CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE GENERALATE OF ARCHBISHOP LOUIS LE HUNSEC, 1926-1950

1. Introduction

After the resignation of Archbishop Le Roy, an extraordinary session of the General Chapter was convened to elect a new superior general. On the second ballot nearly all votes went to Bishop Louis Le Hunsec, the Vicar Apostolic of Senegambia, who had come to the Chapter as Religious Superior of that District. It was the second time that the Chapter had elected a bishop, and, to prevent the system from becoming customary, the Holy See significantly added to its confirmation of the election that it did so "by way of a special favor . . . for this time" but it warned that "in the future those who have been raised to the episcopal dignity must not be elected to the office of Superior General of the Institute."

B. G. 32, 728 f.

B. G. 44, 35 ff.

Bishop Le Hunsec was born in 1878 in Brittany. At the age of twenty-one he joined the Congregation and was sent to Rome for doctoral studies in theology. After his ordination to the priesthood he taught philosophy for one year at Chevilly before he was granted permission to become a missionary in Senegal (1903). At the end of World War I he was elected a member of the General Council of the Congregation but he had hardly time to assume this function when an event took place which temporarily altered the course of his life.

C. L. 20, 1 ff.

On January 9, 1920, Bishop Jalabert of Senegambia and eighteen Spiritan Fathers and Brothers embarked on the SS Afrique on their way to Africa. Two days later the vessel was wrecked in a violent storm. All nineteen members of the Congregation were among the five hundred and sixty-three victims of the disaster who perished in the waves. Rome then appointed Father Le Hunsec to replace the deceased bishop as Vicar Apostolic of Senegambia. Only six years later, at the age of forty-eight, he became Superior General, a position he was destined to hold for two full terms of twelve years each until his advanced age caused him to beg his confreres not to re-elect him again in 1950. In 1945, on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his episcopal consecration, the Holy See
conferred on him the titular Archbishopric of Marcianopolis. He died on Christmas day, 1954, at the age of seventy-six.

With the generalate of Archbishop Le Hunsec we have reached the contemporary period of the Congregation's history, a period that has not yet passed through the crucible of time. We will therefore limit our story to a few salient points and reserve a more detailed report for the second part of this book wherein we will survey the work of the Holy Ghost Fathers throughout the world.

2. The Affair of the "Action Française"

Archbishop Le Hunsec had just laid his hand to the helm when his ship ran into the turbulence of the Action Française. Obviously the time has not yet come to present a definitive appraisal of the events conjured up by this name, but they have caused such widespread public comment that their complete omission from this book could not be justified.

The Action Française. The movement thus referred to was founded at the beginning of the twentieth century by Charles Maurras, a brilliant writer but a confessed atheist who had no regard for moral principles.1 Oddly enough, Maurras somehow conceived a strange respect for the strong central authority and social consciousness of the Catholic Church. He edited a newspaper and a bimonthly review, both called "l'Action Française," which for many years remained strictly orthodox—liberally quoting the Pope and Thomas Aquinas, campaigning against the errors of modernism,2 and even defending the victims of French religious persecution. The paper went so far as to advise its Catholic subscribers not to read certain works of Maurras, the editor. It is not surprising, therefore, that many priests and prelates of the Church gave their enthusiastic support to the Action Française. The "integrists"3 and the royalists were especially sanguine about the new movement. It had many defenders in Rome itself, and

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1In 1939 Maurras was reconciled with Rome.
2Modernism is a system which endeavors to reduce all supernatural events to natural phenomena by means of "scientific" explanations. In the realm of politics it made the Church subordinate to the State.
3The "integrists" were militant antimodernists who in their zeal often went too far and denounced men for modernism when there was no ground for such an accusation. According to Sforza, when Cardinal della Chiesa became Pope Benedict XV in 1914, he found among the papers left on the desk of his predecessor a memorandum in which he himself was accused of modernism.
even Saint Pius X is said to have called Maurras "un bel difensore della fede."

