CHAPTER TEN

THE GENERALATE OF ARCHBISHOP LE ROY,
1896-1926

1. Introduction

B. G. 17, 865
Griz. 64-73

The Vicar General. After Father Emonet resigned on October 20, 1895, his First Assistant and Delegate, Father John Grizard, was elected Vicar General in charge of current affairs until the General Chapter could be convoked. It was far from being an enviable position at the moment. The whole of France was in turmoil over the antireligious tax laws and the declaration of submission, which the recognized religious congregations had signed, was considered a betrayal of the common cause. Most of the odium created by it fell on the unfortunate Vicar General, who had appended his signature and was generally thought to have induced the other congregations to sign also. Insults and insinuations rained on him from all sides and especially from the overheated Catholic press.

In the midst of the confusion, a voice from the depths of Africa came to add to his trouble. Bishop Alexander Le Roy, C. S. Sp., Vicar Apostolic of the Two Guineas, had been opposed to the submission and had advocated continuing the struggle in some way or other. Now that the recognized congregations, including his own, had given up the fight, he wrote a letter to the Catholic newspaper La Croix, the leading protagonist of the resistance and a sharp critic of the Holy Ghost Fathers for their submission. Congratulating the paper “on the good battle it was keeping up,” Le Roy sarcastically explained why the tax laws would not trouble him in Africa:

Won’t we too be asked to give something to the Government? Perhaps. If there is question of a special tax for us, as there is for you, we would hardly, I suppose, be able to consider it as an honor. However, we are rather used to these things. In China it happens very often. In that happy land they frequently confiscate even our very heads. While we allow them to decapitate us, we generally do not go to the trouble of cutting off our own heads and handing them over. Perhaps that is what we will do here.

Roy, 121 ff.

Roy, 126
As could be expected, *La Croix* and the other papers advocating passive resistance interpreted the letter as an approval of their position and as a sign that Father Grizard did not have the support of his own men. After all, there were other signs pointing in the same direction. Father Leo Lejeune, Prefect Apostolic of the Niger, gave an interview to the press and openly joined the opposition. Other missionaries sent individual or collective protests. All these observers far away in the jungle failed to understand what serious consequences would have flowed from the course of action they advocated. They seem to have derived their information solely from inflammatory articles in the rightist newspapers that had been mailed to their jungle stations. As a result, they completely misjudged the situation. While one cannot blame them for their ignorance of the facts, it is hard to excuse them for their hasty judgment. It constituted a painful shock for Father Grizard, especially since *La Croix* had previously insinuated that he took advantage of Father Emonet's illness to submit to the tax laws against the Superior General's wishes.

In addition to this conflict and the ever-present threat of persecution, Father Grizard was faced with a most critical financial situation. The Congregation had not built up any reserves for emergencies and had plunged deep in debt to support its missions and other works. Unable to cope with the perplexing difficulties facing him on all sides, the poor Vicar General more and more withdrew within himself and sighed for the day when a Superior General would be elected so that he could resign his function.

*Election of Bishop Le Roy as Superior General.* In May 1896, the General Chapter convened at Orly, near Paris. Two strong personalities were seriously considered as candidates for the vacancy: Bishop Prosper Augouard and Bishop Alexander Le Roy. Bishop Augouard was famous as the "Cannibal Bishop," who had established a 1300 mile chain of missions along the Congo and Ubangui rivers. The other candidate was equally famous for his exploratory trips in East Africa and his brilliant writings about the Dark Continent. Both men had undeniably great qualities of heart and mind and both would have made splendid Superior Generals. However, Bishop Augouard's intense nationalism detracted somewhat from his magnificent missionary record, and this contradicted the principles which the Venerable Father Libermann had so vigorously stressed. In addition, he had a reputation...
for being rather blunt and abrupt in his dealings with others. Bishop Le Roy, on the other hand, had cultivated a conciliatory attitude and had not made the mistake of identifying religion and politics. As could be expected, the delegates regarded him as the preferable candidate. Despite his reluctance and his efforts to declare himself ineligible, Bishop Le Roy was chosen.

Alexander Le Roy, a farmer's son, was born in 1854 at La Gralemois in Normandy. After studying at the "White Abbey," the junior seminary of Mortain, he began his theological studies at the diocesan seminary of Coutances. In 1874, Father Horner, one of the pioneer missionaries of Zanguebar, found that this young man wanted to consecrate himself to the missions and promptly kindled his interest in the Holy Ghost Fathers. With great difficulty, Le Roy secured the necessary episcopal permission to leave his diocese. Ordained in 1876, he received his first appointment shortly after his profession in 1877.

This first assignment was a great disappointment for the young priest. Instead of being sent to Africa, he was called to teach at the flourishing College of St. Denis, Reunion. The Spiritans had opened it three years before at the urgent request of the Bishop. Then, only a few months after Le Roy's arrival, the college had to be closed, because the Bishop died and his successor saw no use in spending money on higher education. In March 1878, Father Le Roy was back in Paris, confident that this time he would surely be sent to Africa. Instead, he ruefully accepted an assignment to the College of Cellule, France. Two years later, he was appointed to the missions—this time to Pondicherry (India), but again in a teaching capacity. He was to be Director of the local college, which had just been entrusted to the Congregation. Meanwhile Father Schwindenhammer died, and Father Le Vavasseur, his successor, decided to fulfill Le Roy's long-thwarted desire to be appointed to Africa. In December 1881, the young man landed in Bagamoyo on Africa's east coast. He travelled far and wide throughout the immense Vicariate to replace sick fellow priests and made exploratory trips to determine the best locations for new missions. A gifted writer—his bibliography covers ten pages—he used his spare time to publish a series of interesting

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1In 1923 this twelfth century abbey, which had been confiscated by the French Government in 1906, was bought by the Spiritan Fathers to serve as a senior seminary of the Congregation.
and widely read books and articles about his encounters and adventures, and these soon made his name a by-word with all who were interested in Africa.

While he was there, England and Germany agreed on a partition of East Africa, and in 1886 Germany laid claim to Tanganyika, the region in which Father Le Roy was working. The Germans looked askance at the activities of this zealous French Missionary and deeply resented his open criticism of the colonizing powers.

In 1892, they asked him to leave the Territory. Arriving in Paris in the spring of 1892, he read to his great surprise in the Bulletin Général that he was being proposed as the new Vicar Apostolic of the Two Guineas. Despite his pleas to the contrary, the appointment was made.

Bishop Le Roy spent the next three years reorganizing his vicariate and its personnel in order to build up a smooth and efficient administrative unit. Then, as we have seen, he was called to assume responsibility for the whole Congregation in 1896. He was destined to govern the Congregation for thirty years. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of his election as Superior General the Holy See made him titular Archbishop of Caria.

The election of Bishop Le Roy as Superior General was marked by several "firsts." He was the first African missionary to be chosen for this position. His two immediate predecessors, Fathers Vavasseur and Emonet, had been missionaries in the old Holy Ghost Missions of Reunion, Martinique and Guiana, but not in Africa. He was also the first bishop who became Superior General of the Congregation. All his predecessors had been simple priests. Le Roy was the first successor of Libermann who, as the Venerable Libermann and Schwindenhammer were Alsatians, Le Vavasseur came from the French colony of Reunion, and Emonet had been born in a free and independent Savoy. Finally, Archbishop Le Roy was the first successor of Libermann who had not personally known and been trained by the Venerable restorer of the Holy Ghost Congregation.

The generalate of the Archbishop covers a period of severe storms and stresses for the Congregation and its works: progressive

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2Of all the Superiors General before Libermann, only Father Bertout had been in Africa proper. In Chapter II we related the circumstances of his brief sojourn in Senegal. Father Monnet, of course, had been a missionary in Reunion.
persecution in France, expulsion from Portugal, and the miseries of World War I. However, despite persecution and war, or as Le Roy himself sometimes said, because of them, the Congregation grew and expanded to keep up with the enormous task in Africa. It was there that he directed most of its potential. When he resigned in 1926, six new Provinces had been started, the number of members had grown from 1130 to 2096; and in the Spiritan missions of Africa the number of Christians had increased by 830%.

A Program. In addition to electing a new Superior General, the Chapter of 1896 drew up a program of recommendations and decisions. The following points are of interest for the history of the Congregation:

1. Great caution must be exercised with respect to the acceptance or continuation of educational and social works especially in France. As has been mentioned, several of those accepted by Father Emonet proved very onerous and offered no proportionate compensation in recruitment or resources. Thus they were judged to be often more of a hindrance than an aid in the apostolate of the Congregation. Hence the Chapter laid down this rule:

C. L. 2, 20

Educational institutions which, after payment of their staff and expenses, supply the Congregation with resources or vocations fall within the means foreseen for the attainment of our purpose. For this reason it is important to secure the prosperity of these houses by supplying them with a stable personnel that is devoted to this sort of work. This personnel must possess the required aptitudes and offer guarantees of the necessary competence, certified, when required, by degrees.

C. L. 2, 21

2. To remedy the critical financial situation, the Chapter unanimously recommended the levying of a personnel tax to be paid for each of its members, except for those who engaged in the training of aspirants. Similar rules exist in other congregations and orders.

cf. p. 215

3. As we have seen above, Father Schwindenhammer had loosely organized all communities and residences into a number of Provinces and Vice-Provinces. However, most of the houses where-in the Congregation’s aspirants and junior members had their training were still centralized in France. With the expansion of the Society in so many different lands and the progressive colonization
of its missions by different European powers, the Chapter considered it necessary to create in Europe and America national centers of education for its own members. Those countries which supplied their own personnel were to become Provinces; the others could not be Provinces and would be called Districts. A Province would be composed of the necessary “houses of training for the clerical and lay aspirants [and] a certain number of communities and works.” They would be directed by a Provincial Superior and have a representative at the Motherhouse. The Chapter correctly thought that this decentralization would result in more local initiative and a greater development of the Congregation.

4. Hitherto it had been customary for clerics to make their novitiate after ordination and immediately prior to their first appointment. However, a pontifical decree of 1892 prohibited the ordination of unprofessed religious on the canonical title of “common table” or “mission.” For this reason, it was decided that the novitiate must take place immediately after the termination of the classical course and before the inception of ecclesiastical studies.

2. Reorganization in France. Religious Persecution

a. Reorganization

When Le Roy was elected, there were still a number of lawsuits pending for non-payment of the anti-religious taxes. After disposing of these, the new Superior General addressed himself to the delicate task of withdrawing his men from those establishments in France which now proved quite burdensome. Before this could be achieved, he had to see that their debts were settled and that others were ready to assume responsibility for the relinquished works. Despite numerous difficulties, he succeeded in bringing about the voluntary withdrawal from five foundations that embodied colleges, technical schools and similar works in France. The rest had to be retained at least temporarily till someone could be found to take them over. Archbishop Le Roy then accepted several carefully selected works of considerable magnitude, as, for example, the asylum for 500 Parisian orphans at St. Michael, Britanny (1898), the orphanage and agricultural school at Misser-

3Outside of France also, a number of colleges, trade schools and other works were gradually given up.
B. G. 31. 423

ghin in Algeria, (1901) and the Boys' Home and trade schools of Auteuil (1923). Under the direction of the saintly Father Daniel Brottier, this last was to develop into a magnificent chain of institutions stretching across France. It presently cares for nearly four thousand orphans and homeless boys.

b. DANGER OF SUPPRESSION

At the turn of the century, France's government became more and more dominated by a virulent form of Freemasonry. In 1901 a new law required all religious associations and congregations to submit a list of their houses and establishments. Though harmless in itself, the law prepared the way for confiscation. Prime Minister Waldeck-Rousseau then asked the Supreme Council of State for a legal opinion regarding the position of the recognized congregations, i.e. the Vincentians, the Sulpicians, the Foreign Missions Society and the Holy Ghost Fathers. On the basis of a report for which Mr. Dislère, a divisional President of the Council, had supplied the documentation, the Supreme Council advised the Prime Minister that one of the recognized congregations, that of the Holy Ghost Fathers, had ceased to exist in 1848. At that time, they maintained, it had been surreptitiously replaced by the unrecognized Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary. As for the other three congregations, their status was legally unassailable. The decision against the Spiritans was based *inter alia* on the way these priests spoke about their own congregation in the *Bulletin Général* and their other publications: they referred to the *former* Congregation of the Holy Ghost, they called Libermann their *founder* and first Superior General, they spoke about a *fusion* of two congregations, as if a new Congregation had arisen out of the two, etc., etc.

