on fire.

About the last of December, twenty-five cavalymen broke in the school-house door, determined to make stables of the class-rooms, but they had to give way to the energy and firmness of the Brother Director and go elsewhere for stables for their horses.

About the 12th of February the community had again to lodge some German soldiers and their officers and attendants.



*Dieppe.*

From the month of August till the month of May, the Brothers continually lodged French and German soldiers. Some came with billets from the mayor; as to the others, the Brother Director kindly took them from the neighbors to whom they would have been a burden.

And thus, in the spirit of brotherly love and charity, the sons of the Venerable De La Salle extended their hospitality to the invaders of their country.

## CHAPTER XVI.

ASSISTANCE TO PRISONERS: GRATITUDE OF THE SOLDIERS  
AND THEIR FAMILIES.

We have just witnessed the most gigantic battles that have been fought in this age of blood; and if anything could diminish in the hearts of the conquered, and of prisoners, the bitterness of defeat, the horror of captivity, it would be the cares of every kind that have been lavished upon them by charitable souls, by holy priests, devoted Sisters, and the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

To take the wounded from the field of battle, to nurse the sick in the ambulances, to give burial to the dead, to assist, in a thousand ways, soldiers on the march: these are the magnanimous works performed by the Brothers with a zeal which Catholic charity can alone inspire. But the devotedness of the Christian Brothers has been greater still; it revealed itself in an admirable manner in the touching services rendered by them to the poor prisoners. Honored forever be the men who, in the midst of their country's misfortunes, gave such striking examples of patriotic virtue, and who left no pain or sorrow unconsolated!

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From its advantageous position near Paris, this town, from October, became the headquarters of the hostile armies. It was there the French prisoners stopped when on their way



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to Germany. The Brothers were charged with the distribution of provisions amongst them as they came and went. At this time some sick Frenchmen, who had been forced from the Vésinet hospital, arrived at Corbeil exhausted with hunger and fatigue. They were condemned to follow the army to Germany on foot, unless they died on the way. Touched by their sad state, the Brother Director begged the German authorities to let him keep and care for them. His request was granted, to the great joy of his heart; but his joy was of short duration, for he could only keep his patients for a few days; the Prussians, seeing them surrounded by too many comforts, ordered their departure for countries beyond the Rhine.

On the 13th of November, the church, having been, by military order, transformed into a prison, the chapel of the Brothers' school had the honor of possessing the Most Holy Sacrament, and became for a time the parish church.

As soon as it was known that the Brothers had permission to visit the prisoners, a great many persons begged the Brother Director to try and effect the escape of some friends or relatives. Following the dictates of his kind heart, through his excellent management and the civilians' clothes sent him by their families, he succeeded in helping fifty or sixty French soldiers to escape. The gratitude of the poor prisoners for this signal service was deep and lasting.

*Chartres.*

In Chartres the Brothers were fortunate in being able to hide the wounded from the enemy, and thus saving them from becoming prisoners.

*Dreux.*

October 30th, the Brothers brought to Verneuil, in their

ambulance wagon, twenty-three convalescent mobiles, whom the Prussians claimed as prisoners. From the 1st to the 15th of November they made several journeys, in each of which they rescued several soldiers from the enemy. They afterwards gained the good graces of a Prussian doctor, known and dreaded by all Dreux, and were thereby enabled to get their convalescents back within the French lines.

Thursday, January 19th, one hundred and forty-two French prisoners were placed in the Brothers' school. These unfortunate men had had no food for several days. Overwhelmed with grief at the sight of so much suffering, the Brothers hastened to offer them all the eatables the house afforded. There was not enough bread; they went to all the neighbors, and through the mayor's assistance got enough to go round, and other refreshments to make a comfortable meal for them. By the next day they were better able to provide for them. The poor fellows' garments were literally in rags. The Brothers could not think of their continuing such a dreary journey in mid-winter in so wretched a condition. They went out among the inhabitants and collected all the shoes, stockings and warm underclothing they could. As the number of shoes or boots thus procured was far from being sufficient, they bought forty pairs of *sabots*, so that no prisoners might have to march barefooted.

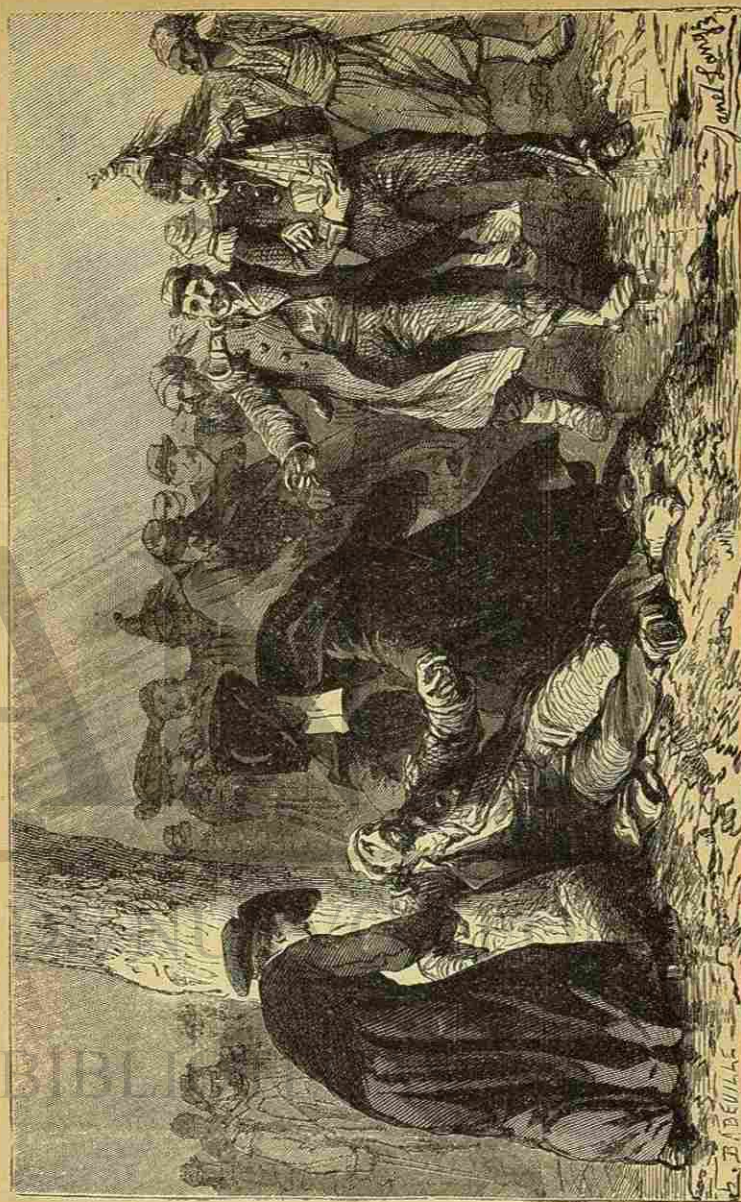
In Levier, Morteau and Baume-les-Dames, the Christian Brothers showed the same tender compassion for the poor prisoners, and by their active charity soothed the bitterness of their lot as far as possible.

*Boulay.*

"The trouble and humiliation caused us by the surrender of Metz," writes the Brother Director of Boulay, "are in-

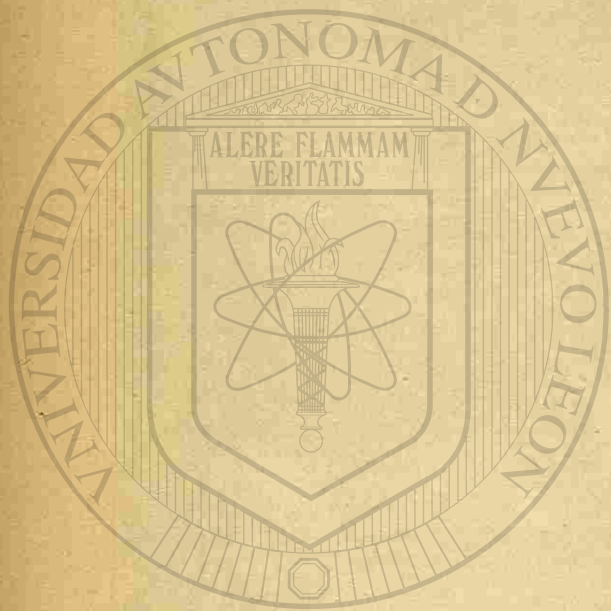


describable. But they were infinitely more so when we saw the army of Metz arrive as prisoners of the Prussians. The misery of these poor fellows filled us with grief and dismay. Imagine one hundred and sixty thousand men tramping through the mud for eight days, under a pelting rain most of the time, having nothing to eat but a small piece of the coarsest black bread. These men, penned up like cattle, were obliged to lie down on a bed of mud several feet in depth. At the sight of such unutterable distress, the inhabitants of Boulay and the adjoining villages were moved with the deepest compassion. They gave and gave, and never tired of giving, food, clothing, refreshments of all kinds, so that no one could understand how a town of three thousand, exhausted by three months of military occupation, could find so many things for the poor prisoners. We, too, had the privilege of adding our little store to the fair edifice of French patriotism, or rather, of evangelical charity. Leaving my brethren to take care of such Prussian sick as were still with us, I went to the French camp. The prisoners had been divided into nine or ten columns of about fifteen thousand men each. The first passed through on All-Hallow-Eve; the others on successive days. They stopped at Boulay twenty-four hours, then set out for Sarrelouis. When the French soldiers arrived, they had marched six leagues without eating anything. They fell fainting everywhere, some on the roads, even in pools of water. Among them were many sick, but no matter! they had to march on. As I knew the Prussians, I was allowed to go every day in search of the sick scattered along the roads and round about the camp, and, with the permission of the commanding officer of the column, I brought them into the town in bands of thirty, fifty, or sixty at a time. When the ambu-



THE BROTHERS OF BOULAY ASSISTING THE PRISONERS OF METZ ON THEIR WAY TO PRUSSIA.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECA Y DOCUMENTACIÓN

lances were full, the inhabitants received a certain number of them, according to their means.

“The first, second, and third days, I was allowed to do as I pleased; but when the Prussian doctors saw that I was giving them too much trouble, they began to declaim against me, saying that I had no right to go to the camp to look for the sick; they threatened to have me put in prison. ‘If you can prove to me,’ said I, ‘that your Prussian sick are neglected, I agree to go no more to the camp; but you know your countrymen have all the care they require. You have no right to forbid me to discharge a duty of humanity. I am duly authorized to visit the French camp by the general in command of the column; if you do not wish to trouble yourselves with our soldiers, you need not do so. French doctors will come!’ They grumbled a little, but at last acquiesced and left me free to go and come at will. The Prussians had taken possession of our best rooms for their sick; they made our poor Frenchmen sleep on the ground floor. Happily, we could provide them with beds of straw. After one day’s rest, they had to set out, no matter what the hour was. Oh! God alone knows how many died on the way. I pass over many details that would be very interesting, but are too long to tell.”

Dear Brother Director! what bravery he showed in his determination to assist the suffering prisoners! How the poor fellows must have looked on him and the other Brothers as the visible representatives of their good angels! With the cruelty and barbarity shown them by the conquerors, how strengthening and comforting must have been their ready sympathy and heavenly compassion!

*Beauregard (Thionville).*

“Up to this day, June 20th, 1871,” writes Brother Atha-



nasius, Director of the boarding-school of Beauregard, "besides 35,000 German soldiers, 35,000 French prisoners have stopped at our establishment, either going to Prussian prisons, or returning to France. Owing to the generous contributions of the inhabitants, the Brothers were enabled to afford relief to all the sick and wounded who came to their house. The poor fellows showed themselves most grateful, and when told by the Brothers that it was not to them, but to the good Christians of Beauregard their thanks were due, they always answered: 'Still, it is in your house we are lodged; and then you take so much care of us; we know very well who it is we have to thank for the relief given us.'"

In Bonnetable, Mer, Vesoul, Gray, Moulins, and Aix-les-Bains, the Brothers night and day ministered to the wants of the French prisoners, their only regret being that they could not do more for them.

*Neufchatel (Switzerland).*

When in February, 1871, the army of the East, to escape the Prussian pursuit, decided on making its way into Switzerland, an agreement was entered into between General Herzog, Commander-in-chief of the Swiss troops, and General Clinchant, commanding the first French army.

The convention was announced to General Manteuffel, who took no notice of it; he wanted to capture the army of the East. The retreat commenced on February 1st, through unheard-of difficulties; the roads were blocked up with snow; the different regiments of the army being obliged to wait their turn, had to remain stationary at the different roads and passes. And there they were cannonaded and slaughtered by an inhuman enemy, to the disgrace of a civilized world.

The French troops presented a most heartrending spectacle. Their clothing and equipments were wholly unfit for the season, and left them exposed to all the rigor of a severe winter in a mountainous region. They had not slept under a roof for three weeks; many of them fell fainting on the snow, to rise no more. Here and there, starving soldiers had half cut up the dead horses by the wayside; others had gnawed the bark of trees, and even attacked the artillery wagons.

Cavalry and infantry crowded in inextricable confusion over the rocks and precipices. The roads were covered with knapsacks, dismounted cannon, and broken arms. The dead were indiscriminately trampled under foot, and no attention was paid to the wounded. Never did army experience such hardships; the rout and ruin were complete.

The army marched by the Rousses, Fourgs, and Verrières roads. This exceptional disaster imposed a great duty of charity on all Switzerland. At Neufchâtel, all classes of society vied with each other in eagerness to lodge, feed, and clothe the thousands of French soldiers who broke on the city like a human avalanche. All the public buildings, and a great number of private residences, were converted into ambulances, and crowded with unhappy soldiers.

On the 13th of February, the French Committee of the Society for the Relief of the Wounded gratefully accepted the offer made by the Brothers of the Christian Schools to give up their establishment to the Southern ambulance. The house was soon filled. By the 17th, it sheltered fifty patients seriously ill of typhoid fever, dysentery, and pulmonary diseases. It was among these poor, stricken creatures that the heroic self-devotedness of the dear Brothers unequivocally pointed out the lowly followers of Christ. Shrinking from



no fatigue, they were seen in constant attendance on the sick, washing the most ghastly wounds, administering cordials to the sick, changing the linen of some, washing others, making beds, and consoling the last moments of the dying with the promise to send kind messages to their friends and relatives far away. Night and day they watched by the bed of the poor sufferers.