A few prominent French bishops, however, grew alarmed at the growing influence of Maurras and Leo Daudet, his principal assistant. They strongly urged that certain of his works be condemned. Accordingly, in January 1914, a document proscribing these books was drawn up, but St. Pius X decided to postpone publication of the condemnation because he felt that the time was inopportune. The First World War and its aftermath prevented his successor Pope Benedict XV from carrying out the project and putting the works on the Index. Consequently, it was not before 1926, during the reign of Pius XI, that any action was taken against the Action Française. At that time, the Archbishop of Bordeaux publicly issued a condemnation. His words were published with a congratulatory message from Pius XI on the front page of the Osservatore Romano. The following year the Pope finally published the long-delayed condemnation of many of Maurras' books and of the Action Française itself. (The original document was dated January 29, 1914).

While most bishops of France at once promulgated the papal decree in their dioceses, the names of one Archbishop and two Bishops were conspicuously absent from a document in which the French Hierarchy signified its submission to the Pope in this matter. A number of theologians, both secular and religious, continued to support the movement, alleging that submission to the Pope's decision in this instance was not necessary. Others externally submitted, but showed in their private conversations where their sympathies lay. Pope Pius XI decided to take stern measures in three notorious cases and make examples of three clerics who held very prominent positions: the famous Jesuit Cardinal Billot; the renowned Dominican theologian Father Pégues, Regent of St. Maximin Friary; and Father Le Floch, the Spiritan Superior of the Pontifical French Seminary in Rome.

Cardinal Billot had sent a letter to Leo Daudet, congratulating the leaders of the Action Française on their reply to their condemnation by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, although the Pope had already praised the Archbishop for his action. Shortly thereafter, Pius XI condemned Maurras, and the Cardinal offered to resign. His offer was accepted and the Superior General of the Jesuits personally conducted Billot to Gallero where he was to end his
life in absolute retirement. Father Pégues' mistake had been to
give a scandalous reply when he was consulted about reading the
*Action Francaise*. Although he recanted six weeks later, he was
nonetheless relieved of his office. Because Father Le Floch was
a Holy Ghost Father, we shall have to analyse his case somewhat
more in detail, especially since efforts were made to place the
whole Congregation in jeopardy because of one member's im-
prudence.

**B. G. 41, 69 f.**  *Father Henry Le Floch.* Undoubtedly Le Floch was one of
the most discussed figures in the *Action Francaise* affair. After
joining the Congregation, he had been sent to Belgium and Italy
for advanced studies. He held doctorates from the University of
Louvain and from the Gregorian University in Rome. His ap-
pointment as Rector of Holy Ghost College in Beauvais was fol-
lowed by his assignment to the directorship of the Senior Seminary
of the Congregation at Chevilly. In 1904 Pope Pius X made him
Superior of the Pontifical French Seminary in Rome. In 1910 and
again in 1912 there was question of making him a titular bishop
to add dignity to his position in the Seminary and it was not
without considerable trouble that the Superior General succeeded
in preventing this ecclesiastical promotion on the grounds that
it would have been contrary to the tradition of the Spiritans, who
prefer to have no more church dignitaries among their members
than is absolutely necessary.

**B. G. 41, 377 f.** During the war years of 1914 to 1918, Father Le Floch spared
neither time nor effort defending Benedict XV against certain
French papers which alleged that the Pope was pro-German. By
1922, after the coronation of Pius XI, he had reached a position
of exceptional influence in the Eternal City. He was a Consultor of
the Holy Office, the Propaganda, the Consistory, the Congregation
for Seminaries and Universities, and the Congregation for the
Oriental Church, as well as an intimate friend of many Cardinals.
He was highly regarded by the French episcopate—not less than
sixty of his students became bishops—and was the idol of many
of his former seminarians. Moreover, success appeared to bless
whatever he undertook. Inevitably, a man in such a favored posi-
tion was bound to have enemies watching his every move in order
to discredit him.