This legal conclusion of the Supreme Council of State came as the proverbial thunder clap in a blue sky. While other congregations were being persecuted, the Holy Ghost Fathers had been confident that they, together with the Vincentians, Sulpicians and Foreign Missions could rest secure in virtue of the legal recognition which had been granted them in 1726 and again in 1816. Now they were suddenly faced with complete disaster in France. The decision would inevitably lead to the dissolution of the Congregation at home, the secularization or exile of all its members, the
confiscation of the Motherhouse, the closing of the colonial seminary, the loss of all other establishments and their sale at public auction for the profit of the State, the immediate call to military service of all members who were of the required age, and ultimately the ruin of most of the missions.

In his anxiety, Archbishop Le Roy went to see Mr. Dislère, who had prepared the documents on which the decision had been based, and asked him what could be done. "That is easy," said he, "all you have to do is disband and return to your respective dioceses. Don't worry about your buildings. The State will take care of them." To make matters worse, the decision in question had now been pronounced by the Supreme Council in plenary session. As such, it was comparable to a decision handed down by the United States Supreme Court. No further appeal was possible. The only hope, if hope it could be called, lay in a reversal of the decision by the Council itself, but that august body prided itself in the fact that in all the years of its existence it had never yet reversed any decision taken in plenary session. How then could it be expected to break precedent almost immediately after taking this fateful step? Nonetheless, this is exactly what had to be done if the Congregation was to be saved in France.

The Archbishop's anxiety was compounded by the fact that he had never been a member of the general administration of the Congregation before he became its Superior General. As he read the government's menacing report he actually believed it was completely in accord with the facts. This is particularly significant because it demonstrates how completely the Spiritans of that age had failed to adjust to the fact that the Holy Heart of Mary Society was suppressed when Rome directed Libermann and his fellow priests to enter the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. While the Venerable himself had wholeheartedly and unreservedly accepted Rome's decision, the others had considered it as a mere formality of no serious consequence. Strange as it may seem, these old-timers had remained so deeply attached to the suppressed congregation that they hardly ever mentioned the ancient congregation of which they were now a part. As a result, those who were not intimately familiar with the official documents of the general administration knew nothing about the exact canonical and legal position of their Congregation. In fact, one of the accidental benefits of the suppression threat at this time was the clearer conception of
their historical development and their canonical status which the modern Spiritans derived from it. They were at last forced to discard their sentimental attachment to an irrevocable and suppressed past.

But let us return to the problem at hand. Father Désiré Barillec, the Archivist of the Congregation, "was not convinced that we dated [only] from 1841 or 1848." He and Archbishop Le Roy made a profound study of the exact legal situation of the Holy Ghost Fathers in France. Their study showed beyond the shadow of any doubt that, in his hurry to finish off the Congregation, Mr. Dislère had supplied the Supreme Council with a very incomplete set of documents. In fact, his report had made no mention of the most essential papers. Moreover, legal advice gave assurance that, although the Supreme Council had never reversed its decision, there was nothing in the code to prevent it from doing so, even if the likelihood of such an eventuality was not great. Hoping against hope and ordering a series of prayers for success in his endeavors, the Superior General drew up a memorandum in which he pointed out the mistakes on which the Supreme Council's decision was based and appealed from an ill-informed to a well-informed Council. He sent copies of this memorandum to all members of the Supreme Council and multiplied his appeals to politicians, high government officials, and colonial Governors to exercise political pressure. He pointed out the disastrous consequences in the French colonies if the Spiritans were forced to disband.

Most members of the Supreme Council still opposed recognition, but Waldeck-Rousseau, the Prime Minister, was wise enough to see all the implications. He personally informed the Supreme Council that "legal recognition of the Holy Ghost Fathers was a political necessity." Despite its reluctance to reverse itself, therefore, the Council finally issued a new legal opinion on August 1, 1901, which stated that new documents submitted by the Superior General proved that the Congregation of the Holy Ghost had never ceased to exist and that consequently it should be considered as a legally recognized religious association. One can well imagine Le Roy's relief. Throughout the controversy, he had kept the impending disaster hidden from his confreres and even the General Council had not known how desperate the situation really was. Now he could breathe a fervent "Deo Gratias."
C. COMBES’ RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

Although victory was theirs, the Holy Ghost Fathers still had good reason to be uneasy. After all, a perverse legal mind could easily distinguish between the Congregation and its establishments, declaring the Congregation recognized, but refusing to extend that recognition to its institutions. Waldeck-Rousseau himself was rather moderate and not likely to resort to such a subterfuge, but the others were not above it. Indeed, the situation once again grew serious when Waldeck-Rousseau resigned his post and was succeeded by Emile Combes, an ex-seminarian who was now bitterly opposed to the Church. Combes personally took control of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and forthwith launched an open persecution. He closed Catholic schools and colleges, even those that were operated by authorized religious congregations. In March 1903, he declared illegal fifty-four orders and congregations because they engaged in teaching, preaching or even, as in the case of the Carthusians, simply in praying. They were given from eight days to three months to leave their houses and disband. Next, the numerous “unauthorized” establishments of the “authorized” congregations came in for the attack. In 1902, Archbishop Le Roy had requested approval for twelve educational and charitable establishments staffed by the Spiritans in France. In November, 1903, Combes replied:

* N. D., 102

I have decided that there is no reason why the papers should be transmitted to the Council of State for the requested authorization. Accordingly, I have the honor of notifying you that your request has been rejected with respect to the above-mentioned establishments of your Congregation.

After drawing attention to the penalties of fine and imprisonment for failure to comply with the order to withdraw from these institutions, the Minister ended cynically: “Allow me, dear Sir, to assure you of my greatest respect.”

* N. D., 104

A few days later, a Presidential decree revoked the Congregation’s approval as a teaching society. Only the Motherhouse in Paris was considered formally recognized and protected by the decision of the Supreme Council. Subsequently, Archbishop Le Roy was able to induce the government to tolerate also the Spiritan seminary at Chevilly, two procurers in the ports of Marseille and
Bordeaux, and two rest houses for old and sick missionaries in Langonnet (Britanny) and Misserghin (Algiers). Fourteen other "unauthorized" houses had to be abandoned, but because of the legal standing of the Holy Ghost Fathers, they were not confiscated. The Congregation was able to place most of them in good hands under the authority of the local bishops. Nevertheless, a large number of boys and young men from various educational and social works had to be sent back to their homes or to the misery of the city slums from which they had been rescued and the Superior General looked on hopelessly while nearly three hundred of his priests and Brothers were expelled from the institutions to which they had devoted a large part of their lives. In spite of it all, the Spiritans suffered less than most other religious groups. As Archbishop Le Roy pointed out at the General Chapter of 1906 in Chevilly: "We are the only religious\(^4\) who are actually able to live in communities on the soil of France, and we are now more numerous and more vigorous than at any other period of our history."

In 1905, the French Government decreed the separation of Church and State. When the Pope refused to accept this unilateral action, and declined to establish legal associations which would function as owners of Church property, the Government issued a military draft call for all seminarians less than twenty-six years old, and seized all churches, rectories, seminaries and episcopal residences. Since the decree covered the old French colonies as well, it entailed the suppression of the institute which served as the combined seminary of the colonial dioceses, i.e. the old Holy Ghost Seminary in Paris. Indirectly, the Motherhouse itself was again in danger. In 1819, when Father Bertout had bought back the buildings in which both the Motherhouse and the Holy Ghost Seminary were established, the Government had paid the bill under the explicit condition that "if for any reason whatsoever the seminary should cease to exist . . . the State would immediately enter into the possession of the buildings as their sole owner." After suppressing the seminary of the colonial dioceses, therefore, the Government laid claim to the buildings which since 1734 had been the seat of the Congregation and of the Holy Ghost Seminary.

\(^4\)None of the other recognized clerical societies were religious in the strict sense of the term.
Fortunately, Archbishop Le Roy succeeded in convincing the Government that legal suppression of Holy Ghost Seminary as a colonial seminary did not entail its total suppression but merely reduced it to the legal status it enjoyed before the Concordat of 1851. Even then, however, the Government refused to list its newly-ordained priests with the colonial clergy, despite the fact that local colonial administrators expressed grave fear of an invasion of American Protestant missionaries. The Congregation was forced to send these young priests elsewhere, to the United States, to Mexico and to Puerto Rico, wherever suitable positions might be found for them. As could be expected, recruitment for Holy Ghost Seminary suffered severely under these conditions, and the situation was further aggravated by the military draft of seminarians. At one point there were only eight seminarians left, but after the first world war their numbers rose again. Through it all, by some strange anomalous policy, the Government continued to pay for the seminary's maintenance till 1911.

Partial Exile. Evidently, the few houses left in France were insufficient to assure the adequate recruitment of future Spiritans in that country. Consequently, the Congregation found it necessary to establish junior seminaries for French candidates across the border in Belgium and in Italy. These houses functioned until after World War I, when persecution in France began to diminish. At that time the Government was planning to exile the surviving priests and Brothers who had fought in its armies and risked their lives for their country, but it suddenly met with concerted opposition. The survivors joined forces, defied the government, and refused to go. Their act of defiance won support and applause from the thousands of ex-soldiers who Father Daniel Brottier, C.S.Sp., had organized into a League of War Veterans. Through the intimate contact of trenches and field hospitals the soldiers of France had learned to admire and appreciate the heroism and charity of these mobilized priests and Brothers. Combat experiences were far removed from the newspaper pictures of fat, lazy, and self-indulgent monks. When, therefore, the Government saw it was confronted by a popular revolt against the proposed exile, it abandoned the program of expulsion. Little by little the religious orders and congregations began once more to establish themselves on French soil.
3. The 1910 Revolution in Portugal

After founding its splendid Holy Ghost College in Braga (1872), the Congregation opened several other flourishing institutions in Portugal.

B. G. 13, 1299  
St. Mary's College, begun at Porto in 1886, soon rivaled the school of Braga in importance and renown. It continued to grow in size and reputation even though the Jesuits opened a rival college almost across the street. These foundations were followed by an orphanage and a novitiate at Cintra (1887), a procure at Lisbon (1892), St. John Fisher College at Ponta Delgada in the Azores (1892), a junior seminary at Formiga (1894), a home for the aged at Campo Maior (1894), and a senior seminary at Carnide (1907). The Province of Portugal was indeed in full bloom when disaster struck.

B. G. 21, 76

The Gathering Storm. A long time before, powerful secret societies had been agitating against religious institutions, stirring up popular resentment and endeavoring to restore the law of 1834 which had expelled all religious orders from the land. In 1901 the Government closed several monasteries and convents, but the Holy Ghost Congregation escaped with a mere inspection. In 1903, however, leftist newspapers began a violent campaign which at first centered on the person of Father Christopher Rooney but was soon directed against the Congregation and its works in general.

Father Rooney was the Congregation's procurator at Lisbon and confessor to the Countess Camerido. Journalistic attacks on him began when the Countess donated a property which the Spiritans planned to use for a Procure to help the African Missions. Since her family fortune had been derived from the slave trade, it was only natural that the pious Countess would want to make some kind of restitution by devoting part of her possessions to a work dedicated to the Negro race. The leftist papers, however, spoke of the whole affair as an intrigue of fortune-hunting Jesuits. The campaign grew so violent that the timorous Papal Nuncio became alarmed and appealed to the Holy See, asking that the Congregation be forced to return the property and that Father Rooney be removed as the countess's confessor and even exiled.

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5 This college was endowed by collateral descendants of St. John Fisher who had settled in the Azores. It was abandoned in 1907.