On the other hand, nothing could be more affecting than the gratitude of the patients for the services rendered them. Here it is a dying Breton, who, making a last effort, calls a Brother, takes his hand in his own, burning with fever, and will not be persuaded to let it go. Not far from him are two Turcos, newly arrived in the ambulance, and yet full of confidence in these religious, whom they have never known before, confiding to their care some little trinket, or whatever they have of value. After a stay of two weeks in the ambulance, the major announces their departure; it is to the Brothers, as their only friends, they go, to ask a few days' longer stay, which the Brothers entreat and obtain for them. When the parting moment comes at last, they bid farewell, with tearful eyes, to those who have so kindly and tenderly nursed them.

The classes were for five weeks. They were scarcely reopened, when two of the Brothers fell sick. One of them, the Brother Director, recovered, after a month's illness from small-pox; the other, dear Brother Romain of the Cross, aged nineteen, died of typhoid fever, after two months of great suffering, borne with truly Christian fortitude.

*Gratitude of the Soldiers and their Families.\**

The father of a young soldier, writing from Saulges to the

\* In the original French, a large number of letters are given entire. In the translation, some are omitted, and from others, only extracts taken, as the matter treated would have but little interest out of France. In the abridgment, still more have been omitted.

Brother Director of Mayenne, says: "It will never be possible, dear Brother, to pay you the debt of gratitude we owe you. You have saved us our son. How happy we are! May Providence reward you. . . . Emile and his mother join me in begging you to accept our thanks and best respects." Several months after, the son himself writes in the most affectionate manner to the Brother Director, promising to visit him in October with a present of game.

A captain of volunteers writes from Langres, February 12th, 1871, to the Brothers of Vienne:—

"DEAR BROTHER DIRECTOR, AND DEAR BROTHERS :

"It is now over five months since I left you, and I have not written to you, who were so kind to me and my whole battalion. The fact is, it was utterly impossible. I was constantly in advance of the battalion, with some twenty-five men, on picket duty or in ambuscade; night and day on foot. I have been in twenty-one engagements, without getting the least scratch, thanks be to God.

"How could I describe to you, my dear Brothers, our forced marches, in cold and rain, without food or shelter—in short, all the hardships we have had to undergo? Not a day has passed without continual marching or fighting; not a single night have we rested three full hours. Our volunteers have borne all these hardships with admirable courage; and yet they are children of the South, little accustomed to the inclemency of the season. How many times have they not said to me, when we were twenty-four hours without eating and drenched with rain: 'Ah! captain, if we were only with the dear, good Brothers!'

\* \* \* \* \*



"We are on the eve of being besieged; 60,000 Prussians are marching on Langres, and God knows what will become of us. We are preparing to make the best resistance we can. . . . .

"If I could have passed through the enemy's lines, I should have gone to visit you, but we are surrounded and trapped like vermin.

"Adieu, dear Brothers: pray for us, and believe me, ever gratefully and affectionately yours,

"C. LAND VERLE,

"*Captain 1st Company, 1st Battalion,*

"*Egalité Volunteers.*"

From another letter, dated Marseilles, March 29th, 1871, written by the same officer to the Brother Director of Vienne, we append the following extract:—

"A certain number of the population of Marseilles, furious demagogues, wanting to imitate the insurgents of Paris, took possession of the Government House, and, for eight days, ruled the city. Happily, there was no well-organized authority among them, and very soon their factious demonstrations fell to the ground, condemned by all honest people. Poor France! how low have thy children fallen! There is neither patriotism, faith, honor, nor any political or religious belief. May God have mercy on us, or we are lost. Save us, Mary! Save us by your intercession with your Son!"

The parish priest of Vauchonvilliers writes to the Brother Director of the Novitiate of Toulouse, May 1st, 1871:—

"DEAR BROTHER:

"I thank you in the name of the relatives of Athanase Le-

franc, and in my own name, for the spiritual and corporal care you have given to that young man. The father, mother, and sisters heard the sad news with intense sorrow, soothed, however, by Christian resignation. In the misfortunes which have come upon them, they thank God that pious and holy hands performed the last sad duties to their beloved child.

"Since the young man breathed his last in your house, I recommend him, dear Brother, to the prayers of your pious congregation, as you are by duty and by vocation the friends, the Brothers of Christian youth. . . . .

"I celebrated a requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of Athanase Lefranc in the church where he was baptized and made his first Communion. The whole parish united in paying a last tribute of respect to his memory.

"I have the honor to be, etc.,

"BAILLY,

"*Pastor of Vauchonvilliers (Aube).*"

The father of a young soldier writes thus to the Brother Director of Narbonne:

"ARLES, Dec. 9th, 1870.

"VERY REVEREND BROTHER SUPERIOR:

"I have learned from my son, a young soldier who was sometime in your ambulance, that he was in your care while under treatment for a wound in his foot. I am rejoiced that it was in your house he was located. He tells me that nothing could exceed the kind and unceasing care bestowed upon him by you and your revered Brothers: I thank you from the depth of my heart, and will ever owe you a debt of gratitude.

"I have for many years filled the office of mayor in this



our city of Arles, and have thus been in a position to know and fully appreciate the merit and the untiring devotion of the members of your Institute. I know that no labor, no fatigue, no sacrifice, is too great for their patriotic devotedness, and in the terrible trials which France is undergoing, they are having more than a share.

"It would give me great pleasure, *M. le Supérieur*, and Very Reverend Brother, to have an opportunity of testifying my gratitude in a more convincing manner.

"Accept, with my thanks and respects, the assurance of my affectionate regard.

"MOUTET,  
"Notary."

A liberated soldier, writing from his home to the Brother Director of Narbonne, says :

"I hope dear Brothers Lonjin, Jomés and Laurentian are entirely over their illness. Your sickness, Brothers, would be a great national calamity. . . . . I depend on you to give me news of every one in your house, all of whom my grateful heart will never cease to love. Every one at home unites in thanking you a thousand times for the great care you took of me. For myself, I can never thank you enough.

"A. BEUNET, JR."

A mobile from Loiret writes from Orléans, March 21, 1871, to the Brother Sub-Director of Nimes:—

"DEAR BROTHER:

"I reached home yesterday evening in good health, and found my family the same. . . . . At the Lyons dépôt I met the mobile, Brosse, who was in dear Brother Tranquille's

class-room; he told me that, on reaching Beaucaire, he was so fatigued that he was obliged to go to the hospital, and from there they sent him back to Nimes, to the International ambulance, where he had good cause to regret the dear Brothers and the care they took of him.

"It only remains for me to thank you, dear Brother Sub-Director, for the great kindness shown me by you and the other Brothers during my long stay amongst you; it was a great disappointment to me that I could not shake hands with dear Brother Director when I was leaving. You will please tell him so, and give him my best respects, as also to Brothers Terrède, Sabas, Théodule, and Thion. . . . . Oh! I was forgetting dear little Brother Thomas, the pill-man. . .

"It would be a great pleasure to hear from you; till then,

"I remain, etc.,  
"A. BEZARD."

A soldier of the marine infantry writes to Brother Cyprian of Nimes:—

"ON BOARD THE FRIGATE *Orne*, 18th June, 1871.

"DEAR BROTHER CYPRIAN:

"I have not forgotten the kind care you took of me during my stay in your ambulance. There are moments in life when one finds himself plunged in one of those moral fevers which deprive the mind of all clearness, the whole being of energy; I was in this condition when I reached Nimes.

"Providence had not deserted me; for it brought me to your house, dear Brothers, to you, whose example is so well adapted to recall one to a sense of duty. Your abnegation, your calm and simple life, which you know how to make so



useful to those who suffer,—all combined to give me better thoughts; I remembered my mother, so good and pious, and I thanked God for having brought me to you.

“There are phases in life which leave imprints within us; they are often a beacon which serves to guide our steps, and point out the way we are to follow. I know not what the future may have in store for me, but, come what may, I will never forget your delicate attention, dear Brothers of the ambulance, or that of the kind lady, Madame Surville. I often think of you all. . . . .

“Dear Brother Cyprian, I beg you to convey my kindest regards to the revered Brothers I knew in the ambulance: are Brother Tranquille and Brother Sub-Director still in Nimes? If you see the Reverend Father, please give him my respects.

“Accept, dear Brother, the assurance of my entire devotion.

“ALBERT POUCHON,  
“*3d Marine Infantry.*”

A captain of artillery writes from Lyons to the Brother Director of Sedan, Sept. 1st, 1871:—

“DEAR BROTHER SUPERIOR:

“I know not whether you remember three artillery officers who last year, about this time, came knocking at your door, asking shelter for the night. They were overcome with fatigue and the mortification of defeat. A bench whereon to stretch their weary limbs was all they asked. You brought them in, although your house was crowded with wounded, you gave them lodging, and what lodging?—your own sleeping-rooms! As for them, the remembrance of your great

kindness, inseparably associated with that of their misfortune, shall never be effaced from their hearts.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Accept, *M. le Supérieur*, our joint thanks, and believe us ever gratefully,

“LE TRONE,  
“*Captain of Artillery.*”

A sergeant writes to the Brother Director of La Charité:

“DEAR BROTHER DIRECTOR:

“I contracted a debt of gratitude during my stay with you. In these unhappy times how many tears are daily shed! how many families are sorrowing over griefs that time can never heal! It is only the Christian religion that soothes them with her bright hope. In their hours of suffering many have had angels of devotedness around them; the sight of them was a consolation; they offered in their own person a living example of detachment from perishable things.

“Monks, nuns, priests, and Brothers, all united their various talents in a work of humanity which honors them, while constituting, at the same time, the glory of our epoch. Happy for him who has been enabled to judge, and, better still, who has experienced the efficacy of so many virtues!

“He will pray for those who, after the example of our Dear Lord, have given themselves up for their brethren: he will ask for them all earthly and heavenly blessings.

“Thanking you every day of my life,

“I am, etc., J. GAUTIER,  
“*Sergeant.*”



A soldier from Calais writes to the same Brother Director :

“DEAR BROTHER DIRECTOR :

“*March 23d, 1871.*

“My wishes are accomplished! I am again in the midst of my family; I am reunited to all I love most. My heart is transported with joy; and yet, since I received your letter, I feel that there is no perfect happiness here below. I am far away from you, and I feel the separation very sensibly.

“I was just going to write to you and to our dear Victor, when your letter surprised me with the sad news of his death, the last in the ambulance. He was so worthy of the friendship and esteem of all who knew him! The death of one so young and strong gives rise to serious reflections; my turn may come at any moment, and God grant that I may not have to appear with empty hands before my Judge.

“Adieu, dear Brother; present my respects to the Reverend Chaplain, the kind Brothers and Sisters, and all who took care of me. I am quite cured now; my relatives all request me to thank you for them.

“Please to accept, etc.

“ERNEST DENUGE.

“J. M. J.”

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE BROTHERS UNDER THE COMMUNE.

Before and during the war of 1870-71, forerunning signs of the insurrection of March 18th were not wanting. From the ravages of invasion, afflicted France passed to the horrors of civil war. The new masters of Paris profaned all, destroyed all, with their foul, unhallowed hands. Religion, liberty, laws, guarantees, honor—all were violated by the men of the Commune; by that infamous race capable of conspiring against their country in the very day of her woe and humiliation. In their demoniac hatred against God, they fell on His ministers, His religious, on crucifixes, holy pictures, and, in fine, on everything relating to religion and its soul-uplifting ceremonies.

The Christian Brothers, who had done and suffered so much for their country, and who in their heroic devotedness had shown the beneficent power of religion, were now to receive, as their earthly reward, the basest ingratitude, the most cruel persecution. The Communist leaders forbade them to take their pupils to church, to teach them the catechism, or prepare them for their first Communion; and they appealed to other teachers, who, imbued with their principles, were willing to follow their programme. The schools of the Christian Brothers were doomed, and the warrant for their destruction was soon to be put into execution.

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On the 2d of April, Paris was aroused by the sound of



cannon; blood was being shed by French hands. An engagement had taken place in the neighborhood of Mont Valerien, between the troops of France and the Federals of the Commune. The Brothers presented themselves to take up the wounded. The officer at the Maillot gate refused to let them go out.

The dictators of Paris would rather the wounded national guards should remain without assistance, than see them cared for by religious. Some Brothers, nevertheless, managed to get out by the gate of La Muette, and returned about midnight to the Longchamps pavilions, bringing a number of dead, and several wounded.

On the following day, the generals of the Commune tried an attack on Versailles, on two sides; on the north, at Courbevoie, Nanterre, Rueil, and Bougival; on the south, between Meudon, the redoubt of Chatillon, and Petit-Bicêtre. Mont Valerien opened fire on the masses bearing down on Nanterre and Rueil, and put them to flight. At Meudon the gendarmes repulsed the insurgents. The enemy was everywhere routed, except on the Chatillon side, where he could not hold out long. The Brothers took away the wounded and dead from the battle fields of Rueil, Sèvres and Chatillon.

On the 4th of April, the Federals were driven from the table-land of Chatillon by the troops of the National Assembly. The Brothers devoted themselves as on the previous day. At the Maillot gate objections were made to letting them in.

Those who had gone to Chatillon could not get back. Archbishop Ségur, aged and blind, Abbé Deguerry, pastor of the Madeleine, the Jesuit Fathers of the Rue Lhomond, and a great number of other ecclesiastics, were taken to

prison. The Dominican Fathers were kept under supervision in their convent in the Rue Jean-de-Beauvais.

April 5th, the Commune legalized the system of hostages; the inhabitants of Paris lived under the reign of terror. An engagement took place on the bridge of Neuilly. The constitutional troops bravely did their duty. The Commune refused to accept the Brothers as stretcher-bearers; its men fell without hope and without benediction. The Brothers continued their care of the sick and wounded in the Longchamps pavilions.

April 11th, the streets of Paris were a scene of mourning; the churches were deserted; three fourths of them were closed; several had been pillaged and desecrated. Sadness everywhere prevailed; the cannon thundered as in the worst days of the siege.

The Mother-house of the Brothers, Oudinot street, received the visit of a delegate of the Commune, and a central commissary of police, accompanied by some fifty national guards. "We want to see if there are any arms or ammunition here," they said. Placing sentries everywhere, they began to search the parlors. Now, it was not arms they wanted, but money. They opened the cash-box, and stole the 2100 francs it contained. They then went into the chapel with their hats on, and their guns on their arm. The tabernacles had to be opened; the Chaplain took away the consecrated hosts, and gave them two ciboriums. Thence they went into the sacristy and took two chalices, and an ostensorium. The wretches touched the sacred vessels with their profane hands, forgetful of Balthazar and the punishment of his sacrilege.