**B. G. 41, 378**  His downfall came about with dramatic swiftness. On May 25,
1927, Pius XI received the students of the French Seminary in a
special audience. Father Le Floch pronounced the customary address. It contained an allusion which, as Pius XI later declared, he found shocking. Although Le Floch protested that he had spoken completely without malice, his words were quickly exploited by his enemies. At all events, when the Pope replied, he made no special reference to what had shocked him but he did speak sharply against the Action Française and went on to declare that to be in harmony with the Church it is not enough to come to Rome and study there. He cited the life and post-Roman works of de Lamennais to underscore his point.

A few days later, Archbishop Le Hunsec made his annual visit to Rome and was twice called into audience with the Pope. Ignorant of what had happened at the special audience, he was astonished to hear Pius XI complain that Father Le Floch was no longer a man to be trusted in his position and that an Apostolic Visitor had been appointed for the French Seminary. This Visitor was Dom Schuster, the Benedictine Abbot of St. Paul-Outside-the-Walls and the future Cardinal Archbishop of Milan. In his report to the Pope after the visit, Abbot Schuster stated that there was nothing worthy of blame in the Seminary as far as discipline, piety, and studies were concerned. While this statement was true, it would have been difficult to deny that the attitude of several students was free from reproach in matters political. Nevertheless, the Abbot's report did not supply any basis for proceedings against Father Le Floch. The trouble stemmed from a counter-report made by Cardinal Bisleti. According to the regulations governing apostolic visits, Le Floch should have abstained from all administrative activities while the Visitor was at the Seminary. Since this prescription had not been perfectly observed, someone reported the delinquency to the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, who in turn carried the whole matter to the Pope.

In July 1927, Archbishop Le Hunsec was called back to Rome. Pius XI demanded the immediate departure of Father Le Floch on the ground that he was an adherent of the Action Française. Although Le Hunsec tried to make a distinction between a royalist and an adherent of the Action Française, the Pope was adamant. He did, however, consent to the Superior General's request that the Superior of the French Seminary be permitted to resign. Father Le Floch complied at once and left Rome for Paris three
days later. His brilliant twenty-three year term as seminary rector thus ended with tragic abruptness. The remaining twenty-three years of his long life—he died at the age of eighty-eight—were spent in retirement at the Novitiate of Orly and later in a chateau in southern France.

In spite of the unfortunate controversy, Father Le Floch's former students continued to hold him in high esteem. At the golden jubilee of his ordination in 1937, they composed a three hundred and fifty page book in his honor. Two years later, after the election of Pius XII, he travelled to Rome and was accorded a long and cordial audience by the present Pope. Nothing more is heard of him until 1950, when death closed his brilliant but sad career. One ventures to hope that some future historian will succeed in unveiling much that still remains obscure in this melancholy affair.

3. The Expansion of Social Works: Father Daniel Brottier

cf. p. 242

In Chapter X we have seen how development of many Spiritan social works was brought to a standstill by various persecutions. In France, the existing institutions had been able to maintain themselves under a "secularized" personnel. Outside France this type of activity had been engaged in to some extent in the United States and after World War I in Poland, but only on a small scale. As soon as conditions in France permitted its redevelopment there, Providence offered the Congregation an opportunity to engage in social endeavors to a degree that surpassed anything that had been done in the nineteenth century.

B. G. 37, 22

In 1923 Cardinal Dubois, the Archbishop of Paris, asked the Spiritans to take over the Orphans' Institute of Auteuil. Investigation showed, however, that the proffered work was not too attractive: the number of boys was relatively small, the buildings were dilapidated, the staff was underpaid and dissatisfied, and the deficit mounted with the years. Despite this bleak outlook, it was a work such as both Poullart des Places and Francis Libermann would have loved. The Motherhouse accepted.

Brot. 115 ff.

Auteuil Institute had its birth in 1865 when Father Roussel, a priest of the Archdiocese, saw an urchin groping through a heap of garbage on a cold winter day. Asked what he was looking for, the boy replied: "Something to eat." The priest promptly took him to the rectory, gave him a warm meal, and lodged him for the
night. Eight days later he had six similar cases on his hands and the Institute was under way. Although Father Roussel had the satisfaction of seeing the work prosper during the thirty years he remained in charge of it, his successors helplessly watched its fortunes decline in the years of economic crisis immediately following World War I. By the time Cardinal Dubois appealed to the Spiritans, things had come to a desperate pass.