6 In the leftist press the term "Jesuit" had become a term of opprobrium applied to all religious orders of men.
from Portugal. In accord with its traditions, the Motherhouse agreed to the first demand for the sake of peace, but strenuously objected to the second point, arguing that Father Rooney's removal would constitute an implicit avowal of guilt. Moreover, it would be a grave injustice to exile an innocent man simply because a few radical newspapers had unjustly slandered him. Archbishop Le Roy succeeded in making this view prevail in Rome and Father Rooney was allowed to remain a confessor to the countess, particularly since she wanted him and him alone to prepare her for her death.\(^7\) When she finally died in 1905, her last will left the disputed property to the Holy See, and her possessions in Campo Maior and Cintra to three unsuspecting Holy Ghost Fathers, who learned about it only through a renewed campaign of defamation in the radical press.

Meanwhile the political situation in Portugal deteriorated rapidly. After the murder of Don Carlos in 1908, the situation became especially precarious. Everyone expected a revolution, although in some quarters there was a forlorn hope that the forces of law and order would prevail.

\(\text{The Revolution.}\) This hope proved completely idle. At 1:00 A.M. October 4, 1910 the community at Lisbon was aroused by gunfire. Fearing the worst, Fathers and Brothers ran up to the turret of the house to watch developments. One priest ventured out to gather news and returned in great alarm; everywhere parents were taking their children out of schools and institutions, for an immediate attack on convents and monasteries was expected. The community quickly dispersed, leaving three Brothers, later joined by Father Riedlinger, to guard the house. The next morning, around 4:00 A.M. a band of armed soldiers and revolutionists demanded to be let in, shouting: "Give us the Jesuits. The Jesuits or you die!" Father Riedlinger argued with the mob, brought them into the house to search for weapons and Jesuits, and ultimately persuaded them to depart without doing much harm.

Elsewhere things did not go nearly so well: several Vincen-\(\text{tian Fathers were killed when their house was invaded, and in Carnide twenty-two Spiritans were thrown into jail, some barely escaping immediate execution. Meanwhile in Lisbon itself, Brother}\)

\(\text{\textsuperscript{7}}\)Later Father Rooney went to the United States, where he became the founder of the Portuguese parishes operated by the Spiritans in Rhode Island.
The Spiritans

Xavier—an American citizen who used to operate a barbershop in the U. S. A.—hoisted the Stars and Stripes over the Procure in the vain hope of scaring off the roving mobs.

At Cintra, four hundred armed sailors and riflemen advanced on the Novitiate and trained their artillery on the house. Actual bombardment was prevented when the revolutionists were invited to engage in a fruitless search for arms, but many of the Brothers were sent to jail nonetheless. Later, when these poor unfortunates were trying to snatch a few hours' sleep on the bare floor of their prison, they were suddenly roused by the announcement that they were to be executed at once because the Jesuits had thrown bombs among the people. Fortunately the threat proved to be just as groundless as the motivating cause behind it.

While this was going on, the Carnide prisoners were incarcerated in the fortress of Caxias, together with eighty-two Jesuits and several hundred other victims. A number of Spiritans had disguised themselves in lay clothes to escape the rioters, but they were soon recognized and severely beaten. In Porto and Braga there was less violence, but it soon became apparent that there was no hope of saving the famous colleges there when the revolutionary government revived Pombal's notorious laws against religious orders, dispersed all communities, and confiscated their possessions. Only the Procure in Lisbon succeeded in remaining open till 1911.

On the eve of the Portuguese revolution, the province could proudly point to its forty-seven novices, the brilliant record of its educational institutions, and the vigor of its foreign missions. Within a few short days this tragic political upheaval left it a broken and pathetic shadow of its former glory.

The Restoration. While waiting for a chance to restore the Province, the Congregation opened a junior seminary for Portuguese subjects in the Spanish town of Zamora just across the frontier. Then in 1915 the Spiritans ventured to re-open their Lisbon mission procure which, as even the masonic government realized, was indispensable for the maininance of missions in

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B. G. 29, 764

8Because the houses of the Congregation in Portugal legally belonged to individual Spiritans of French, German and English nationality, the governments of these countries brought suit against Portugal in the International Court of Justice at the Hague. This suit ended by mutual agreement in 1920 when Portugal agreed to pay limited indemnities to the Congregation.
Angola and the Congo. Despite its political and religious philosophy, the Government knew that the missions had to carry on their noble task if public order was to be preserved.

In 1918, a counter revolution took place and hopes for a quick restoration of the Province rose immediately. The next year, Father Moses Pinho, the future Archbishop of Loanda, quietly opened a junior seminary in Braga and the students of Zamora were transferred there in 1920. At the same time, a house for Brothers and a special retreat center for the reform of the clergy were opened in the same city. In 1921 another seminary was established in Godim, near Regua, and in 1922 a third in Vianna do Castelo. The next year the Government granted an annual subsidy to the Portuguese Province to help it train future missionaries for Angola,—a subsidy, be it noted, which is in addition to the considerable grants by which Portugal supports the missions themselves. Once more, then, the province began to retrace the path of greatness. It differs from the old organization, however, in one important aspect: it has not reopened any colleges. Rather, it has limited itself almost solely to the task of evangelizing and civilizing Portugal’s enormous possessions in Africa.

4. An Internal Controversy Over the “Fusion”

cf. pp. 239 f.

In a previous section of this chapter we learned how the French Government’s threat of suppression caused Archbishop Le Roy to discover to his surprise and delight that the Holy Ghost Fathers dated from 1703 and not from 1841 or 1848. Moreover, it was pointed out that Father Libermann’s humble submission to the decision of Rome was in marked contrast to the sentimental attachment that caused nearly all his confreres to cling to a suppressed past and close their eyes to the fact that the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary no longer existed. As soon as Le Roy had studied the documents and gleaned a true picture of the situation, he courageously devoted himself to setting the record straight. It was not an easy task, for he had to act against the strong opposition of those who for brevity’s sake we may label “the Libermannists.” The most prominent spokesman of this group was Father John Grizard, the first Assistant of the Superior General.

Under Le Roy’s leadership a new school of thought sprang up. For convenient reference, we will call its adherents “the Placists.”
They devoted themselves to gaining recognition for Poullart des Places as the founder of the Congregation and acquainting the Spiritans with their own long-neglected history in the period between 1703 and 1841. Le Roy found a potent ally in Father Henry Le Floch, then Director of the Senior Seminary at Chevilly. Le Floch, whose historical research on the origin of the Congregation and the life of its founder was later to gain the coveted distinction of being crowned by the "Académie Française," opened the controversy in 1902 by means of the traditional February 2 conference which he gave in honor of Father Libermann. The speaker showed that it was historically unjustifiable to call Libermann the founder or even a co-founder of the Congregation. At most he could be called its restorer and the guiding spirit of its missionary activity. One can easily imagine the emotion of Le Floch's older conferees when they were thus for the first time put face to face with the facts. This conference and even more Le Floch's publication of a 556 page book on Father Poullart des Places, the Founder of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, provoked a series of lively discussions and memoranda in which the Libermannists tried to defend their position. It did not particularly help matters when Cardinal Merry del Val, writing on behalf of Pope Pius IX, called des Places "one of the great personalities of the Church in France [and] the Founder of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost." Moreover, Archbishop Le Roy and his adherents were basing their position on a most telling argument: to know exactly what happened at the so-called fusion, they maintained, the important thing was not to argue about the original intentions of the two parties concerned, but to see what action Rome itself had taken. In this respect, the documents left room for only one view—that of the Placists.

Just then another controversy arose to further electrify the atmosphere. It centered around the basic purpose of the Congregation. In 1910, when the Holy See declared Father Libermann Venerable by affirming the heroic nature of his virtues, Father Le Floch, then Superior of the Pontifical French Seminary, published a booklet about Louis Lannurien. Libermann's private secretary and the founder of the Pontifical French Seminary. In this booklet Le Floch quoted with evident approval Lannurien's statement that the work of seminaries falls within the aim of the Congregation as Libermann viewed it after the "fusion." Obviously,
so forceful an expression of this particular idea was greeted by something less than enthusiasm by those whose zeal for Africa rendered them oblivious to any other work. They characterized Le Floch as a man of subversive ideas and even accused him of having falsified Lannurien's memorandum. As we have seen in Chapter VI, however, Le Floch's thesis reflected Libermann's position most accurately.

cf. pp. 120 ff.

B. G. 27, 542 f. Meanwhile, the periodic report on the French Seminary, which was published in the 1914 *Bulletin Général*, emphasized once more that the work of seminaries was perfectly in accord with the purpose of the Congregation. Shortly thereafter, Father Le Floch made public a letter which Cardinal Gasparri had written on behalf of Benedict XV. The Pope had read his life of Pouillart des Places and congratulated its author on the successful application of des Places' principles and methods which were evident in the training that the Seminary was giving the elite of the French clergy. No mention whatsoever was made of Father Libermann, an omission that may appear innocent enough to the modern reader, but to that generation of Spiritans it constituted a cruel blow to their most cherished ideas.

B. G. 28, 365 ff. And so, the controversy went its stormy way. In 1915, when a second edition of his *Life of Father des Places* became necessary, Le Floch prepared a special chapter on the historical facts. The type had already been set when he decided to omit the chapter and distribute it privately as a fifty page booklet entitled *The Act of Union*. Hewing rigorously to the facts and appealing throughout to official documents, the booklet demonstrated that there had been no fusion of two congregations. Instead, Libermann's Congregation had simply been dissolved by the Holy See, Libermann and his confreres had entered the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, and subsequently Libermann had been elected to succeed Bishop Monnet as the eleventh Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers. Many Libermannists were completely unmoved. With magnificent obduracy, they refused to budge from their position. Before long, a second booklet followed: *A Note on the New Edition of the Life of Claude Francis Pouillart des Places*. The opposition promptly countered with a *Memorandum on the Fusion*. At this juncture the dispute assumed a medieval flavor. Amusing exergues were added to the titles: *Gaudium de Veritate* and *Cor Unum et Anima Una*. A rejoinder to the *Memorandum* later fol-
The Spiritans

allowed under the title: Supplement to the Act of Union: A Footnote to the Memorandum on the Fusion. With this rejoinder the controversy reached dead center. It was difficult and useless to argue against people who based their arguments on sentiment rather than on reason.

Nonetheless, Archbishop Le Roy saw to it that a collection containing all the pertinent documents at last saw the light of day. Through a direct reference to the sources, he hoped, everyone would be able to see the facts of the case for himself and thus form his own opinion. In the Preface to this publication, he listed the conclusions of the long debate but we shall not repeat them here, for they coincide with the position we have taken in this book. Although they did not allow Father Libermann to be called the Founder of the Congregation, they sanctioned the use of the term “Second Founder.” While the old-timers were not likely to change their mind for, as the French saying goes: the heart has reasons which reason does not understand. Le Roy knew that time would solve the problem. He directed that copies of this collection be placed at the disposal of all novices and senior seminarians throughout the Congregation and thereby prepared a new generation of Spiritans for whom the whole controversy would have importance only as an interesting bit of history. In 1922 it was officially decided that thereafter the annual commemoration of Father des Places’ death should be celebrated with a special conference on the Founder and his work, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and a festive dinner. In 1950 the General Chapter specified that his feast “should be celebrated with the same solemnity” as that of Father Libermann. At the same time it directed that the biography and writings of Father des Places be made available to all members of the Congregation. The heat of debate had given way to the light of unity.

* N. D. pp.
V. ff.

B. G. 28, 590

B. G. 30, 751

B. G. 41, 375

9The above-mentioned memoranda and brochures are only some of the many that appeared between 1900 and 1924.