They had orders to seize Brother Philippe, but as he had left Paris to visit houses in the interior of France, they arrest-



ed his venerable First Assistant, Brother Calixtus. His parting with his brethren was most affecting. It was like a father being torn from his children. Brought to the police office, they could not, with all their malice, make out a cause against him, and were obliged to release him. His return to the Mother-house was hailed with the liveliest joy, the most heartfelt affection.

April 17th, Asnieres was the principal scene of the struggle; at noon, the village was completely evacuated by the Federals. During the afternoon, disbanded national guards returned to Paris, complaining that they were betrayed.

It was reported that the Brothers were to be arrested in a mass. Those of Menilmontant were surrounded in their house. The pupils were sent away. The brigands of the Commune put seals on everything, broke crucifixes and statues, and proceeded to take an inventory. The Brothers were taken as prisoners to the mayor's office. This arrest struck many of the communities with fear; those of St. Laurent, La Villette, and Batignolles, dispersed of themselves. The Brothers of Belleville were expelled and replaced by lay teachers. Those of Montrouge and St. Nicholas-des-Champs had already suffered persecution. April 18th, desolation reigned everywhere: in the churches, the schools, the houses. The Federals were objects of hatred and malediction. The Brothers of the Longchamps ambulance were replaced by a staff of military nurses. At the Mother-house, Oudinot street, the Superiors were officially notified that it was in contemplation to incorporate the Brothers in the ranks of the National Guard. The Commune put soldiers in their place near the sick, and, with a satanic refinement of cruelty, wanted to send them to the ramparts, to de-

send the odious cause of the persecutors of religion. A search was made in the house of the Brothers of St. Marguerite. The Director and two other members of the community were arrested and conducted to the Conciergerie.

Belleville, the centre and last focus of insurrection, made it a point not to be outdone by any other district of the city in its persecution of priests and Christian Brothers. Towards the end of March, a warrant was issued for the arrest of the Brother Director, and fifteen men were sent for that infamous purpose. In their hatred and contempt for religion, the arrest was made, not in the house, but in the church. The Brother Director, remonstrating against such a sacrilegious act, was accused of propagandism by the delegate before whom he was brought in the mayor's office! Many other charges, of equal gravity, were brought against him. Through the intervention of a man whose children had attended the Brothers' school, and who knew the absurdity of these charges, the worthy religious was allowed to return home.

But on the evening of April 12th, after ten o'clock, when every one was in bed, Citizen Prudhomme, one of the most fiery members of the Commune, at the head of a company of national guards, surrounded the house and commanded the gates to be opened. He had orders to arrest all the Brothers.

Happily, one of the Brothers had made part of his studies with him in the Seminary of Mans; recognizing each other, even the hard heart of the Communist leader was softened by the memories of his childhood thus suddenly recalled, and he agreed to let the Brothers pass the night in their own house instead of in the police station. Sentries were placed at every door, a guard was posted in the gatekeeper's lodge, and Prudhomme retired, the Brothers having promised

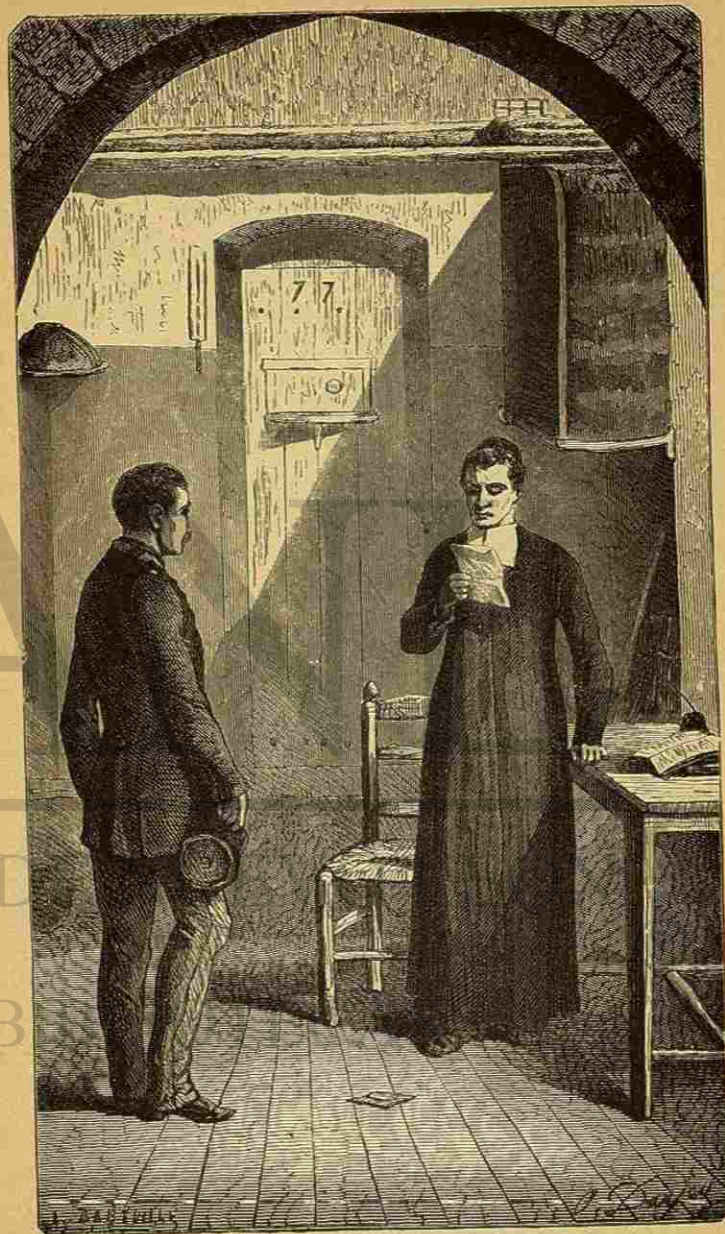


to leave the house next day, and take nothing it contained away with them. . . . Prudhomme, afterwards repenting of having allowed the Brothers to escape, offered a reward to whomever would bring in any of them, with double the amount for him who should deliver up the Brother Director. His efforts were useless. The Brothers had been taken in and concealed by a worthy family; there they stayed for nearly a month, when their hosts were apprised that they were suspected of harboring *Calotins* of the worst kind.\*

It then became necessary for the Brothers to leave their retreat, not only on their own account, but on that of their kind host. The Brother Director judged it best, if possible, to leave Paris. Disguising themselves, they set out one by one, and, God helping them, arrived safe at the house of M. Fleury, in Pre-Saint-Gervaise, where they had appointed to meet. Thence, after receiving the orders of their superiors, the Brothers repaired to Noyau, where they arrived on the 16th of May, and remained till the 2d of June, when they went back to resume their classes.

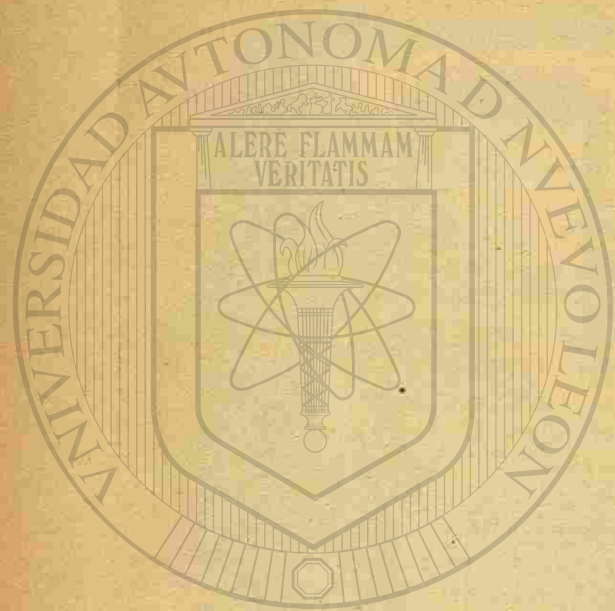
One of them, Brother Germier, who had not accompanied them in their flight, courageously remained in the neighborhood of the school, watching over the interests of all, and protecting them as far as he was able. On the morning of April 10th, the Brother in charge of SS. John and Francis' school was going to his class-room, when he saw a Federal sentry pacing before the parish church. His heart sank within him: had the house of God been pillaged? The faithful were not allowed to enter. If the Brother had consulted prudence only, he would have turned back at once; but a sense of duty impelled him to go on. With a firm step he

\* *Calotins*, a term of contempt then applied to the Brothers, in allusion to the skull-cap they wear indoors.



THE BROTHER DIRECTOR RECEIVES NOTICE OF EXPULSION.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE

advanced to the presbytery, amid the jeers and taunts of a group of national guards standing near. He glanced at the church and saw that the doors were all closed and guarded. Going into the class-room, he was met by a dozen or so of the children, all eager to tell of the doings around the church, and of the soldiers entering the sacristy, and taking away everything of value they could find there.

There was a private door leading from the school into the church—what had become of the Sacred Species? had there been time to take them away? had they fallen into the hands of the desecrators? The cruel anxiety of the religious may be easily imagined. There before him was the little door with its fastenings. It was probably closed and guarded on the inside. If he tried to open it, he would be sure to attract the attention of the terrible insurgents to his school, and perhaps expose his scholars to their ill-usage, and himself to be torn from them. Still, he felt himself drawn by some secret impulse towards the private door. Scarce knowing what he did, he took hold of the handle. The door slightly opened; it was neither locked nor guarded; the church seemed deserted. He ventured a little farther. No sooner had his black gown become visible within the church, than a voice from the other end, in the hideous language of the Communists, asked what he wanted there, and threatened to shoot him if he advanced any farther. Terrified on hearing such language in the dwelling of the Most High, the Brother hastily retreated, carefully closing the door.

Short as was the time he had been in the church, by a quick glance he saw that the Tabernacle had not been forced open. If, as there was much reason to fear, the Blessed Sacrament had not been removed before the invasion of the Communists, at least it had not yet been profaned. Leaving the children



in the class-room, the Brother went direct to the community to consult with the Brother Director; they agreed that no means must be left untried to prevent the Holy Sacrament from falling into sacrilegious hands.

As going to the mayor's office with a letter from the Brother Director, and much parleying with the ignorant and insolent officials of the reigning powers effected nothing, the Brother placed himself and his attempt in the special care of St. Joseph. Once more he ventured to open the private door, which was still unlocked. This time a very different sentry was on guard in the church, a good, simple-hearted neighbor of the Brothers, who was only in the service of the Commune by compulsion; he readily agreed, though it cost him his life, to let the Brother remove the Blessed Sacrament, which happily he effected, and brought it in safety to the community chapel. The Brother had hardly left the church with his precious burden when the sentry was changed, and very soon after the church was pillaged, so that even a moment's delay would have prevented him accomplishing his pious design!—St. Joseph had heard the prayer.\*

April 22.—The searches and arbitrary arrests continued. The wretched mob, known as the Provisional Government, made Paris a place of torment and horror. Their spies were everywhere: tears and groans were watched and denounced; for denunciation was the order of the day.

In the last days of April, the Christian schools were successively closed. The man who presented himself to replace the Brothers in the school in the Rue Saint Jacques was hooted by the pupils: so great was the tumult, that the teacher was obliged to call on the National Guards to restore a little order in the class-rooms.

\* See "Souvenirs of the Commune," pp. 119-138.

The St. Clotilde free school was closed like the district schools, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrance of the director. Tyranny and falsehood, assisted by brute force, replaced the right. May 5th, the house of the Brothers in the Rue de Fleurus was surrounded about six o'clock in the morning. A commissary of the Commune signified to the Brothers that those between twenty and forty were to be incorporated in marching battalions. The Christian schools of the parish were given to lay teachers. These intruders wanted to replace prayer and catechism by the singing of the *Marseillaise*. The pupils in great numbers shook off the yoke of these would-be teachers. They indignantly left the class-rooms, crying out in the streets: "Away with the *sans-culottes!* Down with the Commune!"

May 7th, the Brothers of the Rue Jean-Bart were all day under guard, a sentry pacing before their house. About eight o'clock in the evening, they succeeded in getting out through a window, and making their escape from Paris.

The Brothers of the Issy school left the village, which had become uninhabitable in consequence of the bombardment. The castle of Issy, which the Versailles troops had to abandon on account of the fire kindled by the shells from the fort, was again taken by the Federals. The southern forts were in a desperate condition. The ramparts were ploughed by projectiles, and nearly all the casemates fallen in. The iconoclasts of the Commune, after having imprisoned citizens, plundered the public coffers and the treasures of the Church, next proceeded to destroy monuments. Not content with getting rid of men, they wreaked their fury on stone and metal, guilty of the crime of commemorating historical events. The Brothers of Issy were among the communities which suffered the most from the malice of these enemies of order.

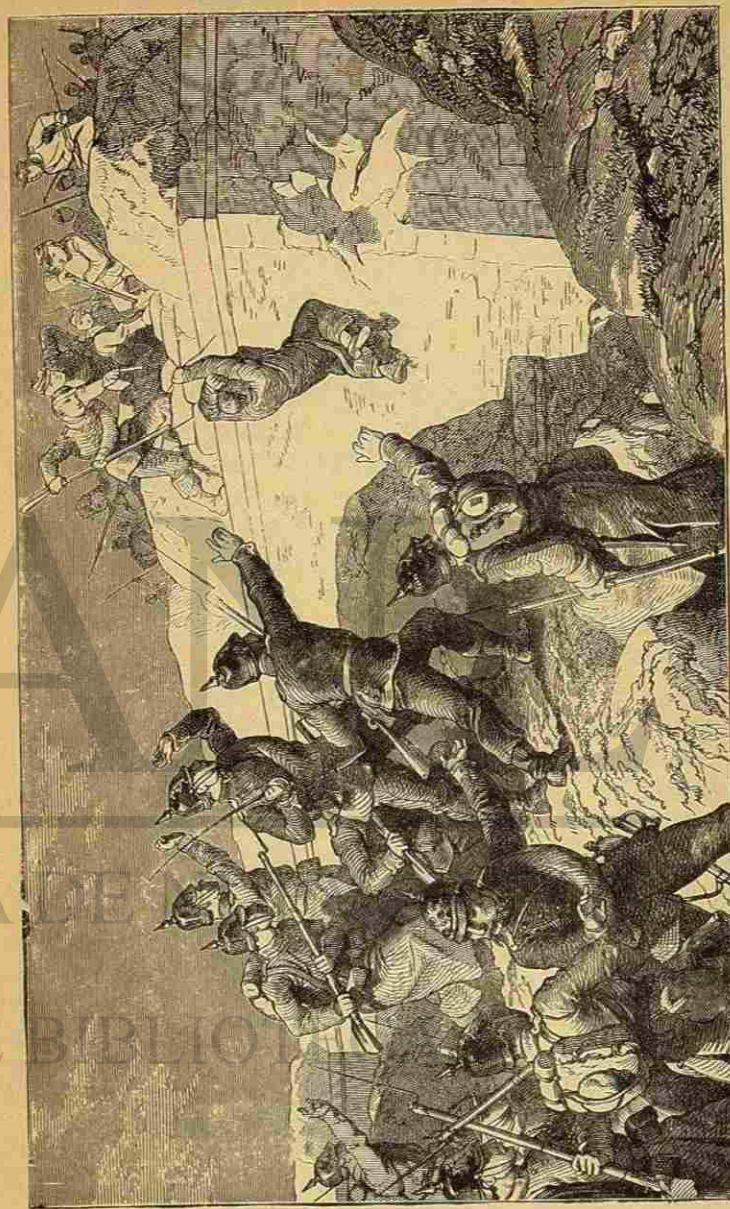


Situated outside the walls, this important establishment, which in ordinary times counted a thousand pupils, was obliged to send away the children as soon as the German invasion took place; the Brothers, left free by the breaking up of the school, were employed in removing the wounded from the battle-field, and nursing them in the ambulances.