B. G. 37, 23

It was not the first time that the Congregation had been asked to take charge of the work. In 1876 Father Roussel himself had wanted to give it to the Spiritans. At that time the Institute was very prosperous and free from any debts and Father Schwindenhammer, then Superior General, favored acceptance of the proposal which "harmonized perfectly with the purpose of the Congregation." For some unknown reason, however, the affair came to nought when it was close to being accomplished. Forty-seven years later, when the Cardinal renewed the founder's request, the proposal was accepted.

Brot. 115

"Make sure that you choose capable personnel, for we must succeed," was the warning given by the Cardinal, when Le Roy notified him of his decision to accept. His words must have been taken to heart, for the man appointed to direct the new venture was Father Daniel Brottier. As subsequent events were to show, no better choice could have been made.

Brot. 11 ff.

Daniel Brottier was born in 1876 at Ferte-Saint-Cyr. Ordained a priest in 1899, he entered the Congregation three years later.

Brot. 23 ff.

In 1903 he was sent to Senegal as a missionary and it was not long before the young man began to reveal his organizational talents in the various tasks that were assigned to him in Dakar.

Brot. 41 ff.

In 1911, when Bishop Jalabert, the Ordinary of the place, needed a man capable of realizing an ambitious plan, no one was surprised that his choice fell on Father Brottier. The project in question was called the "African Memorial."

The originator of the plan had been Mr. Merlaud-Ponty, the Governor-General of French West Africa. One day, the Bishop spoke to Merlaud-Ponty about the need of a Cathedral in that fast growing city, and the Governor told him quite frankly that no help could be expected from the Government. On the other hand, he said, the idea of a Memorial honoring all Frenchmen whose bodies lie buried in unnamed graves throughout Africa would certainly have a strong national appeal. He himself would be
willing to put his own name at the head of a list of supporters. The idea had possibilities. To exploit them, the Bishop placed Father Brottier in charge of an African Memorial Fund. Under the priest's enthusiastic direction, the Fund was making rapid progress when the First World War broke out and all plans had to be shelved until the armistice.

The war gave a new turn to Father Brottier's career. He immediately enlisted as a military chaplain and before long acquired an almost legendary fame. Without the slightest regard for personal comfort or danger, he spent all his time where his help was most needed—in the front lines. Officers and soldiers alike admired and listened to the Padre whose heroic deeds earned him many citations and decorations.

When the fighting ended, Father Brottier set about to preserve the national unity which is so often shattered in France by political divisions. The best way, he decided, was to unite his former comrades-in-arms into one central organization: a League of War Veterans. To assure the necessary funds and support, he did not hesitate to pay a visit to Clemenceau, the "Tiger," who at that time was Prime Minister of France. Despite his bitter anticlericalism, the "Tiger" gave not only his wholehearted support but a personal gift of a hundred thousand francs as well. Encouraged in this way, Brottier launched his League of War Veterans under the slogan, "United as at the Front." The organization soon became a powerful factor in post-war France, but once it was established, the priest modestly withdrew and returned to his job as organizer of the African Memorial Fund.

Despite the fact that he became Director of the Orphans' Institute of Auteuil in 1923, Brottier continued to devote himself to the raising of funds for the Memorial Cathedral. The foundation stone had been laid in 1922, but fourteen more years were to pass before the magnificent structure was finished and solemnly consecrated by Cardinal Verdier as the official Legate of Pope Pius XI. Built on the site of Dakar's old cemetery, where Libermann's first spiritual sons were buried, the massive monument dominates the harbor and stands as a silent witness to the Divine Majesty which is adored within its sacred walls.

But the man whose untiring zeal gave Africa this glorious monument never saw it himself. With characteristic energy, he plunged into the problems of Auteuil and drew up a four-point program
Father Daniel Brottier, C.S.Sp., Founder of the French League of War Veterans, Organizer of the African Memorial, and Father of the Orphans of France, whose process of beatification has been begun.