10As a matter of fact, Father Grizard never abandoned his position till his death in 1929. By then the saintly old man had become the lonely and somewhat pathetic survivor of an old school. Apart from his profound veneration for Father Libermann, there seems to have been another reason for his stubborn adherence to the old view—viz., his fear of a return to the antiquated organization which nearly wrecked the Congregation in the first half of the nineteenth century.
The Generalate of Archbishop Le Roy

5. The Start of New Provinces

The religious persecutions in France and Portugal forcefully impressed the Holy Ghost Fathers with the danger of being too dependent on a few countries when recruiting new members. To keep abreast of the demands made on the Congregation by its world-wide apostolate, it was now imperative that new provinces be established in other countries. No less than six of them were inaugurated during the generalate of Archbishop Le Roy: in Belgium, the Netherlands, England, Canada, Switzerland and Poland.

a. Belgium

Libermann's Efforts. From the very beginning of his foundation, Father Libermann had turned his attention to Belgium. In 1843 he received his first Belgian candidate, Henry Warlop, who later became a hard-working missionary priest in Senegal. This first acquisition whetted his appetite for more; for in the Spring of the following year he wrote: "We will need all available space, especially if Bishop Collier sends people. I hope that they will be Belgians." Later in the same year he redoubled his efforts in that direction but without success. In January, 1845, he announced: "I hope to establish a house of studies in Belgium." He dispatched Father Tisserant to Belgium to recruit aspirants and later went there himself to investigate the possibilities personally. When serious difficulties arose, the Prefect of the Propaganda took the unusual step of urging him not to give up: "I will be greatly pleased if you endeavor to pursue this project and bring it to realization." Libermann then submitted to Canon Beckers of Liege a long memorandum for the Belgian Hierarchy in which he explained his ideas about making their country mission-minded. Because Belgium now ranks very high on the list of countries which play a significant part in the expansion of the Church, and because Libermann's memorandum is said to have exercised a powerful influence on the inauguration of the Belgian missionary movement, we will quote here certain passages from this document.

It is quite certain that as long as Belgium does not have a house destined exclusively for the missions, it will have only a few missionaries. However, it is more than probable that a foundation for this purpose will give the necessary impetus and
that sooner or later Belgium will be the rival of the countries which are most fruitful in missionaries.

It may be objected that others have already tried and failed. However, they have not tried to start a Belgian work; they have not undertaken it in the form and according to the plan which I am about to propose and which eliminates the principal causes of their failure.

This plan is very simple. It is a question of establishing a seminary whose sole objective would be the missions, a seminary with wholly Belgian missions. An institution conceived in this way would naturally attract the majority of Belgian vocations; it would stimulate missionary thinking in a large number of young men who would otherwise be unconcerned; it would maintain and develop nascent vocations; its first successes in pagan lands would make a profound impression and give impetus in a wholly natural way to Belgian clerics, just as the French missions give it to Frenchmen.

From what I have seen in travelling through your excellent country, all the Bishops and all the directors of the senior and junior seminaries are inclined to favor such a work. This favorable disposition will increase when they see a foundation which is in conformity with the ideas and tastes of the Belgian clergy.

To make the seminary conform to the tastes and ideas of the country and secure its success, it will have to be Belgian and only Belgian. It would therefore have to be directed by Belgian priests.

To follow these plans there are, I think, two ways. The first would be to found an entirely independent congregation. The second would be to connect the work with an existing congregation which is solely occupied with missions. The first method would give rise to a few additional difficulties. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it would meet with success if a wise, zealous and stable man is placed at the head of the work.

If the second method is followed, it would be easier and there would be more encouragement. However, I think that in this case it should be a connection rather than a fusion. In a fusion, the house in Belgium would be a subsidiary entirely dependent on a Motherhouse and obliged to follow its prescriptions in every respect. This could give rise to inconveniences. It would
no longer be a Belgian work; in the course of time its fundamental plan would run the risk of being changed; moreover, the administration would not proceed too smoothly because the Belgian way of doing things would not be sufficiently known and understood by foreigners. If, however, the method of connection is adopted, the new work will be a Belgian work, and as it were, a sister of the already existing work; it will be an integral part of it and will have the same spirit, follow the same Rules, be directed by the same general administration. Just as the French branch, it will have a share in this administration and be represented in it by a fixed number of members. But in addition it will have its own special administration, with a Superior and a Council charged with the general administration. The French branch will be similarly organized. . .

If divine Providence wants to make use of us to help in the foundation of this establishment, we will be very happy to be of service. Our Rules are still in the provisional stage; hence we would be more amenable to a modification in our organization, as would be demanded by the arrangement I propose. . . With respect to the missions, the same system would be followed. The communities established there will be staffed exclusively from the house in Belgium; they will report directly to a Belgian member representing these houses in the General Council of the Congregation. He will be in charge of their immediate direction and report about them to the Council and to the Superior General. The same system will be followed in the French Missions.

Unfortunately, Father Libermann's efforts did not produce the effect he had hoped for. He sadly concluded after his first trial that Belgium, which had only recently been liberated from the yoke of its Protestant Dutch rulers, "was not yet sufficiently ripe for the missions."

The Foundation. Half a century later, his successor, Archbishop Le Roy, was visited in Paris by Mr. Wegimont, a rich merchant of Antwerp and owner of vast concessions in the French and Belgian Congo. This pious merchant-prince wanted missionaries for his holdings, but the Superior General had to decline his request. By way of explanation, Le Roy told him: "Unlike com-
mercial institutions, a missionary congregation has reserves neither of personnel nor of funds, for the demand always exceeds the supply.” This answer would have checkmated anyone else, but not Mr. Wegimont. Knitting his brows, he threw down his challenge: “I understand. Well, come and get them in Belgium. I will give you a house.”

Under these propitious auspices, the Congregation opened its first junior seminary in 1900 at Lier. Its first superior, Father Albert Sébire, was destined to preside for many years over the activities of the Spiritans in Belgium as well as in neighboring Holland. In the course of the thirty-six years which remained to him, he was to be the founder of ten houses and two Provinces. His first task, of course, was to publicize the Congregation and its work. Without sparing himself, he began to travel all over the country, giving more than two hundred illustrated lectures in less than three years. As a result of this, Cardinal Mercier, then still President of Louvain’s Higher Institute of Philosophy, stated that Father Sébire contributed powerfully to the awakening of Belgium’s interest in the missions. Although this enthusiasm was later to attain prodigious proportions, the Congregation was to share in its fruits only in a very modest way.

Belgium is a country inhabited by French-speaking Walloons and Dutch-speaking Flemish. The difference in language and the cultural opposition between these two groups made it impossible to train aspirants from both in the same junior seminary. Since Lier lay in Flemish territory, another junior seminary was necessary to take care of the French-speaking part of Belgium. This problem was solved when exiled French communities found a refuge in Gentinnes and gave a much-needed stimulus to the budding Belgian Province (1903). Four years later a novitiate for Brothers was opened in Donck, but lack of space and other reasons forced the abandonment of this house in 1913, when it was exchanged for a new location straddling the Belgian-Dutch border at Baarle-Nassau and Weelde. Two years earlier a foundation had been made at Louvain, where French confreres had been in residence since 1902 to attend the lectures at the philosophical institute. The new foundation was perfectly timed to receive Portuguese aspirants who had been exiled from their country by the terrible revolution we have already described. After the First World War this house became the senior seminary of the Province.
b. **The Netherlands**

*B. G. 6, 107*

*First Efforts.* In 1867, Bishop Elder of Natchez, Mississippi, had entered into negotiations with the Holy Ghost Fathers regarding the admission of Dutch priests into the Congregation. In search of priests for his diocese, he had approached the Dutch Hierarchy and found that they were willing to let him have some priests, if these priests would join a religious order or congregation. This proviso was based on their fear of the dangers which face any missionary who remains alone. The Congregation accepted Bishop Elder's offer quite readily because it provided a good opportunity to establish the Spiritans in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, His Excellency was disappointed in the great expectations from Holland and the whole project came to nought.

*B. G. 34, 472 ff.* The next year, 1868, Brother Pius Orbons became the first Dutchman to join the Congregation. He entered in Marienstadt, Germany, just before Bismarck expelled the Holy Ghost Fathers from the Reich. Shortly thereafter some of the German exiles considered taking refuge in Holland and laying the foundations of a new Province there, but it was ultimately decided that they should cross the Atlantic and begin the Province of the United States. Brother Pius accompanied Father Strub to America, but sickness soon forced him to return to Europe. He was sent to France, where another Dutch Brother, Augustine Jansen, joined him in 1886. Later on, Brother Pius was destined to spend the last twenty-five years of his life helping to build a province in his native land.

*B. G. 37, 782*

*L. H. 99-110* *The Foundation.* In 1900, as soon as the Holy Ghost Fathers had opened a Belgian junior seminary in Flemish-speaking Lier, several young Dutchmen asked permission to enter. Their candidacy prompted the Motherhouse to consider the feasibility of establishing a house in the Netherlands themselves. Somewhat hesitant about the chances of success in such a Protestant country, the Spiritans opened a junior seminary in Weert, just "to give it a trial." In the beginning, a little hastily-converted restaurant was rented for this purpose, but in two years' time the number of students increased to such a degree that much more room was needed. Providence helped, for just then Father Albert Sébire, the founder of the Belgian-Dutch Province, chanced to meet a philatelist on the train and gave him a few interesting stamps.
In return, his grateful fellow-passenger eventually presented him with a donation sufficient to build a junior seminary!

The rapid progress of the work was unexpectedly gratifying to the French Fathers who continued to marvel over the fact that everyone in Holland, even in the cities, carefully fulfilled his religious obligations. Nonetheless, they were much concerned over their aspirants' apparent lack of interest in the missions. Being Frenchmen, they looked in vain for the flying sparks and wildly leaping flames which enthusiasm generates in the youths of their country. They could not see the quietly burning fire of apostolic zeal which is more proper to northern climes. Because of this psychological gap between directors and directed, the initial development was rather slow. As years passed, however, and as more Dutchmen were given responsibility for the training and direction of local recruits, the situation improved and Weert became one of the most important junior seminaries of the Congregation. A large share of the credit for the flourishing condition of this house should go to Father Lambert Vogel who, undeterred by the depression, expanded the buildings into one of the most efficient and practical seminary plants in the country.

B. G. 28, 241

In 1913 a special training school for Brothers was built on the Belgian-Dutch border at Baarle-Nassau. It provides a very special atmosphere in which postulant Brothers, novices and newly-professed spend about five years training for the religious life and becoming expert at the various useful trades for which they show particular aptitude. Because of these splendid facilities, the Dutch Province has always been blessed with a relatively large number of vocations to the Brotherhood.

B. G. 30, 239

In 1914, when the First World War closed the doors of his Senior Seminary at Louvain, Father Sébire went in search of a temporary house for his Dutch seminarians. Through the accident of missing a bus, he found himself stranded in a small village, called Gemert, where some French Jesuits exiled by Combes had taken refuge. He told them why he was travelling through Holland, and they very generously offered to teach his senior seminarians. Makeshift lodgings were found in the neighborhood and a temporary community (so they thought) was organized under the direction of Father Charles Luttenbacher. Little by little the Jesuits were recalled from exile to defend with their lives the country that had no use for them in time of peace. As their num-
bers decreased, more and more room became available in the medi-
val castle of the Teutonic Knights which they had occupied. As
a result, the Spiritans were generously invited to move in and they
have stayed there ever since, for they subsequently purchased the
property. The old castle and its modern additions, its various
out-buildings, and its magnificent park have caused visitors to
regard it as the Congregation's most beautiful establishment.

C. ENGLAND

N. B. 244 f. Preliminaries. As early as 1792 a Holy Ghost Father took up
residence in England. He was Father James Bertout, the future
restorer of the Congregation after the French Revolution. Till
1802 he lived in the county of York, exercising his priestly func-
tions and waiting for peace to return to France so that he might
undertake the work of restoration.

Father Libermann, as early as 1842, had been thinking about
establishing a branch of his society in England to train English
and Irish missionaries in their home country. At that time, in a
letter to Father Tisserant, he said:

N. D. 3, 117

It would be good to propagate our work in England and
to form either English or Irishmen with a view to the same
purpose and in the same spirit as our own, so that the English
could go to their colonies and the French to theirs. . . . It does
not matter how the project is put into practice: whether Eng-
lish and Irish would enter into our Society under one Superior,
or form a Society apart with their own Superior. The im-
portant thing is to get something done: the need [of the British
colonies] is more pressing than that of the French. . . .