To this community of Issy belonged Brother Berrier, who, before he had reached his twentieth year, fell a victim to his zeal and perseverance in nursing the fever patients in the Irish ambulance.\*

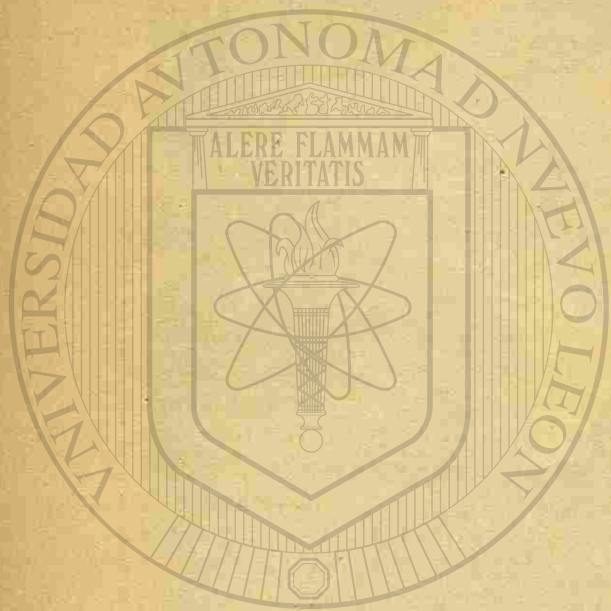
During the first week in May, more than sixty shells fell upon the St. Nicholas house at Issy, which did not prevent the Brothers from giving hospitality to three battalions of the National Guard, while taking care, at the same time, of 150 wounded. There were in the house, besides six Brothers whose services were not needed, twenty-one working people, gardeners, apprentices, etc.; most of them were youths whose lives were seriously imperilled. The Brother Director first thought of taking them to the country house of the St. Nicholas establishment. By the aid of an influential friend, he succeeded in getting passports for all. Four Brothers of mature age, and nine of the oldest workingmen, were left in the house at Issy to take care of the wounded; the lives of all these were in continual danger, not only from the shells, but from the National Guards. Notwithstanding the danger, the chaplain of the school insisted on remaining, in order to administer the sacraments to the wounded and dying. A freemason, going to the house a day or two after, was very angry to find the chaplain still there; to escape being shot on the spot, he was obliged to take refuge at once with some friends in Paris.

\* See "Souvenirs of the Commune," pp. 84, 85.



PERILOUS POSITION OF A YOUNG BROTHER ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.





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While the Brothers, and those with them, were on their way to the country, accompanied by a guard, they were subject to continual insult, and loaded with abuse by the crowds through whom they passed. The persecuted religious were consoled by the kind salutations of the children, who would eagerly have shaken hands with them if the brutal guards had not pushed them back. As they advanced into the interior of Paris they saw more sympathetic faces; many of the women raised their handkerchiefs to their faces as the poor prisoners passed along.

“Near the railings of the Luxembourg,” writes the Brother Director, “stood one of our Paris Directors, dressed as a secular; he had mingled with the crowd to see what was going on; having recognized me, he saluted me with tearful eyes; I returned his salute, which our guards perceiving, they rushed forward, arrested him, and forced him to go with us to the police station. . . . As to the treatment we underwent there, it would have been more than we could bear, were it not for the recollection of what our dear Lord suffered for us. Everything we had in our pockets was taken from us. The miserable wretches were not ashamed to take from one of our gardener’s little apprentices a franc piece. . . I was several times taunted with having laid aside my religious habit. To one of the scoffers I replied: ‘Citizen, I respect my habit too much to expose it to the insults it would, in these times, be sure to receive.’ It is impossible to describe all that we were made to suffer that night: the blasphemous and obscene language heard all around, the scoffs and insults of which we were the objects, and the bodily misery we endured in those filthy dungeons. About three o’clock in the morning we were taken to the railroad dépôt, where we met several other Brothers, and



were delighted to be able to converse together. Our satisfaction was of short duration. On Thursday, the 11th, we were all taken to Mazas, and I was harassed with anxiety as to the fate of our poor workmen, who I afterwards learned had been conducted to Mazas and kept there as long as ourselves.

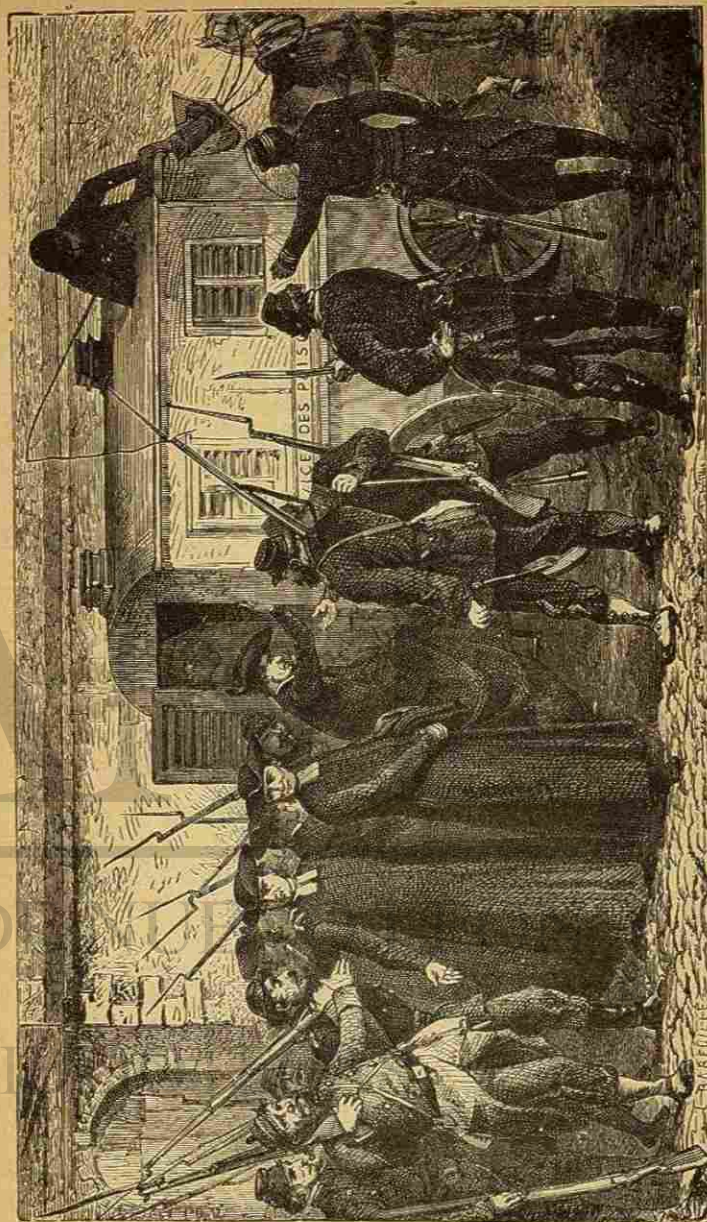
"It may well be imagined how dreary was my captivity, when I was not left even the smallest object of piety. A medal of the Most Blessed Virgin, which I had worn for thirty-six years, was taken from me; also my beads, crucifix and prayer-book, which last I missed most of all.

"On the evening of the 15th, I was brought before a magistrate, who, from his appearance, could not have been more than eighteen years of age, although he tried hard to look grave or dignified. He asked me all sorts of trivial, unmeaning questions, which I answered as well as I could.

"'Accused,' said he at length, 'what is the charge against you?'

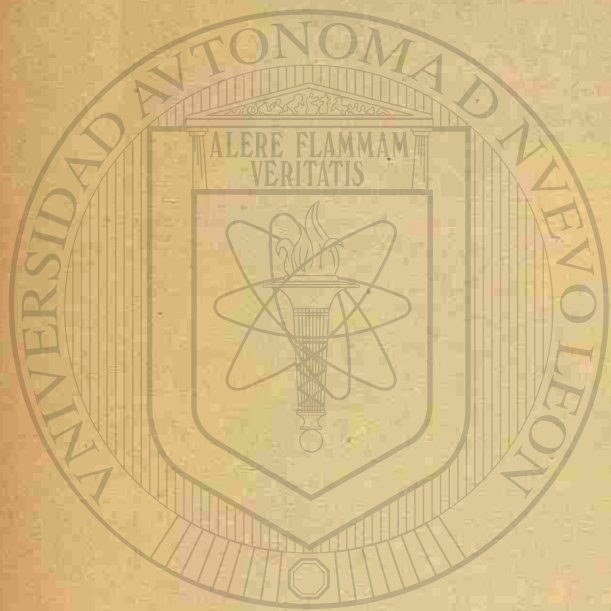
"I replied: 'Sir, you would do me a great favor if you told me yourself, for I know absolutely nothing about it!' There ended my examination. I begged, however, to make a few remarks, to which my young judge agreed. I complained that I and my Brothers had been very badly treated during our imprisonment. The boy official admitted that such treatment was wrong, but said it was easily accounted for, as the Brothers were known to have done great harm to the Republic. I asked him: 'Are you very sure, sir, that the Brothers have done harm to the Republic?' 'Oh! certainly!' he replied.

"'How is it, then,' said I, raising my voice, 'that, during the four months the Republic has been in existence, the public press, even the most radical journals, have been lav-



THE CAPTIVE BROTHERS SENT TO THE MAZAS.





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ish in their praise of the Christian Brothers?' He admitted that we had acted very bravely on the field of battle, and on that account were deserving of praise. 'Well! sir,' I replied, 'what have we done to deserve such treatment as we have received? What we did four months ago, we did two weeks ago. At Longchamps, we had six hundred wounded in charge, taking as good care of them for the Commune as we would have done for any authority.' After telling him what we had done only nine days before, at our house in Issy, for the National Guards, both sick and well, I saluted him and retired.

"Returning to my cell, I was warned in a whisper, by one of my guards, a friendly old soldier, to get away from there as soon as I possibly could. From this I understood that we were all in imminent danger. In fact, next day, Garreau, one of the Communist officials, wanted to shoot us, and to blow up the prison. The guards very coolly told him they would do no such thing: their lives were as dear to them as his was to him. The worthy Garreau, seeing the men were firm in refusing to do his cruel bidding, went to get orders from the Commune. The evening before, several shells had fallen on the building; and in the morning, the whole house was shaken by a very large one which fell, crashing on the roof. The prisoners were all alarmed; they began knocking violently at the doors of their cells, crying out for them to be opened. The guards were not slow in obeying, on their own account, and all the prisoners rushed into the yard. Amongst the seven hundred and fifty prisoners were forty Brothers, and the Venerable Abbé Crose, chaplain of La Roquette. There were also some seminarians from St. Sulpice.

"On getting out of prison, we found ourselves in a posi-



tion no less dangerous; for, at the Mazas gate, the Federals were constructing barricades, and pressing into their service all the men who came along, forcing them to dress as National Guards, and shoulder a musket. Very few of us could escape, but I had the good fortune of being one of these few, as also the Brother Director before mentioned.

"After a long run, the course of which God directed, about eleven of us found ourselves on the St. Mandé avenue, where a worthy man, a Mr. Nattier, gave us hospitality for thirty-one hours; his house was somewhat exposed, being between two fires. At seven o'clock in the evening the Versailles troops carried the Trône barricade; the disgraceful red rag was replaced by the tri-color.

"We asked an officer of the regular troops if it would be safe to venture to our several houses, in order to apprise our friends of our safety, as it was reported that seventy Brothers had been shot at Mazas. The answer being in the affirmative, we set out at once. How great was our joy while passing in front of our troops! The soldiers anxiously asked us if we knew anything of the hostages, especially the Archbishop. As we had heard nearly all the sad truth from our guards, we were, alas! able to tell them the dismal tidings.

"But if my Sub-Director and I were saved, there still remained twenty-five persons of the Issy house of whose fate we knew nothing. It was not till three or four days after that I found they were all safe. We proposed to erect a statue to St. Joseph, to whom we had made several novenas. It is certain that great Saint had taken care of us all. We, as well as our house, had been exposed to so much danger, that it required some powerful superhuman aid to save us all."\*

\* See "Episodes of the Time of the Commune," pp. 105-123.

May 8th, the Brothers of Gros-Caillou and Saint Nicholas-de-Vaugirard quitted their home. Thirty or forty of their brethren, trying to get out of the city, were arrested, either at the dépôts, the gates, or even beyond the ramparts. Some were released, but twenty-one were taken to the jail (La Conciergerie).

The fort of Issy was taken by the troops of the regular army. Nine batteries, posted at Montretout, raked the Point-du-Jour and the bastions of Auteuil and Passy with shot and shell. The man-chase went on all over Paris. To escape the search of the Commune, it was necessary to hide during the day, and change quarters often.