N. D. 3, 124 f. There is no question of mixing the Englishmen with the
Frenchmen; each nation will remain separate unless subse-
sequently it would be considered advisable to unite them. Perhaps
it will even be possible to establish a colonial seminary for
Englishmen in which those who are destined for parish work
would be trained. . . . For I think that if Irishmen are educated
in England or Ireland, their ecclesiastical training will be much
better than the one they get in France. They would be made
much more capable of serving the Church and would be safe-
guarded against so many vices which, to the scandal of the
poor faithful and the heathens, cause so many of them to be
lost in the missions.
He sought to interest Cardinal Wiseman in his plan and was even on the point of visiting England for this purpose. The more he thought about the plan, the more enthusiastic he grew. He considered his impending visit to England even more important than a serious proposal to merge his society with the Congregation of Holy Cross. Unfortunately, under pressure from Father de Brandt he had to give up his planned visit to England and his friends advised him to wait at least a year in order to consolidate his society in France. Meanwhile a Father John Hand visited Libermann and outlined his plan to start a missionary college in Ireland. Realizing that his own foundation would in some degree compete with this new institution during its most difficult initial period, Father Libermann decided to postpone his own plans indefinitely. He did accept Father Hand’s advice, however, and retained the religious service of the British colony of Mauritius as a stepping-stone toward a future foundation in England.

After Libermann’s death, an opportunity seemed to present itself in 1863 when the Spiritans were asked to take charge of St. Mary’s College and St. Joseph’s Orphanage in London, but the death of Cardinal Wiseman prevented the execution of these plans. That same year the Archbishop of Birmingham offered the Congregation a parish, and in 1865 another request came to undertake a mission at Kupar in Scotland. Because the scope of these two works was too limited, both were regretfully declined.

Foundation. It was not till sixty-four years after Libermann’s efforts that the Spiritans established themselves in England. In 1904, when it began to look as though all French houses would be confiscated, the Congregation rented a large property in Prior Park, Somerset County, to serve as a reception center for the exiles. When the danger of exile had passed, this house came to be used as a Brothers’ novitiate for the Irish Province. Three years later, an exorbitant increase in rental rates caused the Irishmen to abandon Prior Park and settle in Castlehead, Lancastershire. Since a junior seminary for English subjects was opened in the same house, Castlehead became the first foundation intended for local aspirants and the starting point of a new province. Within three years the house was too small for the Irish novices and the British seminarians. Consequently, the novices were transferred to Ireland and the whole house was left free for the growing junior
B. G. 26, 854  seminary. Some years later, another foundation of the Irish Province in England, the residence at Peasley Cross near Liverpool (1912), was taken over by the English Province.

B. G. 30, 270  World War I wrought its havoc in the English Province also. The Alsatian Fathers and Brothers stationed there had to be removed and all seminarians of military age were mobilized. This draft of seminarians seriously hampered the Province’s growth, for only a small proportion of the aspirants returned when hostilities ended. Immediately after the war, however, their numbers began to increase once again and Castlehead had to be expanded. In 1924 the upper years were transferred to Bebington, near Birkenhead, where the Congregation had been offered a property free of charge for five years. During that period of grace, the Spiritans enlarged Castlehead to a point where all junior seminarians could be housed there. When they completed the new wing, Bebington was closed and Castlehead functioned thereafter as the junior seminary of the Province of England.

B. G. 31, 705  
B. G. 34, 241  
N. D. 3, 407  Chapters II and III of this book were devoted to the eighteenth century history of the Holy Ghost Fathers in Canada. The last survivor of these early Spiritans, a refugee from St. Pierre et Miquelon who had refused to take the schismatic oath imposed by the French Revolutionary Government, died in Canada in 1835.

As early as 1846, a Canadian by the name of MacHarron had entered Father Libermann’s novitiate, but it was not until after the foundation of the French Seminary in Rome (1853) that contact between Canada and the Congregation was renewed. Several Canadian Bishops knew Father Libermann from their seminary days in St. Sulpice and were happy to entrust to his spiritual children at the Pontifical Seminary the ecclesiastical training of their most promising candidates for the priesthood. A number of these aspirants later rose to very prominent positions in Canada. For example, Cardinal Taschereau and Cardinal Begin, both of Quebec, Archbishop Bruchesi of Montreal, and Bishops Labrecque, La Rocque, Emard and Archambault were all former students of the French Seminary. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Congregation soon began to receive invitations to establish itself in Canada. As early as 1862 it was offered the mission of Sandwich,
in West Canada, but lack of personnel prevented acceptance of this offer. In 1865, and again in 1870, the same fate befell a proposed College-Seminary in Kingston. Cardinal Taschereau in particular made several tempting offers to induce the Spiritans to settle in Canada. He went so far as to offer them the famous shrine of St. Ann de Beaupré, but to the surprise and pain of His Eminence even this was turned down by the Superior General, Father Emonet, who obviously did not realize the extent of the Cardinal’s generosity.11

It was not till the beginning of the present century, under the pressure of threatening persecution in France, that serious thought was given to establishing the Congregation in Canada. At first, the plan involved founding a Canadian national institute of foreign missions, similar to the Foreign Missions of Paris, but some Canadian Bishops considered this project still too far advanced for their country. In 1905, Father Amet Limbour, who had taken up Archbishop Le Roy’s search for a suitable work in Canada, bought a property of 1600 acres about five miles from Ottawa. The place has since come to be known as St. Alexander le Gatineau. When the owners realized that they had sold to a Catholic institution, they and the local Orangemen were furious—so furious in fact that they vainly offered to buy back the property at twice the price! The forest alone contained a million maple trees from which the famous Canadian maple syrup is produced.12 Hydraulic energy up to 2000 H. P. was available in the Gatineau river; phosphate and mica deposits lay beneath the surface, and large expanses of arable land stretched out on all sides. Staffed by capable Brothers, the whole establishment could soon be self-supporting, and was admirably suited for the agricultural training school for French immigrants which the Fathers originally intended to begin there.

However, very few Frenchmen could be induced to migrate to Canada, and fewer still considered themselves in need of long agricultural preparation. From 1912 on, therefore, St. Alexander became a junior seminary open to all aspirants to the priesthood, both diocesan or religious. Later, lay students also were admitted

11His successor, Cardinal Begin, was so distressed over this refusal that he still complained about it twenty years later.

12In early spring, when the trees are tapped, the community is host to thousands of people who come to sample this delicacy. Its guests have included dukes, governors and, during the second world war, the Dutch royal family.
and the whole became a regular college. From the start, its students were prepared to take official university examinations in classics and philosophy, and the college was affiliated with Laval University.

B. G. 31, 717 ff.; 33, 602 ff.

Until 1924, French and English divisions existed at St. Alexander and a surprising degree of harmony was maintained in spite of the antagonism between these national groups which Pope Benedict XV so greatly deplored. With an increasing enrollment, however, serious conflicts were bound to arise and, after some hesitation, the college administration decided to discontinue the English division, even though this meant the loss of eighty students. At that time, other colleges and seminaries in Canada were doing the same thing for similar reasons. Although St. Alexander's took only a few years to make up the loss and even to increase the number of students to the maximum its facilities would allow, one regrets that the Spiritans did not use these eighty English-speaking students as a nucleus for a new foundation.

At the end of their course of studies, aspirants to the priesthood trained in St. Alexander were, and still are, free to join any diocese or order of their choice. A rather large proportion of them have always preferred to enter the Congregation. Despite this steady flow of candidates, however, the Holy Ghost Fathers did not emulate other orders in expanding mightily after World War I when Canada awoke to its great potential in the apostolic activities of the Church. "Right now there are immense apostolic possibilities here," the Superior of St. Alexander wrote to the Motherhouse, "but it is certain that our efforts will be destined to have very limited success as long as we have in Canada only the one house of St. Alexander, situated as it is at the extreme limit of the Quebec Province." Despite his pleas, however, nothing could be done immediately to improve the situation.

e. Switzerland

B. G. 13, 765

In 1885 the Spiritans assumed charge of two orphanages at Douvaine, near Geneva and close to the Swiss border. They established a recruiting center there and then accepted an invitation in 1891 to take over St. Nicolas Industrial School for delinquent boys at Siviriez. This step was taken because political conditions were uncertain in France and the Congregation wanted to attract Swiss candidates. Unfortunately, a number of circum-
stances kept the work from fulfilling expectations and the school was abandoned five years later. The time was not ripe for a Spiritan foundation in Switzerland.

When Combes’ religious persecution began, however, the Congregation decided to build a senior seminary in Fribourg (1904) where younger members of the Congregation could reside while studying at the local university. This had to be accomplished with considerable legal ingenuity, for at that time Swiss laws did not allow new Congregations to establish themselves in the Alpine State. The foundation finally merited approval on the plea that its objective was to house university students. This seminary still exists and serves its original purpose as an interprovincial house of studies, to which all provinces send selected members to pursue higher studies.

In the same year (1904) another residence was opened in Fribourg. It is across the street from the seminary and it serves as an administrative annex of the Motherhouse. Then, too, shortly before the first world war (1913), the Spiritans rented a villa in Montana where tubercular members might recuperate in the pure mountain air. At the war’s end, a sizeable gift enabled the Motherhouse to build a special sanatorium there. It still functions and serves not only the Congregation, but other priests and seminarians as well.

None of these establishments, however, aimed specifically at attracting Swiss aspirants. Rather, they served the needs of the Congregation in general. It was not before 1919 that increasing personnel needs induced the Spiritans to open a junior seminary at Bois-Noir, Valais. It was a pitifully small establishment that was constantly exposed to the threat of floods from a nearby torrent. Moreover, the local bishop opposed any enlargement of the seminary and thereby effectively prevented the Swiss Province from developing for many years.

f. Poland

In 1904, Princess Oginska invited Archbishop Le Roy and Father Acker, the Provincial of Germany to come to Poland and discuss the establishment of the Congregation in Bobrek, near the border of Hungary. As a start, she offered a large orphanage to which a junior seminary could be attached later. Father Acker also made some efforts on his own to open a house in
the diocese of Chelmno, but for some reason nothing came of these plans. After World War I, however, the memory of these visits still lingered on. Father Sigismond Rydlewski, a member of the American Province who served as chaplain to the Polish forces of Canada, France and Poland, proposed founding an orphanage at Welczak for the children of Polish war heroes and learned to his surprise that the people there still spoke of the Holy Ghost Fathers. Permission was quickly granted, and the orphanage was opened in 1921. In the same year Father Kolipinski and Father Baranski found a bargain property at Bydgoszcz and the orphanage was transferred there during the course of the next year. Because the house was too small to accommodate an orphanage, a junior seminary and a novitiate for clerics and Brothers, the Spiritans soon opened a novitiate at Dembowałonka where an old castle was available for immediate occupancy and probably could be bought cheaply later on. However, this expectation was somehow thwarted, and at the end of 1925 the community was transferred to another recently purchased house in Bydgoszcz. Through the generous aid of American Spiritans and their friends, a new wing was added and the house became a full-fledged junior seminary. It looked very much as though a new province of the Congregation was now solidly launched.

6. The First World War, 1914-1918

This monstrous conflict, in which thirty-five million souls were locked in deadly combat, dealt cruel blows at the various European Provinces of the Congregation. In France, Belgium, and Germany, 600 Fathers, Brothers and seminarians of military age were called up for armed service or for war-time duties. In the enemy nations recruitment almost came to a standstill.

B. G. 30, 415

During the war, 320 French members of the Congregation were mobilized; 81 of them killed in battle; 108 received a total of 169 citations or decorations for bravery. A survey of twenty-four orders and congregations show that 7,873 of their members saw military service: they earned a total of 3,578 citations and decorations for bravery; 1,278 of them were killed in action. It is to be noted that all but four recognized congregations had been exiled, yet all of them responded immediately to the call for military duty in defense of a country that did not even permit them to live on its soil!
The effects of the conflict made themselves acutely felt in the African Missions as well. Many missionaries were drafted and others joined the war as military chaplains. Although the fighting on African soil was rather limited, half a dozen Spiritan missions in Tanganyika were wrecked by advancing Boer armies from South Africa. Their German personnel were taken prisoners and sent to internment camps in India and Egypt.

When peace finally came, the Congregation counted its losses in one hundred and twenty-four of its men killed outright on the battlefield or fatally wounded; scores of others returned maimed for life or broken in health; and the general membership was reduced from 1,804 in 1914 to 1,665 in 1919.

Despite these losses, Spiritans rallied to the call when the Holy See asked the Congregation to replace those German missionaries who had worked in the former German colony of the Cameroons. Obviously, it was more important than ever to intensify the campaign for vocations. Under the energetic direction of Archbishop Le Roy, strenuous efforts were made in this direction and dramatic results crowned the endeavor. By 1920 there were again 145 novices and 940 aspirants preparing to join the Congregation.

7. The Missions

a. The Inauguration of Missions in the Interior of Brazil

In 1893, Father Xavier Libermann, a nephew of the Venerable Francis, had been appointed official visitor of the Holy Ghost Missions and communities in the West Indies and South America. From Peru, he travelled over the Andes to Buenos Aires and in the course of his trip he met the newly-appointed Bishop of Manaus. The Bishop appealed to him for priests and emphasized the need by reporting that there were parts of his immense diocese which had not seen a priest for over a hundred years. When the Holy See reinforced the bishop’s plea in 1897, Archbishop Le Roy sent Father Libermann with three Fathers and two Brothers to the bishop’s rescue. Just then someone providentially contributed enough money to buy a small steamer, a most essential item of equipment since all traffic in the interior
of Brazil goes by water. A Brother purchased the boat in Philadelphia and delivered it to Manaus.

At once two missions were started: one in Manaus itself and the other deep in the jungle at Tefe, several weeks away by boat. These regions are so wild that, as someone said, God has not yet finished creating them. They are sometimes more realistically called the Green Hell. Nonetheless, the Fathers and Brothers set to with axes and machetes to reclaim a part of the jungle at Boca de Tefe. Laboriously cutting boards from tree-trunks by hand, they constructed a small residence for themselves and a large building in which Spiritan Brothers soon began to teach agriculture and various trades that would be useful in these remote regions.

Meanwhile the Fathers busied themselves with the spiritual care of the people confided to them by the Bishop of Manaus. Their zeal and charity contrasted sharply with the indolence of the few native priests, who looked on enviously while people flocked to the Spiritans from every direction. Soon their work suffered from numerous restrictions: their jurisdiction was limited, their subsidies were cut off, their church was “closed for repairs”, and a newspaper campaign was launched against the intruders. There seemed to be no alternative to withdrawal.

However, the Holy See definitely opposed leaving the whole territory of the Manaus diocese—three times the size of Texas—in the hands of the half dozen secular priests who constituted the entire diocesan clergy. It urged the Spiritans to stay on and make the best of it until part of the diocese could be erected into a separate ecclesiastical territory. This occurred in 1910 when the bishop died and a Spiritan-trained priest, Father Frederic Costa ¹⁴ became his successor. Realizing the impossibility of manning his immense diocese with his own priests, the new prelate allowed five new circumscriptions to be carved from his domain: the Prelatures of Upper Purus and Rio Branco, and the Prefectures of Tefe, Upper Solimoes and Rio Negro. The Holy See entrusted Tefe, the largest of the new circumscriptions, to the Congregation. Two years later, the upper Jurua regions in the Territory of Acre were added to this and the Spiritans

¹⁴He had studied at the College which the Congregation had opened at Belem (Para) in 1885.
now found themselves charged with a river basin stretching over two thousand miles.

Meanwhile the Government was much impressed by the amazing success which the Spiritan Brothers had achieved in their agricultural and technical school at Boca de Tefe, and in 1905 it asked them to take over a similar State-owned institute at Paracatuba, near Manaos, the famous jungle capital of the Amazones. They accepted the offer, but the school lasted only three years. By then another Governor had come to power and his hostility to the Church forced the Brothers to withdraw from their new school. Falling back on Boca de Tefe, they continued their educational work. Since then, it has operated regularly down to the present, interrupted only for a brief time during the Second World War, when a critical personnel shortage caused a suspension of its activities.

b. The Congregation and the Old French Colonies

All things considered, the separation of Church and State did more good than harm to the Catholics of France by giving the Church a new freedom along with its enforced poverty. The same cannot be said, however, at least not immediately, with respect to the old French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the West Indies, and of Reunion in the Indian Ocean. Frightened by the prospect of threatened riots, the local government officials did not dare to confiscate the churches. The local bishops warned them that, if they touched the rectories, all priests would be withdrawn. Consequently, they abstained from seizing the priests' residences although they did liquidate all other church properties, including all Mass endowments, and they stopped the payment of salaries to the clergy, except those few who were official chaplains in State institutions. Because people had been accustomed for generations to see the State take care of all expenses for the maintainance of churches and the clergy, they paid little heed at first when their Bishops appealed for support. As a result, the Church was rapidly approaching a state of financial crisis.

In addition, the secular clergy itself was slowly disappearing. Since 1890, various pressures from the Government had reduced the number of priests to a bare minimum. After 1905 the French Government systematically refused to inscribe any new priests on the list of colonial clergy. In the interim, death, disease, old age,
and departures further decimated the ranks of the survivors. Many formerly flourishing parishes were now without priests, and in Martinique the entire northern half of the island had no resident pastor.\(^{15}\) In 1909 the situation had grown so desperate that the Holy See once more put the old French colonies under the Propaganda.

Before very long the Propaganda saw that it would have to confide these territories to a religious organization capable of assuming responsibility for them. As one might expect, its choice fell on the Holy Ghost Fathers whose entire past history made them logical candidates for the task. Moreover, they were the only religious congregation that already had establishments in these colonies. No wonder, then, that it came as something of a surprise to the Propaganda when the Spiritans reacted unfavorably to the proposal. In fact, they did their very best to have the honors and the burdens of insular administration transferred elsewhere. While they were quite willing to prepare a secular clergy for the colonies and to undertake auxiliary works such as colleges, social works and mission bands, the Holy Ghost Fathers had no desire to staff parishes, chanceries, and episcopal sees. Once again, as they did when Father Schwindenhammer decided to send more men to these colonies, the missionaries in Africa raised their voices in vigorous protest. They feared that these “new” missions would absorb too much of the total potential available for the apostolate. Archbishop Le Roy, himself a veteran African missionary, was inclined to be sympathetic to their view.

The Propaganda, however, was not to be dissuaded since no other organization offered the remotest chance of success. Moreover, the French Government, ant clerical as it was, now grew more and more alarmed over the results of its folly in disorganizing the religious services of the old colonies and it concurred fully with the Propaganda’s proposed solution. Nonetheless, the Congregation still turned a deaf ear. New objections were raised until at last the Roman Procurator of the Congregation told Archbishop Le Roy that “the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda and his secretary had had enough of his evasive action.” Pope Pius X

\(^{15}\) The volcanic eruption of Mount Pelé in 1902 had killed twenty-six priests, seventy-one Sisters, and 30,000 people. Seven parishes were wiped out, as was also the College of the Holy Ghost. When the danger of new eruptions had passed, the survivors returned to their farms and villages, but there were no priests available to restore religious services.
was on the point of giving a personal and formal order. It was high time to submit to the wishes of the Holy See.

The official document entrusting the three dioceses, as well as the Prefectures of Guiana and St. Pierre et Miquelon to the Congregation bears a trace of the long resistance: it does not say that the Spiritans have consented to accept them. Instead, the text states that “We have considered it opportune that [the Holy Ghost Fathers] consent to assume them again.” In accepting the decision “with respectful submission” because he was “unable to escape from the imposed task,” Archbishop Le Roy tried to follow the practice of not proposing any Holy Ghost Fathers as residential bishops, but when the Propaganda first refused his proposed diocesan priests because they were not members of a religious congregation and then a religious because he was not a Spiritan, the Superior General finally realized that he had no alternative. Again, the Roman documents appointing the first Spiritan Fathers to the bishoprics of these islands give evidence of their reluctance to become residential bishops: “Considering the present circumstances, we have decided to entrust the Diocese of . . ., to the care of the Holy Ghost Fathers.” From then on, the Congregation had to resign itself to having a number of residential bishoprics reserved for its members. In 1916 this same arrangement was extended to the British island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean.

One of the immediate benefits flowing from this new state of affairs was the seriousness with which priestly vocations were now promoted in these territories. Previously, the secular bishops had in general been quite conservative in this respect. The Spiritans followed a different policy. They decided to foster vocations prudently but nonetheless diligently and the policy eventually produced gratifying results. In the future, most of the students at Holy Ghost Seminary were recruited from these territories rather than from France.

c. Progress in Africa


In Chapters XIX and XX the reader will find a fuller discussion of developments in Africa, but for the present a few facts and figures may be found helpful in assessing the extent of missionary advancement under Archbishop Le Roy’s generalate.

E. P. 7, 69
In 1895, just before Le Roy became Superior General, the Holy Ghost Fathers were responsible for the ten ecclesiastical circum-
C. S. E. 69 ff. 

scritpions of Senegambia, Sierra Leone, Southern Nigeria, the Two Guineas (Gabon), the French Congo, Ubangi, the Lower Congo, Cunene, Cimbebasia, and Zanguebar. Three hundred and twenty-six Fathers and Brothers dispersed over seventy-four residences supervised two hundred and ninety-one native schools, took care of 14,239 Christians, and prepared 11,420 pagans for baptism in that year alone. By 1926, at the end of his generalate, the number of ecclesiastical circumplications manned by Spiritans in continental Africa had grown from ten to eighteen through the addition of the Cameroons, Northern Katanga in the Belgian Congo, Kroonstad in South Africa, and by the division of other missions into autonomous Vicariates or Prefectures. In addition, the Congregation was charged with eleven ecclesiastical areas outside the African continent. The number of Fathers and Brothers in Africa had risen to five hundred and thirty-four, and the statistics of 1925 showed a total of one hundred and fifty-seven residences, with two thousand five hundred and forty-three schools in Africa alone. The Fathers cared for 385,563 Christians and instructed 232,200 pagans for baptism. The number of native priests, Brothers and Sisters had risen from twenty-four in 1895 to one hundred and fourteen by 1925. Without question, the Church was making giant strides throughout these parts of the Dark Continent.

d. The Return to the Belgian Congo

Ap. H. 300 ff. Early Work in the Congo. Since 1865 the Holy See had entrusted the Prefecture of the Congo16 to the Congregation. From this Prefecture, Spiritan Fathers travelled inland and became the first Catholic missionaries to penetrate the regions which now constitute the Belgian Congo. As early as 1876, Father Carrie, later Bishop Carrie, Vicar Apostolic of Loango, went from Landana in what is now the Portuguese Congo up the Congo River to Boma. There a local king sold him a hill which seemed to provide an eminently suitable site for his mission.17 After the necessary building materials were prepared in the workshops of the Landana Mission and two exploratory trips had been made up the river, the first priest went to live in Boma in March 1880. Per-

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16This Prefecture was erected in 1766, but had been without an occupant for many years.
17For the contract of purchase see B. G. 12, 714.
manent buildings were immediately constructed and, although the mission was dedicated to Our Lady of Victories, the hill which dominates the river has ever since been known as Mount Holy Ghost.

Another piece of land was donated to the mission by a local Portuguese commercial agent, but political problems arose when this man was replaced by another agent who refused to recognize the gift and appealed to the commander of a Portuguese gun boat to back up his position. At this juncture, Father Carrie announced that he had already appealed to the Admiral of a French naval force at the mouth of the Congo. The implied threat effectively forestalled any further difficulty.