May 8th, one of the Brothers, who was arrested with some others of his brethren at the Northern Railroad dépôt, gives a thrilling account of his experience, from which we take the following extracts:—

"Whilst waiting, in a room belonging to the dépôt, the summons to appear before one or other of the dreaded Communist leaders, and thinking whether I should ever see my dear Brothers again, the door opened with a loud noise, and a group of prisoners, escorted by some National Guards, entered the apartment. Mechanically turning my eyes on these new companions in misfortune, I recognized the Brother Director of the Novitiate, and five or six Brothers from Vaugirard. At this sight, I rushed forward, but was driven back by the guards, who, making Brother Exupérien responsible for my act, loaded him with insults and reproaches. . . . After going through a sort of examination, in which the questions put to us were so trivial that our fate was evidently already decided upon, we were conducted to prison, and I shuddered at the thought of the horrible company we were to have. What, then, was my surprise



and joy, on entering the dark room assigned us, to hear familiar voices greet our arrival! The charity of some of our guards had managed to spare us the company I so much dreaded, by putting only Brothers and priests together in this room. May God reward them for their kindness! We there found some twenty of our Brothers, some religious of St. Joseph's, and several priests; one of whom, a Pole, had been arrested in a curious way:—He had been robbed, and lodged a complaint against the robber; the police, although admitting that the latter was guilty, set him at liberty, and imprisoned the plaintiff on the score of his being an ecclesiastic. Such was the justice of the Commune!

"We were so thankful at being left together, that none felt our imprisonment so much as we would otherwise have done. But, alas! we were soon removed to Mazas and placed in solitary confinement. Here I resigned myself wholly to God, while the thought that was continually uppermost in my mind was not that of my own danger, but rather what the Venerable Brother Philippe must feel in having so many of his children in the hands of the Commune. What anguish for a heart so loving as his! . . . I had two dear Brothers also in our community, brothers in blood as well as in religion, and to them my heart turned with fond recollection in these hours of meditation and prayer. . . .

"The want of my religious habit troubled me not a little, but I had another privation still more painful. When searching me, on my arrival at Mazas, they had taken away my New Testament. Still, I was not without compensation: my beads had been left me, my dear beads! the blessed medal of which, pressed to my lips, often revived my courage; while reciting my Rosary and meditating on the Mysteries restored peace to my soul. As we need it, God sends us consolation in our sorest trials.

"I was seated in my little cell at Mazas on Thursday, May 25th, about eight o'clock in the morning, when my door was violently thrown open, and I heard voices cry in all directions: 'Fly! save yourself!' I lost not a moment, but, darting along the corridors, reached the inner yard without meeting any obstruction; there I found myself amongst a crowd of prisoners who were shouting and blaspheming. This tumult continued for about half an hour, when the guards, having received orders to let us out, opened the doors. Amongst the six or seven hundred prisoners, I had the happiness of discovering the Brother who was arrested with me at the Northern Railroad dépôt. We got together. 'Take care,' whispered one of our guards; 'don't let any one suspect you are Christian Brothers; if you do, these people will do you all the harm they can!'

"We agreed to keep in sight of each other after we got out, but not to let any one see us together or suspect our being known to each other. On leaving the prison, I turned down the first street I came to. After making sure my companion was following me at a distance, I walked on as fast as I could, till I came to Berry. There I found myself stopped by a barricade; so, turning back, I went down another street, but, not knowing which way I ought to take, I kept walking about within a small circuit from the place whence I had set out. I was worn out with fatigue, and lay down behind a low wall, my comrade doing the same, a little way off, and slept about half an hour; we then resumed our march, he at a distance following all my movements, and doing just as I did. This is to be kept in mind all through my narrative, though, in order to make myself better understood, I may often use the singular number.

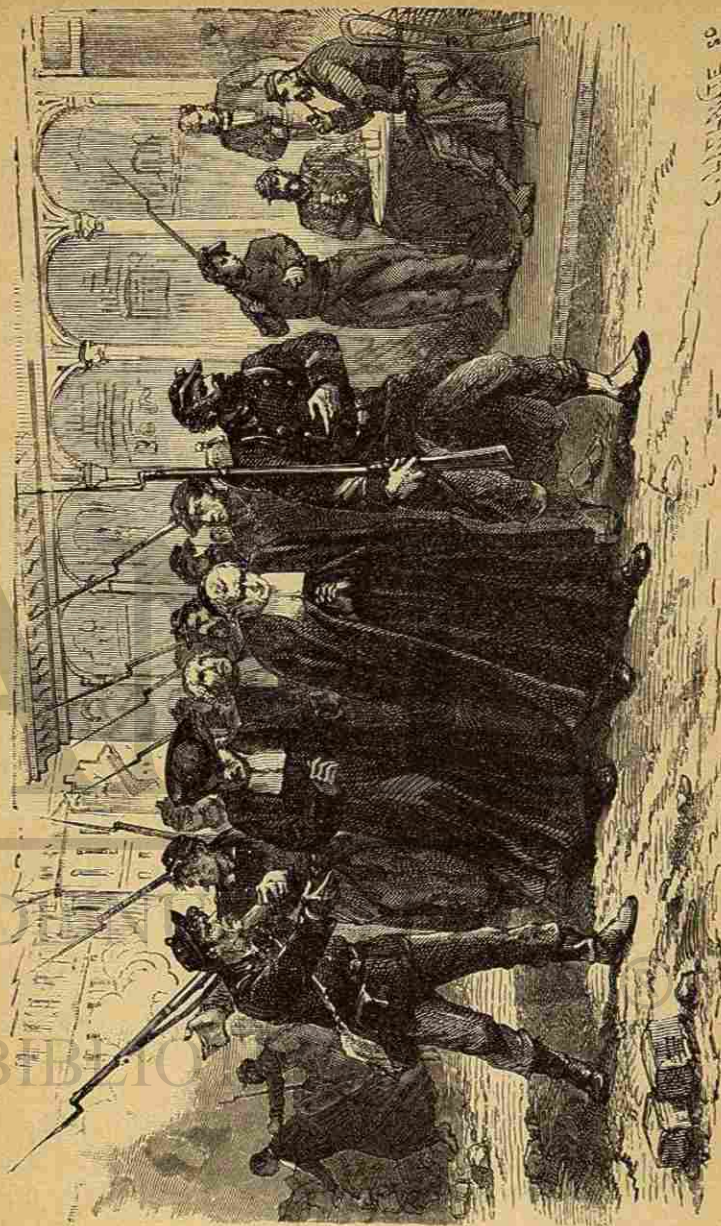
"I had gone but a little way when I perceived a sentinel;



I hurried on, intending to cross the adjoining barricade boldly, in the hopes of being unnoticed. 'Citizen, a stone for the barricade!' cried the sentinel. With a trembling hand I picked up a stone and laid it in the place pointed out to me. At the other end of the Rue Chemin-Vert, a noisy crowd were commencing a new barricade. There I was not allowed to get off so easily.

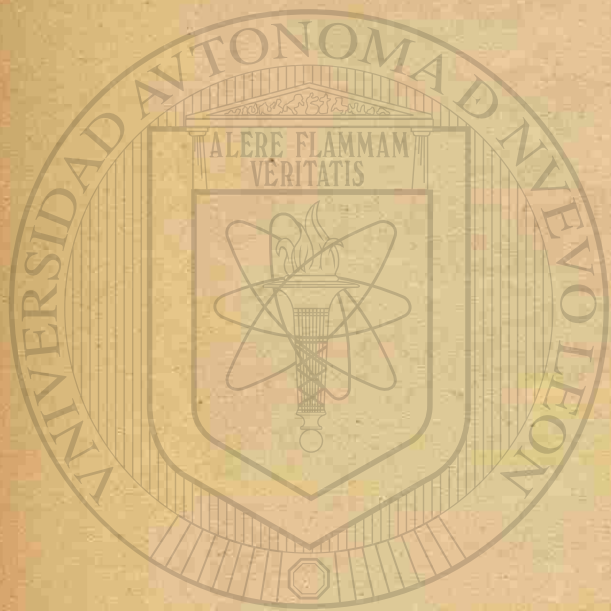
'Where do you come from? where are you going, citizen?' asked several voices at once.—'I came from Mazas, driven out by the shells!'—'Ah! very well; you are just in time: we want men; you shall work with us.' I involuntarily made a gesture of alarm, which the leader of the workmen either mistook, or feigned he did. 'Don't be afraid!' he said; 'you'll be paid.' If I refused, I would be instantly shot. So, breathing a prayer to my guardian angel to direct and assist me, I asked, with as much indifference as I could assume, what I was to do. They showed me. It was a regular apprenticeship to mason-work; we took paving-stones and cemented them one on the other with clay instead of mortar. When the barricade was sufficiently high, it had to be covered with sacks of earth. I was placed amongst the workmen who were filling the sacks and carrying them to those who were putting them on the rampart. Ah! that rampart! if I could only throw it down!—What a scene the building of it was! what curses, what imprecations, what feverish eagerness!

'Absorbed as I was in reflections, I noticed that four of my companions had been for some time watching me attentively. As soon as our work was finished, one of them asked me if I were not an Italian. I replied in the negative. 'What matters it where he is from?' said another. 'He has worked well, and that is the principal thing.' Then turning



THE BROTHERS OF ST. MARGUERITE, AFTER LEAVING THE MAZAS, ARE CONDUCTED TO THE LYONS ST. BARRICADE.





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to me, he said: 'Here is one franc; come and drink a bottle, and after that you may go where you please.' I took the money, and, partly from fearing to refuse, and partly because I was really in need of some little refreshment, I went with my strange comrades to the wine-shop. While drinking a glass of wine, a singular change came over me; I felt I could read the men's thoughts, and perceived the words, 'You can go where you please,' concealed a snare. I then resolved to be on my guard, and when three of the Federals left us at the door of the wine-shop, I told the fourth, the same who had paid me, and who seemed to be a sort of leader—'I will remain, citizen!—I like to work, and will do whatever is required.' This conduct was assuredly inspired by my good angel. It saved my life, and, what is more important, it prevented my three unhappy companions from committing a crime; for I have since learned that, having suspicions of me, they had determined to lie in wait for me at the next corner, to see if they could find out anything more about me, and then to arrest and take me to the Mayor's office, where I would certainly have been sentenced to be shot as a spy.

"My companion expressed himself pleased with my decision, and told me to go with him, and he would have me equipped for service. My Brother, who had been watching for my appearance from the wine-shop, now came up, and being asked if he, too, wanted employment, answered in the affirmative; and we were both taken back to the barricade where we had worked. We were told to rest awhile, and, despite the horror and anxiety that filled my mind, fatigue overcame me, and I slept soundly. At midnight I was suddenly roused. 'To your post, citizen!' cried a rough voice. It took me some moments to realize my position. Was it indeed I, the calm and peaceful friend of youth, I, the disciple



of the God of peace, who found myself amid shot and shell with a musket in my hand, and serving in such a cause?

"It was too true, and I soon was terribly convinced of my identity. I went to take the place assigned me on the barricade: I was to act as sentry for three hours."

For three days the two poor Brothers were made to share the fortunes of the Federals, sometimes separated, sometimes together, always exposed to imminent peril, in case of discovery, from the implacable hatred with which the Communists regarded the *Calotins*—as they called all religious, and all priests. What a strange and terrible fate for two Christian Brothers, to be dragged hither and thither with the Communist rabble, flying from the approach of the national army, which in their hearts they hailed with transport, as the only hope of safety for their country as well as for themselves! What sights of horror met their eyes!—churches desecrated, pillaged, and converted into human slaughter-houses!—priests and religious led to death amid the savage shouts of the infuriate mob! Who can tell the horrors they witnessed in those days of compulsory service amongst the Federals! A change came at last. The Versailles army, drawing their circle closer and closer around the Communists, at length captured them all, and marched them to La Roquette; among this vile crowd of prisoners were the two sorely-trying religious!

"The heavy iron doors of a large dungeon closed upon us," says the Brother, whose narrative we resume; "from time to time the door opened with a dreary sound, and a loud, harsh voice called out: 'Five men!'—The five men nearest the door are detached from the crowd; what becomes of them we only know from the quick discharge of musketry outside! justice is done, in part, for one of the greatest crimes the modern world has seen.

"The door has already opened and shut many times; behold me now in the front rank. 'Five men!' cries the jailer. I was hardly conscious of what was passing around me, or how I crossed the threshold that stood, perhaps, between me and death, when, after being carefully searched, I was asked some summary questions. My Brother was beside me; we gave our names as Brothers of the Christian Schools. We were heard with a smile of incredulity, and that was not surprising: our dejected features, our dishevelled garments, everything, even our very fatigue, bore witness against us. I felt this was the case and fairly burst into tears. 'Be composed,' said a kindly voice; 'let us see if you have not some papers to show us.'—'We were stripped of everything at Mazas, when we were taken thither with our brethren.'—'In that case—'

"'But, I assure you, we belong to the Brothers' house, No. 169 St. Dominic street; you may write there, or to the Mother-house, Oudinot street, and we shall be recognized immediately.'

"I saw, by the looks exchanged by our interrogators, that we were condemned!—A sudden inspiration flashed on my mind: 'Papers! you asked for papers?—well, here are mine!'—and with one hand I drew my beads from my pocket, and with the other took out the scapular, which the guards at Mazas had respected. My Brother had no scapular, but he too had his beads, and, like me, presented them. This evidently changed the aspect of affairs, and we were told to sit down and wait a little while, so that the truth of our statement might be verified. We were soon after taken to an adjoining apartment, where a police officer came to us, and with great respect asked us to tell him how we came to be found in so strange a position. Having taken notes of all, he left, and it was not long till the door of the apartment was



thrown open, and we heard the blessed words, 'You are free!'

"With grateful but anxious hearts, we too made our way to the dear old house in Oudinot street. 'God be praised, here are two more!' cried the Brother-porter, as he opened the door for us. Scarce a moment had passed when a dear Brother Assistant and several others of our brethren came to welcome our return, and much did they marvel at the strange story we had to tell. Brother Assistant would scarcely allow us to finish, saying that, as the beads and scapular had been the instruments used by Almighty God in delivering us from such fearful danger, it was doubly incumbent on us all to go first to the chapel to return thanks. For the first time in nearly a month we had the privilege of kneeling before the holy altar. How fervent were our thanksgivings! how ineffable our joy! Ah! how true are the words of Holy Writ: 'How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord God of Hosts!'

"All the scattered sheep were now gathered back into the fold, except one whose name was still unknown.\* . . .

"On the following day, we resumed our religious habit with inexpressible happiness, and the dear Brother Director of Novices was appointed by Brother Assistant to go with us to La Roquette to thank M. Charles Noel, the police officer who had set us free." †

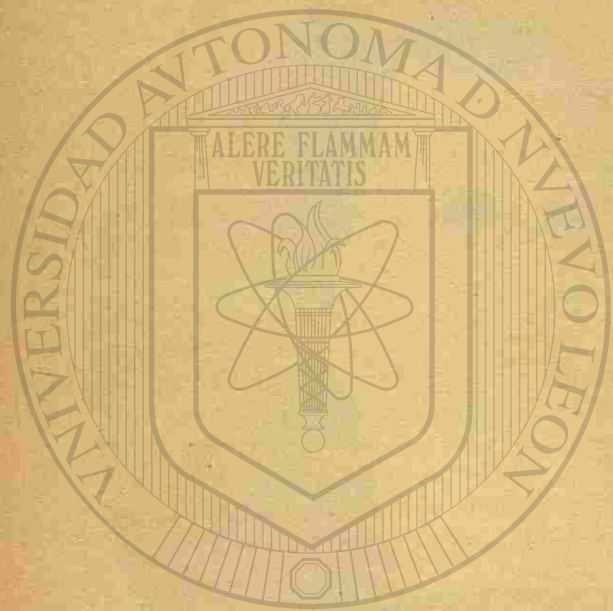
\* The death of Brother Néomède-Justin was not yet known.

† See "A Quoi Sert on Chapelet," pp. 7-80.



BROTHER NÉOMÈDE-JUSTIN.





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DIRECCIÓN GENERAL

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE BROTHERS UNDER THE COMMUNE.—*Continued.*

The last days of April, the Communists paid the first official visit to the community-house of the St. Sulpice Brothers.

Druet du Mousset, the delegate sent for this purpose, was accompanied by two National Guards. They were, on this occasion, very civil, and assured the Brothers the Commune owed them no ill-will. Notwithstanding these specious professions, several Brothers thought it prudent, with the permission of their superiors, to leave Paris. For some days the schools outside went on as usual. Only one, the 3d class of St. Thomas d'Aquinas' parish, was closed, through the sickness of the teacher.

On Friday, May the 5th, a detachment of National Guards arrived with a notification that all the Brothers were prisoners. These men were to take possession of the house and to forbid all egress from it. At the time of the arrest, there should have been twenty-one Brothers in the house, but, happily, two young Brothers had gone to the church of St. Sulpice; on their return, they were apprised from a window of what had taken place, and did not try to enter the house, and, in the course of the day, succeeded in getting out of Paris in secular dress.

Meanwhile, the Brothers imprisoned in the community-house were told that a member of the Commune would visit



them in the evening, and they began to hope for some change in their favor. They were deceived in their expectations. When the delegate arrived, it was to renew the prohibition to leave the house, and, worse still, to ask the names of all the Brothers between the ages of nineteen and fifty-five, that they might be enrolled in the National Guard. The list was promised, and returned accordingly by noon of that day. Lay teachers, at the same time, were sent to replace the Brothers in the schools of the Rue d'Assas and Rue St. Benoit. . . . The Guards being kind enough to allow the pupils of the schools to visit their imprisoned teachers, great numbers, accompanied in many instances by their parents, availed themselves of the permission. No visit, however, consoled the prisoners so much as that of Brother Exupérien, Director of Novices.

"Sunday morning comes," writes the Brother Sub-Director; "it passes, anxious and monotonous; what a contrast it presents to our usual Sundays! no more offices, no more instructions, no more children to conduct to church. Poor children! we could not go to them, but they came to us; for, on that day, their visits were more numerous than on the previous days. It did us good to see them. Ah! in the world, how little people know of the tender affection which God has planted in the heart of Christian teachers! That love which the father and mother feel for their family according to nature, the Christian Brother bestows no less generously on those who are his little brethren in Jesus Christ, his children in God. . . . Alas! after another visit from two Communist delegates, this great consolation was denied us; we were no longer allowed to see our pupils or their parents!"

Those who by their age were liable to be enrolled in the

National Guards, were, as may well be imagined, very much troubled; a plan was devised by some of them by which to escape so great a misfortune. Their project was, in a general way, made known to the Brother Director, and met his approbation. Nevertheless, that he might not be compromised, he was left in ignorance of the details, nor was his special permission asked. . . . After supper, the eleven Brothers who would have had to serve in the Commune went up stairs, and, seeing their guards walking in the yard on the other side of the house, each took off his religious habit, and, having a secular one under, they were ready for their departure. They assembled in a small room overlooking the Rue Jean-de-Bart. A rope was fastened to the bedstead to facilitate their descent. The parts were distributed; some went through the house, making all the noise they could, while others engaged the guards in conversation. Another was set to watch what was passing outside, and when the coast was clear he gave the signal. Under the protection of Mary, the Divine Help of Christians, the bold attempt was made, and admirably succeeded, amid the silent applause of friendly neighbors anxiously looking on. . . . Next day, when the escape of the Brothers was discovered, and the Director was called to account for their disappearance, it was not difficult for him to exonerate himself, seeing that he had not been informed of the hour of their departure. Moreover, the Communists had stationed guards in the house, whose duty it was to see that no one escaped: when the fugitives had eluded their vigilance, how could the Brother Director be held responsible? Having vented their wrath in dire threats of future vengeance, the Communist delegates decided to turn out the four citizen Brothers who still remained in the house, which was accordingly done, and so the matter rested for that time.



To the Brothers who had succeeded in making their escape the night seemed long and dreary; it was no easy matter to find a lodging, and it was past midnight when one of the fugitives was still wandering in the streets. In those evil days, so many honest people had left Paris, the Brothers often found enemies where they expected friends. When, a day or two after, they succeeded in getting out of Paris, it was in the strangest disguises, as millers, marketmen, etc.

Amongst the first called to the care of the ambulance, and the last who remained in the service of the victims of foreign war, were the Brothers of the Rue des Martyrs. They had also, in the first days of the struggle, to gather in the wounded and dead, no longer struck down on the field of battle to the cry of "*Vive la France!*" but shot in the streets of Paris by French bullets and to the cry of "Hatred and death to Society!" It was in front of their house, and before their eyes, that the civil war entered upon its era of shame and carnage; it was theirs to witness the heartrending sight of the triumph of anarchy over order, desertion over discipline!... The sound of the volley that took the lives of two brave French generals shook their house, and they were at one time afraid their gardens were to be made the scene of such executions. Their house was full of the wounded; the dead were piled in their enclosure, and even the hard-hearted Federals fled in disgust from a scene so revolting. Under the very windows of the Brothers' house two barricades were erected. Guns were next planted there, and it was not till the 24th of May that the government troops succeeded in taking these positions. The poor Brothers of Montmartre were obliged to cross four barricades to go to their post, and on Easter Tuesday the Brother Director in Rue des Martyrs had to keep them there. They

opened classes for such of the Montmartre pupils as came to them.

Meanwhile, after having posted a notice on the church-door that "priests being robbers, every good citizen was called on to arrest them," the Federals paid a visit to the Rue des Martyrs, when they informed the Brothers that the warrant condemning the priests also extended to them, and all the other "black gowns" in the ward. But this threat did not frighten the pious instructors of youth. They had not faced death so often on the battle field and during the siege, in the service of the wounded, without feeling convinced that human life is in the hand of Divine Providence, on whom all are alike dependent. They therefore went quietly on with their usual avocations, and, strange to say, were for some time not molested. . . . But they could not hope to be left long in peace. They were in continual danger of arrest, and not only themselves, but their friends. After several interviews with the delegate and mayor, in which he showed how brave and fearless a religious can be in defending the right, the Brother Director saw it was necessary for his friends' and his own safety to devise means to escape from Paris. In this he succeeded, and by the following Sunday the last two of the five Brothers remaining in the Rue des Martyrs arrived safely at Aubervilliers disguised, one as a laborer, the other as an inspector on the railroad. A few days after, the Brother Director succeeded in joining them there. They were all kindly welcomed by the Brothers in Aubervilliers.

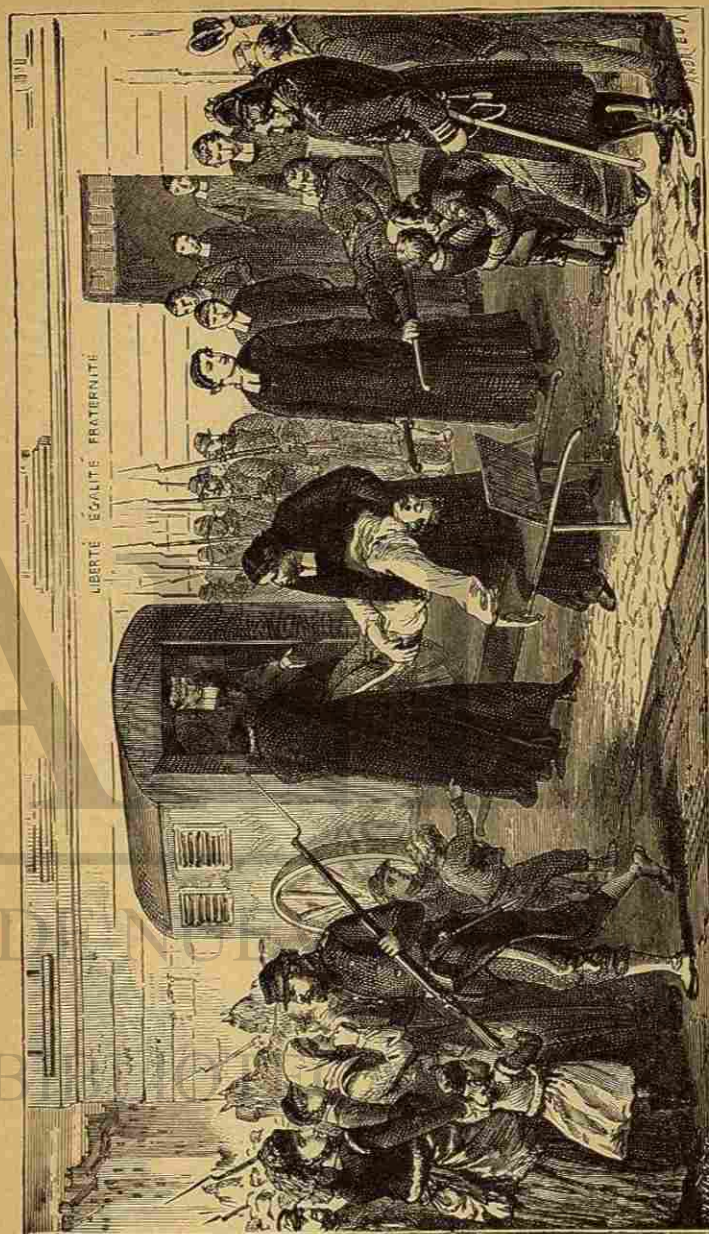
On the 15th of April, a delegate of the Commune made his appearance at the community-house in the Faubourg St. Martin. He came to ask the number of the classes and how many children attended the school, at the same time inti-



mating to the Brothers that they were to be replaced by lay teachers. Nothing more occurred till the evening of the 18th inst., when Brother Director was privately informed by letter that, in the course of forty-eight hours, he and the other Brothers were to be arrested and enrolled in the marching battalions of the National Guard. No time was to be lost; it became necessary to vacate the premises that very night. Secular clothes and a little money were at once given to each of the Brothers, and, by God's assistance, they all succeeded in escaping from Paris, some going to friends, some to relatives, in various parts of the country. One Brother, however, remained in the city: being charged with the direction of the choir-boys of St. Joseph's parish, he kept his post all through the worst days of the Commune, and regularly taught the children entrusted to his care, in a room belonging to the church. . . . It was not without indignation that the people of that vicinity heard of the forced departure of the Brothers. A great number of parents went to the school-house to express their regret; and others, knowing that Brother Director had taken refuge in Beauvilliers, wrote to him the most touching letters.\*

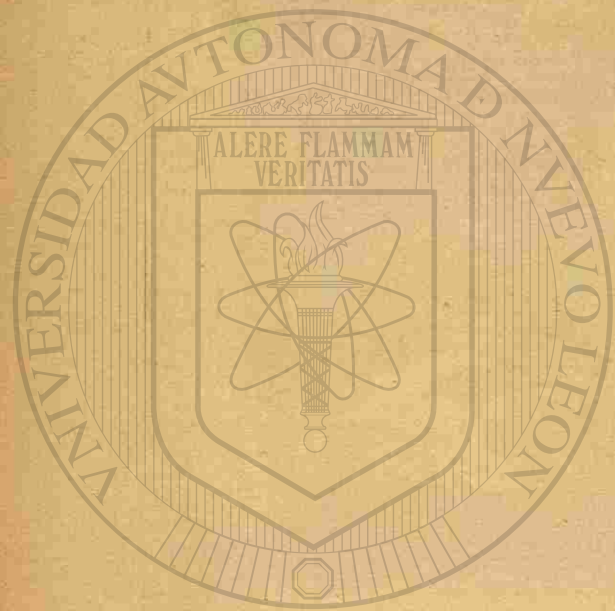
Events were culminating. Every day the Communists were losing ground. The hour of deliverance was at hand, but the struggle waxed only the more desperate, and the number of victims was increased. On the 10th of May, the Brothers of Clichy were called on to take charge of the ambulance of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul. They all declared themselves willing to go, and it was agreed upon that they should relieve one another night and day in that eminently Christian task. God alone knows what trials they had to endure, what sights of horror they saw in that Com-

\* See "Episodes of the Time of the Commune," pp. 6-67.



BROTHERS OF MARTYRS' ST REMOVING THE DEAD.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN

DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

munist ambulance, where, nevertheless, they faithfully did their duty till the arrival of the regular troops.

On the 11th of May, the red flag was hoisted over the door of the Mother-house, Oudinot street. Three delegates from the Central Committee, under pretence of visiting the ambulance, insisted on being taken all over the establishment; the chapels, the cellars, etc., were examined in turn, and the visitors went away much dissatisfied, having found nothing. On the following day the Federals evacuated the village of Issy; they marched out in sullen silence.

The bombardment now reached the boarding-school of Passy; the staff of Brothers remaining there were forced to abandon the building, and with their pupils arrived, about seven o'clock in the morning, at the Mother-house.

May 15th, the artillerymen of the Commune were disabled. The savage destruction of M. Thiers's house began. The sanctuary of home once violated, every citizen had reason to fear, not only for his person, but for his house. Nearly two hundred persons, from nineteen to forty, were arrested and imprisoned in the church of Notre Dame de Lorette. The fort of Vanves was evacuated. The Federals escaped through subterraneous passages, the fort being blockaded. Each citizen had thenceforth to produce a certificate of identity from the commissioner of the City Hall. Emissaries from the Commune made another search in the house in Oudinot street, but found nothing to compromise the Brothers.