It should be remembered that the colonial powers were dividing Africa among themselves during the eighties. With the exception of the Dutch, other colonial-minded European nations were busily engaged in expanding their coastal factories and blockhouses into full-sized colonies. Willy-nilly, but sometimes quite intentionally, the missionaries themselves became involved in these political enterprises. To carry on their missionary work among savage tribes, they needed support and protection. Usually, the only source of such protection was the local colonizing power. Where two or more nations had designs on the same territory, any missionary who did not collaborate in the plans of his own nation exposed his confreres in Africa to the danger of incurring the displeasure of the home government and the resentment of its local representatives. On the other hand, it must be admitted that a few of these apostolic figures experienced great difficulty in distinguishing between religion and politics. In their eyes, France was equated with Catholicism while England (or Germany) was identified with Protestantism. Where this opposition did not play a role, as in conflicts of interest between France and Portugal or France and Belgium, nationalistic motives were likely to exercise too much influence on their actions.

cf. pp. 504 ff.

The next year, 1881, the future “Cannibal Bishop,” Father Prosper Augouard, set out with a caravan of thirty-two carriers on a twenty-seven-day march along the Congo River to Stanley Pool. After a cordial reception by the local king who had recently been visited by the French explorer Brazza, Father Augouard selected a site for his future mission near the present city of Leopoldville, the Capital of the Belgian Congo. Stanley
was then in the employ of the King of the Belgians and had reached the place five days before him, but the natives were most unfriendly to him when he came. On Brazza's suggestion, therefore, the French Government sent a subsidy of 11,000 francs for the mission which Augouard planned to establish near Stanley Pool. Brazza's desire to work hand in hand with this valiant Spiritan is evident from the following excerpt from one of his letters:

B. G. 12, 727

Father, you are working for your God, who is also mine. I am working for my country, which is also yours. We shall succeed in making civilization penetrate these regions and, as you say, in making the name of our France known and loved in them.

B. G. 13, 921

Situated above the waterfalls of the Congo at the beginning of nearly one thousand miles of navigable water, the mission occupied an extremely important strategic position. As a matter of fact, in the near future it was to become the site of the Congo Capital and the starting point of nearly all other Congo missions. It is not surprising, therefore, that the French Government gave Brazza 1,270,000 francs in 1882 to colonize the area for France. With high hopes, then, Father Augouard set out from Landana with a hundred and twenty carriers and great quantities of building supplies for the new mission, but when he arrived at the designated area, he found the natives' disposition so much changed that he decided to withdraw to the other side of the Congo River and construct his new mission at Linzolo.

B. G. 13, 945 ff.
M. C. 18, 10 ff.; 17 ff.; 28 f.; 56 f.; 69 ff.; 80 ff.; 92 ff.; 103 ff.

B. G. 14, 516

In 1885 this intrepid priest travelled over the Congo River right up to the equator and reached the spot now occupied by Coquilhatville, where he bought a huge piece of land for another mission. At the same time he established another center at Kuamouth, a station of the International Congo Association\(^\text{18}\), five days' march from Brazzaville. The next year, in 1886, he founded his last mission in Belgian Congo territory at Nemlao on the northern bank of the river. The project came into being under particularly trying circumstances, for local tribesmen repeatedly invaded the compound to destroy and plunder under the pretext of removing the curse

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\(^{18}\) The International Congo Association was the forerunner of the Independent State of the Congo, established in 1885 by the Berlin Conference. In 1908 the Independent State become a colony of Belgium.
emanating from one or other piece of furniture which, they said, was responsible for the current drought. On one occasion the missionaries had to be rescued by the combined military forces of a neighboring Belgian army post and a French factory.

**Storime, 644 ff.** *The Departure.* Father Augouard’s close collaboration with Brazza, the promoter of a French protectorate, soon aroused the suspicions of Stanley and his patron, King Leopold of Belgium. It should not be surprising, therefore, that when the Conference of Berlin (1885) recognized the Independent State of the Congo under the sovereignty of King Leopold, there was little if any inclination to leave these Congo missions of the Congregation in the hands of French priests. Since, politically speaking, Leopold felt that Frenchmen were not to be trusted, he requested and obtained from Pope Leo XIII an assurance that only Belgian missionaries would be assigned to the Independent Congo. Unfortunately, the Holy Ghost Fathers had very few Belgian nationals in the Congregation in 1886. Father Emile Callewaert was the only Belgian Spiritan in the Congo and the Province of Belgium had not yet been founded. When a mission seminary for the Congo was founded in 1886 at Louvain and failed to generate sufficient interest, the Holy See asked the young Belgian Scheut Congregation to take charge of evangelizing the Independent Congo. The Holy Ghost Fathers, after transferring the residence of Kuamouth to Brazzaville on the French bank of the Congo, stayed a few more years in the stations of Nemlao and Boma until the Scheut Fathers were able to relieve them.

**B. G. 14, 601 f.**

**Storime, 684 ff.**

**B. G. 15, 619 ff.**

**B. G. 24, 41 f.** *The Return.* Obviously, the young Congregation of Scheut was not able to cover the nearly one million square miles of Congo territory alone. In the extreme east, the White Fathers, who already had started a Province in Belgium, retained control of their missions and a few years later the Jesuits, the Trappists, the Redemptorists and many other orders came to the Scheut Fathers’ aid. As soon as the Spiritans had established their first foundations in Belgium (1900) and the Netherlands (1904), they indicated that they were ready to resume missionary activity in the Belgian Congo. The Scheut Fathers were quite willing to assign the Katanga section to them, but first it was necessary to obtain the permission of the Congo authorities in Brussels.

Difficulties arose immediately, for official archives contained a full account of the political activities in which Father Angouard
had engaged. Although some of these activities had been grossly misinterpreted, the Congo authorities refused to allow French Holy Ghost Fathers into the territory and frankly showed their displeasure that the Scheut Fathers were willing to cede Katanga to such *persona non gratae*. After extensive negotiations and discussions, Father Callewaert and Archbishop Le Roy managed to convince Brussels that the proposed mission was politically harmless. In Katanga the Spiritans would be more than a thousand miles away from the scene of the old Franco-Belgian rivalries. There would be no danger of political infiltration and the mission would provisionally remain under the control of the Scheut Fathers until it was staffed by Belgian and Dutch members of the Congregation. Moreover, the mission would be under the direction of Father Callewaert, a Belgian citizen and a veteran of the Congo.

On the basis of these guarantees, Brussels finally acquiesced to the proposition and recognized the Spiritans as official missionaries, with all the rights and privileges thereunto attached. In what appears to be an endeavor to show that there were no hard feelings over the past, they even added a few special favors, such as free transportation from Belgium to the mission, payment of installation costs, and an annual subsidy. By 1907, everything was settled. Father Callewaert and three confreres set out on their ten-week voyage from Antwerp to Katanga. Four years later, the Holy See erected there a special Prefecture for the Holy Ghost Fathers and named Father Callewaert its ecclesiastical superior.

## c. Repercussions of the Portuguese Revolution in Angola

The suppression of religious orders by the revolutionary government in Portugal could easily have resulted in persecution of the missionaries who were working in Angola and Portuguese Congo, and their expulsion would have destroyed all missionary work in these territories. To prevent such a disaster, Archbishop Le Roy ordered the Fathers and Brothers in Angola and the Congo to appeal to the Berlin Conference of 1885, the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1891, and the Brussels Conference of the same year, all of which guaranteed the freedom and protection of religious missions. They were directed to stay at their posts, no matter what happened. "If the missions are confiscated, withdraw into native huts," he commanded.
In general, however, the colonial officials were well disposed and tried to minimize the effect of political upheavals at home. Arguing that the decree of suppression was not applicable to the colonies, they resisted the efforts of local Portuguese settlers—many of whom were deported criminals bent on plunder—to drive the missionaries from their residences. Occasionally, it is true, subordinate local officials temporarily closed a mission, arrested a priest, or submitted the Fathers to vexatious treatment. Thus, for instance, in Cabinda, when a few semi-intoxicated officers caused a riot during the Christmas Midnight Mass in 1911, the resulting inquiry charged the celebrant and his assistant with attempted murder. Although the ridiculous charge had to be dropped, it supplied fuel to the anti-religious campaign.

The occasional closing of a mission, however, did not deter the missionaries. Following instructions faithfully, the Spiritans refused to depart. They appealed to the international treaties, and sought support for their appeal by calling on foreign consuls. For the most part, therefore, things did not go beyond recriminations, threats, and ridicule. The higher colonial officials realized all too well how much public law and order depended on the work of the Holy Ghost Fathers and they hesitated to play into the covetous hands of other colonial powers by giving them a pretext for moving in on Portuguese territories. Moreover, a famine and a number of native revolts occupied the government so fully that it had neither the time nor the energy to persecute missionaries. As a result, the Spiritan effort in Angola and Portuguese Congo did not suffer too severely from the Revolution at home. Even Government subsidies to the missions were maintained, although on something of a reduced scale.

f. THE RETURN TO THE CAMEROONS

B. G. 30, 723

Vogt 72 ff.

Early Efforts. As early as 1883, the Holy Ghost Fathers traversed their immense Vicariate of the Two Guineas to explore the possibility of establishing missions in the section known as the Cameroons. They had been invited to come by two Polish explorers who had settled there and acquired vast tracts of land. One of the two Poles ceded his properties to the Congregation as

19The region derives its name from the Portuguese explorer Fernando Po, who discovered the mouth of the Wuri River in 1472 and called it Rio dos Cameros, i.e. Shrimp River.
a contribution toward the new mission. Meanwhile, however, the German explorer Dr. Nachtigal had entered the picture and proclaimed the protectorate of Germany over that same territory. He was well-disposed toward the Spiritans and encouraged them to begin their missionary work at once. Similar encouragement came from the German Admiral Knorr, who commanded the German navy stationed in the area, and from Baron von Soden, the first German colonial governor. As a matter of fact, the German authorities went to visit the Fathers in Gabon, were delighted with what they saw, and urged them to come to the Cameroons and establish similar works there. Since Alsace had become part of Germany in 1871, the Alsatian Father Stoffel was sent to select a suitable site. The native population welcomed him and he was able to obtain the tract he considered ideal for the purpose.

Before any mission could be inaugurated, however, it was necessary to obtain authorization from Bismarck, the German Chancellor. Despite the pleas of Dr. Nachtigal, Admiral Knorr, and Governor von Soden, and despite the pressure exercised by German politicians, Bismarck obstinately refused to admit the Congregation to the Cameroons. He stubbornly maintained that he wanted no Jesuits in German-controlled territory. As the reader will recall, for some mysterious reason we have not been able to fathom, the "Iron Chancellor" persisted in seeing a disguised Jesuit in every Holy Ghost Father. Father Stoffel could achieve nothing beyond a promise that Catholic missionaries would not be excluded from the Cameroons. As a result of Bismarck's obstinacy, Rome had to separate the Cameroons from the Two Guineas in 1890. It then erected a special Prefecture for the territory which it entrusted to the German Province of the Pallotine Fathers. These priests did magnificent work in the colony and quickly transformed it into a very flourishing mission. In twenty-four years, starting from nothing, they established fifteen central residences and reported 30,000 Christians by the beginning of World War I.

Vogt 73 f.

The Return. This isolated German colony was unable to resist the superior forces of the Allied armies which converged upon it from British Nigeria, French Guinea and the Belgian Congo, and by February 1916 all resistance had ceased. Despite the pre-
ventive efforts of Catholic chaplains in the Allied armies, the military authorities decided to exile all German missionaries from the territory. Since the Allies were reluctant to leave the missions unoccupied, the Commander of the French army then released five Spiritan chaplains from his forces to take care of abandoned missions. This small group was a scant substitute for the thirty-five German priests, thirty-nine Brothers and thirty-three Sisters who had been banished, and the army was subsequently induced to release seven other Holy Ghost Fathers who were on the point of being called up for military service.