Riddled with shells by the batteries of Meudon, Clamart and Issy, the Montrouge fort was in ruins. At Auteuil, a breach was made in the fortifications. The tricolor waved over Clichy. The projectiles of the besieging army reached even to Longchamps. The sick and wounded, with whom the pavilions were crowded, had to be removed farther into



the city. An order came from the Committee of Public Safety to put up four hundred beds in the Mother-house.

The Vendome column fell by order of the Commune; this was another page added to the accursed book of the Revolution of March 18th.

May 17th, the Mother-house received some twenty wounded, removed from Longchamps. It was agreed upon with the administration of the Press that the ambulance service should be entrusted to the Brothers, under the direction of a Brother Assistant-General.

At a quarter to six o'clock, a terrific shock was felt all over Paris; it was the blowing up of the arsenal on Avenue Rapp. The Champ de Mars was covered with blackened beams, and, sad to say, a vast number of balls and flattened bullets struck many persons. The number of victims was great—about two hundred dead, and four hundred wounded. The Mother-house received sick and wounded from Gros-Caillou Hospital, to which many of the victims of the explosion had been brought. The Committee of Public Safety, in a placard posted on the walls, accused the Versailles government of having caused the disaster; this absurd accusation needs no comment. The Communists were alone responsible for such blunders, follies, and crimes.

May 18th, feast of the Ascension, most of the churches were closed or desecrated. In those days of terror, evil alone was free. It was only in the privacy of their own houses that Christians could watch and pray.

May 19th, all the Brothers remaining in the Mother-house assumed secular clothing. The Dominicans of Arcueil were arrested and conducted to the fort of Bicêtre.

May 20th, the Brothers not employed in Oudinot street ambulance were enabled, by the kindness of some friends,

to gain the open country. Those that remained were ordered by the Committee of Public Safety to quit the house, under pain of arrest and imprisonment. Then the Brother Assistants, and other elders of the Order, who had hitherto remained at the post of danger, found themselves obliged to leave their house, no longer, alas! the Mother-house, but rather the widowed house, and, for five or six days, the house of sorrow and death. The parting between the sick and the Brothers who had been taking care of them was most affecting. Many tears were shed; but God graciously vouchsafed to give the Brothers a great tranquillity of mind in the midst of their trials, an entire trust in Him, and a filial abandonment of themselves into his Divine hands.

The Longchamps ambulance was installed in the house under the direction of the Press, the administrators of which had all along taken the greatest interest in the Institute; and it was to them the Brothers were indebted for the preservation of their establishment, which would otherwise have been occupied by the Federals, and probably burned.

May 21st, the persecution of the Brothers had reached its height: it was also nearing its end. The same day, about five o'clock in the afternoon, the besieging army forced the Saint Cloud gate, then those of Passy, Auteuil and Sèvres. The Grand-Armée avenue, the Arch of Triumph, Passy, Auteuil, the Trocadéro, Batignolles, and Les Ternes, were successively occupied by the brave Versailles soldiers. On the morning of the 22d, the army advanced in good order along both sides of the Seine, and delivered the inhabitants of the streets adjoining,—Les Invalides, and a great part of the Faubourg St. Germain,—from the reign of terror. The fine boarding-school of the Brothers at Passy had been fixed upon by the Federal staff as a centre of resistance; this was



dooming it to destruction, as the soldiers of the regular army would have directed all their batteries against it, and the insurgents, seeing themselves forced to evacuate it, would have set it on fire; but Providence watched over that model establishment, as it had watched over the Mother-house. Scarcely had the insurgents taken possession, when they were surrounded and made prisoners by the Versailles troops.

The whole week was but one bloody battle. The Committee of Public Safety, with a despairing cry, called the citizens to arms; everywhere drums were beating and bells ringing; barricades were raised at the corners of streets and squares; the base of operations was the City Hall, where the various delegations, driven forward by the progress of the government troops, had taken refuge; the principal monuments of Paris were committed to the flames. The Mother-house was filled with over six hundred wounded, and over eighty dead bodies lying in a sort of amphitheatre prepared for the purpose.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the 24th, the military authorities decided that the ambulance was to be again transferred to Longchamps, and that the Brothers should immediately take possession of their Mother-house, and of all their other establishments. Thence dated a new order of things for them, and the return to Paris of the Brothers who had been obliged to leave it. But they could not all return. Some were prisoners at Mazas, and probably themselves knew not that they were in imminent danger.

His Grace the Archbishop, the pastor of the Madeleine, the Abbé Allard, and the Fathers Ducoudray and Clerc, of the Company of Jesus, had been shot at La Roquette, through hatred of religion; and a number of prominent citizens, prisoners of war, had shared the same fate. The mur-

derers proposed to shoot all the hostages, and thus renew the massacres of 1792 and '93.

The liberating army carried the barricades with irresistible bravery, and the firing soon approached Mazas. Then the guards arrested and locked up the Brother Director of that district, threw open all the doors, brought down to the yard all the hostages, to the number of four or five hundred, and sent them out, three by three, about ten o'clock in the morning.

The Brothers went out, but found themselves in the midst of the Federals, and most of them were compelled to work on the barricades till such time as, under cover of the night, or in a moment of panic, they could hide in some adjoining house while waiting the hour of deliverance.

God had chosen from amongst them a new victim for Himself. Brother Néomède-Justin was struck by the splinter of a shell at the Pont d'Austerlitz barricade, and instantly killed. The following are some particulars of the life and death of this Christian martyr, whose memory shines out on Catholic France as a gentle star amid the thick darkness of the sorrowful year of 1871:—

Philippe Saguet—in religion Brother Néomède-Justin—was born on the 8th of May, 1836, at Hermaux (Lozère), of a God-fearing and eminently Catholic family. On the 28th of August, 1856, in the bloom of his promising youth, he bade the world farewell, and entered the novitiate of the Christian Brothers, at Puy (Haute-Loire). After his probationary term, the fervent religious was sent by his superiors to Paris. In that metropolis,—which was subsequently, in its wild frenzy, to slay its prophets and burn its monuments,—Brother Néomède devoted himself, for fifteen years, to the gratuitous instruction of the children of the poor.



During the memorable siege of Paris he taught his dear pupils of Issy-sur-Seine, who had taken refuge in the Vaugirard district. Admirable to relate, his recreation, after the fatigues of the day, was to go to the battle field, with a great number of his brethren, to take up the wounded, or bury the dead. At Champigny, none of the Brothers displayed more courage or ardor than he in relieving the poor soldiers. God preserved him from all the dangers of those stormy days: the time for Brother Néomède-Justin's glorious death had not yet come.

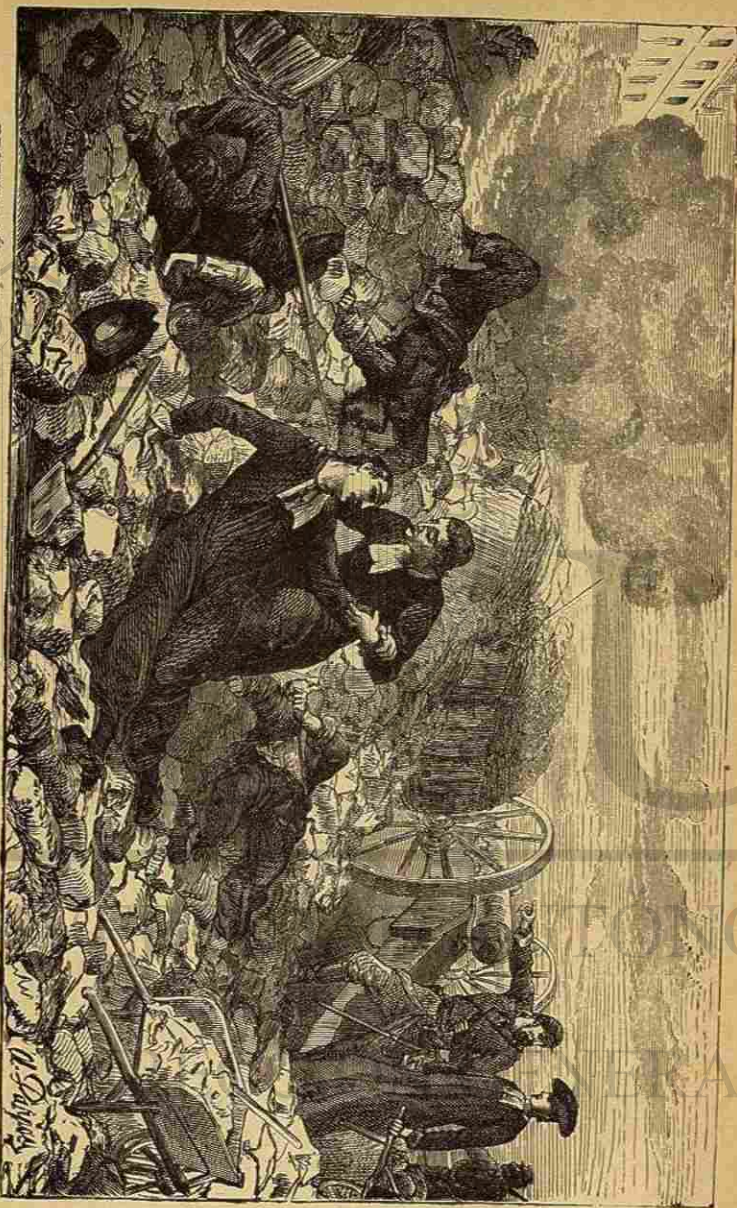
Having returned to his community in Issy after the truce, Brother Néomède had again to leave it, to avoid being enrolled in the Federal battalions. He joined his brethren of St. Nicholas, but there also the position became untenable. The army of Versailles encircled the village and fort of Issy with a belt of iron; more than two hundred shells fell on the establishment: prudence demanded its evacuation. The Brothers' workmen and several young apprentices, were on their way to Igny, when they were arrested at the Montrouge gate, stripped of every valuable, and otherwise ill treated. Brother Néomède bore all with evangelical meekness, and with his companions went to the police station, escorted by numbers of the National Guard.

That long journey, in the midst of a misguided mob, resembled that of the Divine Master through the streets of Jerusalem.

Brother Néomède heard without fear the cries of "*Death to the Calotins!*" "*Death to Versailles!*" Strengthened by the recitation of the Rosary and meditation on the sufferings of Our Lord on his way to Calvary, he courageously drank the chalice of insult and humiliation presented by that raging mob. On arriving at the police station, he had to



BROTHER NÉOMÈDE-JUSTIN WOUNDED AT THE BARRICADE OF THE PONT D'AUSTERLITZ.



undergo a new examination, which, of course subjected him to new outrage; the myrmidons of the Commune not only cursed and abused, but even struck him. The calm composure of the Brother only served to increase the wrath of those infuriate men.

Brother Néomède was imprisoned, with his companions, in a hall where several of his brethren already were. The number of prisoners, including the workmen of St. Nicholas' Orphan Asylum and some pupils, was over fifty.

On Thursday, May 14th, most of the Christian Brothers were removed to the Mazas prison, where Brother Néomède was placed in cell No. 98. Full of faith, he bore the restraint and privation with admirable patience. One of his superiors, a prisoner like himself, had taken an opportunity, on the way from the station-house to Mazas, to encourage him to the sacrifice and to give him a little money. The thought of this double service touched his heart and occupied him in his cell. Having a presentiment of what was to happen, the heroic prisoner wrote to his Director substantially as follows: "I give myself up to Divine Providence; come what may, it can only be for my advantage. This solitary confinement is very painful; the day is long; our privations are many. I regret the absence of my brethren; it grieves me that I cannot see you, or hear again any of those kind words you addressed to me at the station. The will of God be done; death will be a gain to me if He is pleased to call me to Himself. I find my consolation in prayer. I apply myself with my whole heart to our spiritual exercises, and the time does not seem so long: it would be still less so, if I only had my New Testament, the privation of which I feel very keenly. I am very grateful for the kindness of our superiors: I have received the little eatables that were sent to us. May God bless those who are mindful of the poor prisoners."



Then came the liberation of the Mazas prisoners in the manner already described. They were conducted in groups to the Rue de Lyon barricade. Brother Néomède at first succeeded in hiding, together with one of his brethren, like himself a member of the Issy community, for about two hours in the house of a wine-merchant.

A captain, deputed by the Commune, having discovered the two fugitives, treated them as cowards, and, with a revolver in his hand, made them march before him. Brother Néomède and his companion refused to take the musket that was offered them, but they were obliged to carry stones and provisions to the barricades; then, wrapped up in the great-coat of the National Guards, to draw an ammunition-cart.

Both were waiting a favorable moment to escape, and to find a safe asylum. Fully aware of the danger of their position, they had recourse to prayer. Brother Néomède said to his companion: "Our fate is sealed; death is certain; may the will of God be done!" These were the last words he uttered.

Meanwhile, the regular troops advanced; the whistling of balls and the crashing of shells gave the struggle a terrific character. About three o'clock, a shell burst near the Pont d' Austerlitz, where our two Brothers were. Seven or eight National Guards were horribly mangled; Brother Néomède-Justin was struck, and died instantaneously. Wounded himself, his Brother was barely able to reach his companion, to ascertain that he was dead, and to pray for his soul. Providentially taken up by some National Guards, the wounded Brother was conveyed to St. Eugénie's Hospital, where, for four days, the kind Sisters took all possible care of him. From him was learned these few, but most interesting, particulars of the death of this generous martyr.

Brother Néomède-Justin was taken to prison; his death was the outgrowth of hatred of the Catholic faith. Like a soldier of the Gospel, he fell on the field of honor, after having labored for years in the Christian education of youth. He died a martyr to his country and the Church, nothing wanting to complete his glory, not even the disgraceful insults of those who caused his death. Brother Néhelme had been killed some time before, at Bourget, the victim of his devotedness to the wounded. Of these two deaths the Institute of the Christian Schools may well be proud; they are an eloquent answer to the attacks of its enemies. Institutions which bring forth saints and martyrs, are truly those established by God for the accomplishment of His works in the world.

The regular army, not finding at Mazas the prisoners known to have been confined there, at first thought they had been shot by the insurgents; thanks to the Divine goodness, the alarm, although very natural under the circumstances, was unfounded.

Several of the Brothers who had been in prison arrived at the Mother-house on Friday, May 26th.\* Others did not get there till Saturday.