This pitiful number was all that could be spared under the circumstances, and it should be emphasized that the circumstances were particularly difficult. All possessions of the missions had been temporarily sequestered by the occupying powers, the country was ravaged by war, and the whole organization of the Church had been wrecked by the exile of German clerics just at the moment when a mass movement of the population toward the Church had gotten under way. Moreover, it was impossible to regulate the religious status of the Cameroons in any definite fashion till long after the war. The uncertainty of the political situation made it difficult to undertake anything of a definitive nature. Finally, in 1923, although the Spiritans were not especially anxious to add another 166,000 square miles to their African responsibilities, the Holy See entrusted the French-controlled section of the Cameroons to the Congregation. The smaller British-controlled part of the territory was given over to the Mill Hill Fathers. Bishop Francis Xavier Vogt, who had been Administrator of the Cameroons since 1922, became Vicar Apostolic of this mission. Under his direction it was destined to develop into one of the finest in all Africa.

g. The Return to South Africa

B. G. 33, 154 ff. Early Work. In Chapter VIII it was noted that Father Duparquet took over the Prefecture of Cimbebasia in 1879. It was a vast area covering a large part of Angola, South-West Africa, and Bechuanaland. By 1886 this tireless pioneer had penetrated as far as Mafeking, on the border of Transvaal, and established there a Holy Ghost Mission. Father Thomas Fogarty was appointed Vice-Prefect Apostolic of this new missionary enterprise, which itself covered a territory twice the size of Texas.
Because there was little prospect of success among the already Methodist natives in the neighboring villages, the Fathers decided to direct their efforts toward the gold mining district of Malmani in Transvaal. However, by 1889, the constant opposition of Protestant missionaries and the difficulty of communication between this mission and its headquarters on the West Coast—about a thousand miles away as the crow flies—caused the Spiritans to withdraw from Mafeking. Three years later, at the request of the Congregation, the Holy See entrusted the whole of South West Africa, then a German colony, to the Oblates and Bechuanaland became an integral part of the Vicariate of the Orange Free State (Kimberley).

B. G. 15, 70 ff. Return. It was not until after the First World War that the Spiritans returned to South Africa. In 1923 the Prefecture of Kroonstad in the Orange Free State was separated from the Oblate mission of Kimberley and confided to the German Province of the Congregation. Hampered by lack of personnel, the Oblate Fathers had established only two posts in the territory and these had a combined Catholic population of 350. Since most of these were whites, the native population had received scant attention. Under the energetic direction of the new Prefect, Monsignor Klerlein, the German Fathers and Brothers went to work. Their efforts were so successful that in 1951 the Holy See created the two Dioceses of Kroonstad and Bethlehem to serve what was once the old Prefecture.

h. A Conflict in Kenya

Although the time has not yet come to present a full picture of the conflict which caused considerable trouble in Kenya Colony, British East Africa, we cannot pass over it in complete silence.

B. G. 21, 499 ff. In 1901 the Congregation was approached by a priest who had just founded a new missionary institute. He requested permission to send some of his priests and Brothers to the Zanzibar Vicariate of the Holy Ghost Fathers. They intended to stay only a short while to acquire some experience in missionary work before undertaking the evangelization of the Gallas tribes in Southern Ethiopia.

ibid. “Desirous of favoring as much as possible the development of new apostolic societies,” the Congregation and Bishop Emile Allgeyer, the Vicar Apostolic of the Zanzibar mission, readily consented to admit them as auxiliaries on condition that they take care of their
own expenses, limit themselves to the district assigned to their activity, remain under the jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic of Zanzibar, and not request the Propaganda that part of the Vicariate be ceded to them without previous authorization of the Vicar Apostolic and the Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers. Upon their written guarantee to observe these conditions faithfully, Bishop Allgeyer welcomed them to his jurisdiction and personally conducted them to one of the most promising sections of his Vicariate.

Trouble began soon after their arrival. The newcomers sent for reinforcements and began to disregard the limits assigned to their activity. When the Bishop complained about this, they appealed to Rome and obtained the erection of a separate mission extending over all of Kenya Province and had it assigned to their care. As a result, the Spiritans had to evacuate their residences in the area and fall back on what was left of their territory. Moreover, within the Zanzibar mission of the Holy Ghost Fathers itself, the new society obtained a residence and surrounding territory at Limuru where, they said, they had to have a procure.

To make up for the lost stations, the Congregation founded new residences in Kikuyu land at Manga (1906) and Gatanga (1913), but in 1916 the newcomers produced a modified map showing that Gatanga was situated in their domain and therefore should be surrendered to them. Although for some strange reason the boundaries of their Vicariate on this map differed from the one indicated in the original document erecting the Kenya Mission, the Spiritans were willing to sacrifice Gatanga for the sake of peace, provided that the Limuru Station inside the Holy Ghost mission be returned to the Spiritan jurisdiction. The Propaganda tried to find a middle way by deciding that Limuru was indeed part of the Zanzibar Vicariate but that the procure in question should be transferred elsewhere “in the way and at the time” judged proper by the Propaganda itself. However, by 1922 the newcomers' Kenya Vicariate had added the Limuru district also to its domain and at the same time managed to secure permission to establish its priests in Nairobi itself, the very residential city of the Vicar Apostolic of Zanzibar. These men soon acquired a procure, a public church and a “Rest House” for Christians of their missions who desired to visit Nairobi!
In 1931 these continual encroachments were partially redressed when a report of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Hinsley, and of a special Apostolic Visitor, prompted Pope Pius XI personally to order the Limuru region restored to the Zanzibar Vicariate "without compensation of any kind," and to declare that this decision would "be and remain valid and effective forever." At the same time the Holy Ghost Fathers were directed "to cede voluntarily" the Laikipia region to the Nyeri Vicariate, which was one of the two missions into which the former Kenya Vicariate had been divided.

i. The Withdrawal from Spanish Guinea

In many regions of Africa the Spiritans had established missions long before these territories were effectively claimed by European colonial powers. One of these regions was the domain which is presently known as Spanish Guinea and which was then the object of political claims and counterclaims between France and Spain. As early as 1884, French Spiritans acceded to the request of the local populace and founded a residence at Bonito. Although they were cordially received by most of the natives, it appears more than likely that one of the Fathers fell victim to poisoning. In addition, communications with their headquarters in Gabon proved difficult to maintain. However, when they decided to transfer the center of their activities to Bata in 1889 and abandon Bonito altogether, the natives appealed to the Spanish authorities at a nearby post and asked for priests from that quarter. Seizing the opportunity, the Spaniards promptly dispatched a steamer with a few Spanish priests and a copious supply of Spanish flags. Whereupon the French Governor of Gabon urged the Holy Ghost Fathers to re-occupy the post.

The political situation was not clarified until 1900 when France and Spain finally settled their claims on the disputed territory. A treaty of that date gave Spain control over about one hundred miles of coast-line and a depth of nearly one hundred and twenty miles inland thereby bringing both Bata and Bonito into Spanish territory. Since the Spiritans were reluctant to give up the flourishing missions which they had established at the cost of such great sacrifice, they decided to continue their work under the jurisdiction of the Spanish Vicar Apostolic of Fernando Po. As a matter of fact, the change in civilian administration was pleasant: instead
of dealing with troublesome anticlerical civil officials, the Fathers enjoyed cordial relations with a Spanish Governor who was in full sympathy with their work. In 1908 Spain granted an annual subsidy of 18,500 pesetas for the support of the mission, and Father Ferre, the Religious Superior, was named municipal treasurer of Bata. With such encouragement, the Fathers did not hesitate to open another mission in Embula.

Meanwhile, the Congregation was seriously weighing the question of founding a Province in Spain so that it might have Spanish confreres for its works. For this purpose, a residence was established in Cogullada, near Saragossa (1903) but the next year a new Spanish law made the legal position of the Congregation too tenuous and the project was abandoned. The failure of this attempt, coupled with the pressing demands for personnel elsewhere, resulted in a regretful decision to withdraw from Spanish Guinea. While the First World War delayed the execution of this plan, the Spiritans ultimately surrendered their stations in the territory to Spanish missionaries in 1919.

8. Revisions of the Rules and Constitutions

Various Pontifical decrees regarding religious institutes of simple vows made it necessary to revise the Rules and Constitutions twice during Le Roy's generalate. On the occasion of the first revision, 1906-1909, there was question again of abolishing the Rules because Rome had decided that only religious orders founded before the Fourth General Council of the Lateran (1215) were permitted to have Rules as well as Constitutions. Although the Spiritans fell short of this date by nearly five centuries, the Holy See once again authorized retention of the Rules and looked on the Constitutions as an official commentary thereof.

We list here the most important modifications introduced in the 1909 revision:

1. As a religious institute, the Congregation was henceforth to be dependent on the Holy See through the Sacred Congregation of Religious which had just been established by the Pope.

2. The practice of remaining indefinitely in the Congregation without pronouncing perpetual vows was abolished. Hence-
forth after a period of temporary vows a member had to engage himself for life.

3. The Superior General was to be elected for a period of twelve years. His term of office could be renewed if he were to obtain at least two thirds of the votes.

Later, in 1917, the Holy See introduced its new Code of Canon Law. All religious orders and congregations were obliged to revise their rules or constitutions anew and bring them into consonance with the new general ecclesiastical law governing all religious institutes. The resulting modifications gave rise to the actual text of the Rules and Constitutions as it was published in 1922. Since then, no substantial changes have been made.


Although the Spiritans had always been efficaciously assisted in their missionary work by several Congregations of Sisters, notably the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, the extensive development of their missions at the beginning of the century caused a pressing demand for more Sisters capable of assuming charge of hospitals, dispensaries, schools for girls and the training of women for Christian motherhood. This situation led to the foundation of two new religious congregations of Sisters especially dedicated to assisting the Holy Ghost Fathers in their apostolic labors: the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Ghost in France and the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in Ireland. The first of these congregations was founded in 1921 by Archbishop Le Roy and three years later the first twenty-five of its members made their Consecration to the Apostolate. Since then the Sisters of the Holy Ghost have attained provincial organization in Portugal, the Netherlands, Canada and, of course, France. They aid the Fathers in many missions throughout Africa and the West Indies.

At about the same time another Spiritan Bishop, Joseph Shanahan, of Nigeria, experienced great difficulty in securing enough nuns to teach the young girls in his territory. Like Archbishop Le Roy, he was encouraged by the Pope to start a new missionary institute for this specific purpose, but when he also wanted to call his projected congregation "The Missionary Sisters of the Holy..."
Ghost," Rome told him to choose another title lest it give rise to confusion. Accordingly, he selected the name "Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary" and placed the society under the special protection of the Holy Ghost. Their Motherhouse and novitiate were established at Killeshandra, Diocese of Kilmore, Ireland. This Congregation also has enjoyed the blessing of phenomenal growth. It renders splendid assistance to the Holy Ghost Fathers in their Nigerian missionary endeavors.

* * * * *

By 1925 the seventy-one-year-old Superior General's health began to deteriorate to such a degree that he received the last sacraments in October. Realizing that the Congregation should be led by a strong and vigorous man, Archbishop Le Roy convoked a General Chapter and tendered his resignation. Oddly enough, once he was relieved of the burdens of office, the Archbishop's health improved sufficiently to accord him twelve additional years of life.

In 1938, two years after celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of his ordination, he closed a glorious career at the age of eighty-four years.

**AVERAGE AGE AT DEATH OF HOLY GHOST FATHERS AND BROTHERS IN CONTINENTAL AFRICA, 1843-1956**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Average Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1843-1850</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31 yrs. 11 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851-1860</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32 yrs. 1 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1870</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>36 yrs. 1 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871-1880</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38 yrs. 1 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881-1890</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>39 yrs. 3 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-1900</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>41 yrs. 5 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1910</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>40 yrs. 9 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-1920</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>40 yrs. 9 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-1930</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>41 yrs. 11 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-1940</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42 yrs. 10 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-1950</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>46 yrs. 2 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-1960</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>57 yrs. 2 mos.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These statistics are based on the districts of death contained in the register of the Congregation. Between 1890 and 1932 one hundred and fourteen missionaries in Africa did not reach the age of thirty, and eighty-one others died between thirty and thirty-five years of age.

The worst years were: 1889 with an average age of 29 yrs. and 6 mos.,
1893 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 1 mos.,
1897 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 2 mos.,
1902 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 3 mos.,
1907 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 9 mos.,
1937 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 11 mos.,
1942 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 12 mos.,
1947 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 13 mos.,
1950 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 14 mos.,
1955 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 15 mos.,
1960 with an average age of 30 yrs. and 16 mos.