Two of them arrived only on Sunday evening about five o'clock. On leaving Mazas, they found themselves in the midst of men drunk with wine, and thirsting for blood, who had forced them into their vile ranks. For three days and

\* Friday, May 26th, some fifty hostages, among others, Fathers Olivaint, Caubert and Bengy, of the Society of Jesus, were taken from La Roquette to Belleville, and executed in a ball-room in the Rue Haxo. These victims were not shot; they were massacred. The fearful work of death lasted fully a quarter of an hour; the murderers even vented their fury on the mangled bodies, then threw them into a pit.

The same day, about nine A. M., the bodies of the martyrs of Albert-le-Grand and Arcueil were brought to the large hall of the Brothers' school, Rue Moulin des-Prés. Rev. Fathers Captier, Bourard, Cotrault, Delhorme, Chataigneret, and seven servants of the college, had been massacred the day before, at the barricade of the Barrière d'Italie, by order of the infamous Cerisier.



nights they had been closely watched, and were forced back from barricade to barricade, as their captors gave way before the victorious army.

Finally, on Sunday, the feast of Pentecost, about ten A.M., they were surrounded on the heights of Belleville, then disarmed, chained in groups of five, and brought before a council of war.

The two Brothers, who had been chained with three insurgents, were witnesses of the examination of those who preceded them, and of the death of a great number. Three hours were passed in this state of terrible suspense. Their turn came. They said they were Christian Brothers, who had got out of prison, and, unable to escape from the mob outside, had been forced to remain three days among the insurgents. . . . The council, after taking steps to ascertain the truth of their statement, gave them a passport, and sent them back in safety to their friends.

They returned harassed, or, rather, broken down by the hardships and fatigues they had endured, the dangers to which they had been exposed, and the terrible sights they had been made to witness, and blessing God for the signal mercies He had vouchsafed to them.

The insurrection once quelled, orders were given by the Cabinet council to re-open places of public instruction, and, as far as the Brothers were concerned, to restore the state of things existing prior to the 4th of September.

The following list of the Brothers who were arrested and kept in prison by the Commune at Mazas, will furnish another sad page for the history of the last French Revolution:—

NAME IN RELIGION.	NAME IN THE WORLD.	COMMUNITY.	DATE OF ARREST.	DATE OF TRANSFER.	DATE OF LIBERATION.
Brother Dugobertus, Director	Gérardin (Jean).	Ste. Marguerite.	April 20th.	May 14	May 25
" Jason.	Voisin (César).	"	"	"	"
" Améle.	Humbert (Nicolas).	"	"	"	"
" Expérien, Director.	Mas (Arlén).	Novitiats.	May 8th.	May 11	"
" Benigné-Paul.	Biondi (Paul).	"	May 9th.	"	"
" Berthevin-Denis.	Peytavin (Auguste).	"	May 8th.	"	"
" Adolphinus.	Chayla (Jean-Baptiste).	Gros-Cailou.	"	"	"
" Athème-André.	Joris (Jean).	"	"	"	"
" Hamon-Martyr.	Marion (François).	St. Nicolas (Vaugirard)	"	"	"
" Adolphe-François.	Sauze (Célestin).	"	"	"	"
" Nizier-de-Lyon.	Aldin (Antoine).	"	"	"	"
" Abdonis.	Letaimet (Jean-Baptiste).	"	"	"	"
" Adrianis.	Labat (Jean).	"	"	"	"
" Nalle.	Devèze (Justin).	"	"	"	"
" Aubert-François.	Lepié (Jean-Baptiste).	"	"	"	"
" Altigen.	Vallès (Etienne).	"	"	"	"
" Agrevo-Emile.	Pélamourgues (Emilien).	"	"	"	"
" Néon-de-Romé.	Barthélémy (Jean-Baptiste).	"	"	"	"
" Antide.	Page (Augustin).	"	"	"	"
" Pflotius, Director.	Roussel (Louis).	St. Nicolas (Issy.)	"	"	"
" Bertule.	Longuet (François).	"	"	"	"
" Aberius.	Barraud (Michel).	"	"	"	"
" Abélien-de-Jésus.	Villert (François).	"	"	"	"
" Néophile.	Peyte (Justin).	"	"	"	"
" Angeian.	Surbled (Ange-Julien).	"	"	"	"
" Dositheüs.	Blauvillien.	"	"	"	"
" Néomèle-Justin.	saguet (Philippe).	Issy (école communale).	Killed, May 25th.	"	"
" Aubert Antoine.	Cossé (Frédéric).	"	near a barricade.	"	"
" Abrosimus.	Sabatier (Jean).	"	May 8th.	"	"
" Bertheric-André.	André (Etienne).	Gros-Cailou.	April 25th.	"	"
" Bertulien, Director.	Perignon (Auguste).	Charonne.	May 9th.	"	May 12
" Amertin.	Fèvre (Henri).	St. Eustache.	"	"	"
" Flour, Director.	Milhat (Jean).	Notre Dame des Champs	May 8th.	"	May 15

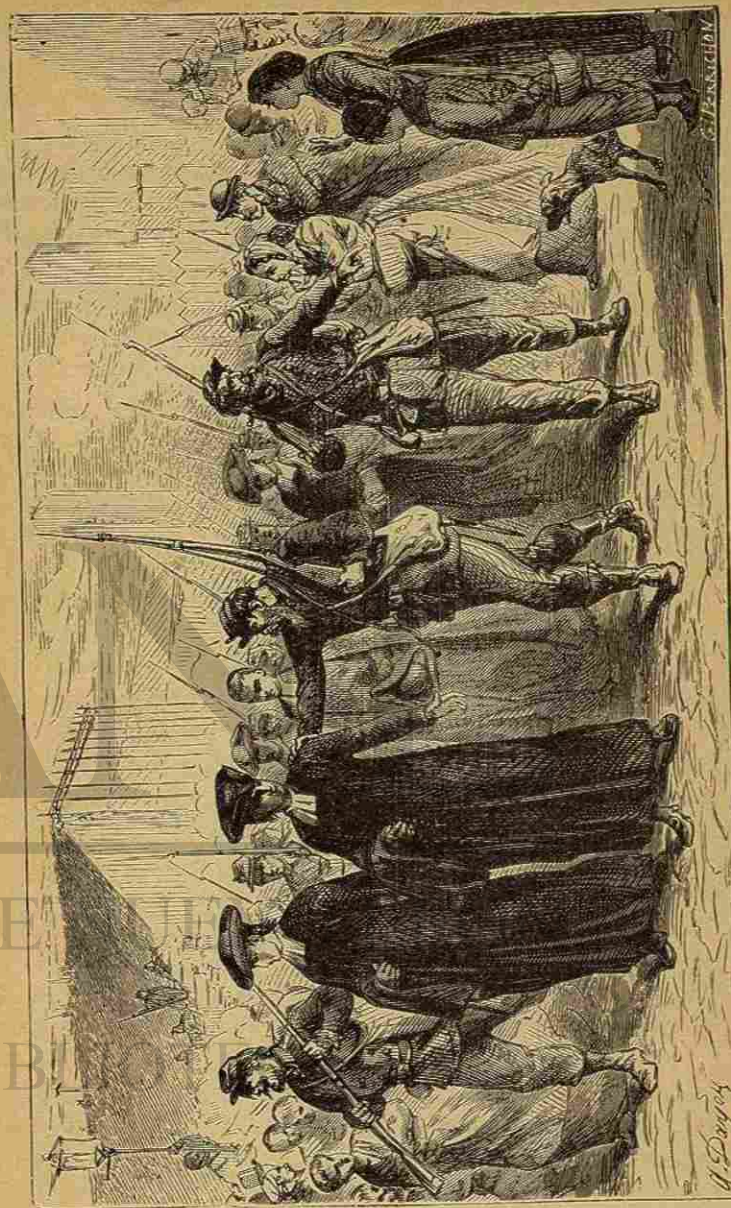


As soon as the absent Brothers heard of the order of the Council, they returned to Paris, forgetting what they had suffered, and thinking only of the good that might be done. The Most Honored Brother Philippe returned to Paris on the 9th of June. "I cannot," wrote the venerable Superior-General to his Brothers, "express what my feelings were at the sight of this unfortunate city, which has its finest monuments and vast numbers of its houses reduced to heaps of ruins. Neither can I describe my emotions on crossing the threshold of our Mother-house, where I found Brothers waiting to welcome me with tears of mingled sorrow and happiness. With what inexpressible joy I again saw that dear Brother Calixtus, who had been a prisoner in my place, and our dear Brother Assistant Facile, who had so courageously shared danger and affliction!

"As it was the hour for Benediction, we went to prostrate ourselves at the feet of our Divine Saviour, to receive His gracious blessing, and to thank Him with our whole hearts for the providential aid He had granted us. After Benediction, the hymn, *Ecce quam bonum*, was sung. How my heart swelled with joy and gratitude, under such circumstances, on hearing those admirable words of the prophet!

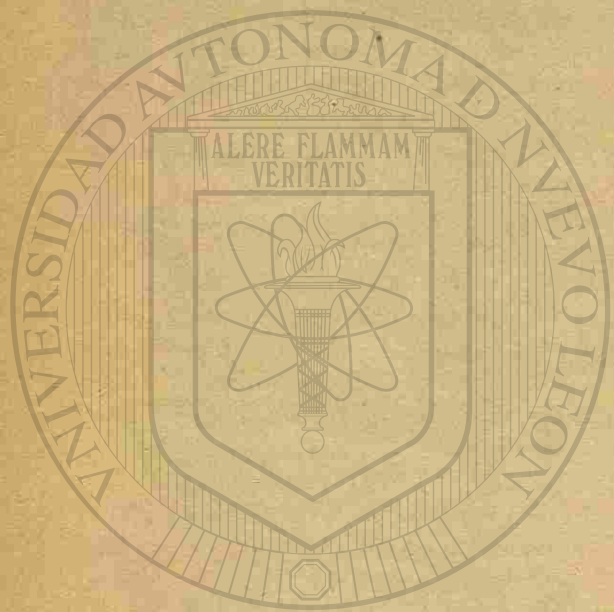
"The scene was a sublime one, and more akin to heaven than to earth.

"I afterwards tried to address our dear Brothers, thus joyfully reunited; but so great was my emotion that I could only say a few words of congratulation and encouragement, and tell them how much our Brothers in the provinces were interested in them, and how charitably they had everywhere welcomed their brethren who had been forced to fly from Paris."



ARREST OF THE BROTHERS OF THE ORPHAN ASYLUM OF ISSY.





UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE NUEVO LEÓN  
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE BIBLIOTECAS

On June 22d, a funeral service was celebrated at the Mother-house, Oudinot street, for Brother Néomède-Justin. Hundreds of Brothers from the different communities of Paris filled the spacious chapel of the establishment, edifying all who were present by their piety, modesty and recollection. The Very Reverend Brother Philippe and his Assistants occupied places suitable to their rank, on either side of the altar.

Near the catafalque were the children of the Issy school, the pupils of Brother Néomède. An admirable funeral oration was delivered by the Abbé Roche, chaplain of the house. The reverend orator paid a touching tribute to the memory of Brother Pérrier, who died of fever contracted while attending the Irish ambulance, and Brother Néthelme, who fell on the battle-field of Bourget.

"It had pleased God," the reverend gentleman said, "to stamp on the brow of the Institute of the Venerable De La Salle the triple seal of martyrdom. Institutions marked with that sign are imperishable."

The eloquent preacher also paid a glorious tribute to the memory of Archbishop Darboy, and the Jesuit and Dominican Fathers massacred by the Commune; he described all the innocent victims of the civil war, prostrate before the throne of the Lamb, with the glorified founders of their several Orders, asking pardon for the guilty city which had so long abused the gifts of heaven. ®

The Brothers of America, deeply touched by the woes and afflictions of poor, suffering France, sent \$5,780 for the French victims of the war. It is our duty to place on record



this act of generous sympathy, which the French people should never forget. This magnificent offering was contributed by the following communities:—

Parochial School attached to De La Salle Institute.....	\$1,825	Syracuse, N. Y.....	\$200
New Orleans, La.....	1,000	Brother Alfred-Edward.....	150
St. Teresa's.....	500	West Troy, N. Y.....	100
Ellicott's Mills.....	500	Newark, N. J.....	100
Detroit, Mich.....	300	Yonkers, N. Y.....	100
Albany, N. Y.....	200	Utica, N. Y.....	100
Manhattanville, N. Y.....	200	Washington, D. C.....	50
Buffalo, N. Y.....	200	M. Lalor.....	50
Baltimore, Md.....	200	Brother Abraham of Mary.....	5

Having recorded the sublime devotedness of the Brothers of the Christian Schools during the late disastrous period of French history, we can only repeat the words of Count de Maistre: "O holy Church! great men belong to thee!"

We, like the primitive Christians, are thrown in the midst of a corrupt civilization; the earth has grown cold, and it is for Catholics to restore its vital warmth, to probe the wounds of the mighty patient, to cleanse and to heal them. Let us beg of God to preserve to society the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools—that torch of faith, that focus of religion, so essentially necessary in its mission to the rising generations of the children of men.

Let Christian teachers go everywhere, sowing the good seed, spreading the glad tidings; let them draw divided peoples together. The influence and the teachings of virtuous men can alone give prosperity and peace to the world.

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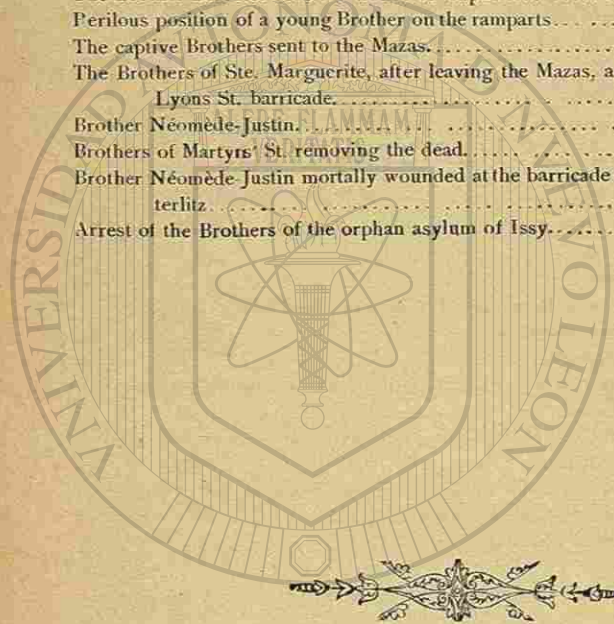
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