The Auteuil Institute as it was when Father Brottier took over in 1923.
A view of the campus of the Auteuil Institute at the death of Father Brottier in 1936.

The Saint Philip Annex of Meudon, near Versailles, one of twenty branches of the Auteuil Institute.
for the work as soon as he was appointed its Director. Like a modern Don Bosco, he pledged himself:

1. To save as many homeless boys as possible by expanding the work at Auteuil itself.

2. To build a beautiful chapel in honor of Saint Therese of Lisieux, whom he had chosen as the heavenly Patron of the Institute, and to make this chapel a shrine for the Catholic population of Paris.

3. To generate interest in his work among the pilgrims flocking to the shrine and thus secure a necessary income for the realization of his plans.

4. To establish branches of the Institute in the country and thus save not just a few hundred boys but thousands of them. “The Orphans of Paris” were to become “the Orphans of France.”

The Chapel was ready at the end of 1925 and immediately became the shrine its creator had envisioned. Every year on Saint Therese’s feast day, fifty thousand Parisians flock to this place of pilgrimage.

Once the shrine was built, the number of boys began to increase rapidly. Soon Auteuil was as well known throughout France as Boys Town is in the States. Homeless youngsters began to arrive from all over the country. Although millions were spent on more dormitories, more workshops and other facilities, it was impossible to accommodate all deserving applicants. Up to two thousand times a year the poor Director had to repeat his heartrending: “No, we have no room” to teen-age boys who hopefully looked to him as their last refuge. Intensifying his efforts to create space, Father Brottier began to open annexes throughout France. In five years’ time no less than fourteen of them were founded. Only an insider can guess the amount of worry and care such an expansion added to the burden carried by this sickly priest who literally did not pass a single day of his life without enduring violent headaches. Even the tremendous expansion of facilities he had achieved did not suffice to take care of all applicants.

Looking around for new ideas, Brottier was struck by the depopulation of rural France. Everywhere villagers were flocking to
the big cities, while the farmers cast about anxiously for enough hands to gather in the harvest. Why not kill two birds with one stone, the priest thought, by placing suitable boys with farmers who would teach them to love the land and at the same time give them an opportunity to acquire their own homes in the country? In 1933 Father Brottier started the French equivalent of a Catholic Rural Life Conference. Within two years, close to five hundred boys had been placed with decent Catholic families and saved from the physical and moral miseries of city slums. Under the careful supervision of Brottier and other Spiritans, these youngsters were soon on their way to a happy Christian life in the peaceful French countryside.

Despite all his efforts, however, there were still far too many for whom the priest could find no place. Unwilling to abandon them entirely, he expanded the existing First Communion Program. Four times a year a large group of boys from twelve to twenty years of age who could not be admitted permanently were allowed to come to Auteuil for a period of ten weeks. The time was used to give them an intensive preparation for their first Holy Communion. Father Brottier exercised such a marvellous influence over these boys that many of them returned totally transformed to their squalid surroundings in the city slums and became excellent promoters of a living Catholic Faith.

When the saintly priest died in 1936, his Institute and its annexes sheltered fourteen hundred homeless boys. “The Orphans of Paris” had really become “the Orphans of France.” Since then, the work has continued to prosper and grow. It now extends over a network of twenty establishments, directed by nearly sixty Spiritans and it takes care of close to four thousand boys. In this way the Congregation has once more emphasized the social role which Father Libermann had assigned to it on the European scene.

As a final note to this section on Auteuil, we are happy to report that in 1956, after the preliminary hearings in the Archdiocese of Paris, the process of Father Brottier’s beatification was introduced in Rome.

4. Nazi Persecution in Germany

In Chapter IX the reader has seen how the German Province was restored when the Holy Ghost Fathers finally managed to
convince the Government that they were not affiliated with the Jesuits. Under Father Acker’s capable direction, new houses in addition to the Abbey of Knechtssteden were founded at Sabern (1900), at Neuscheuren (1904), at Broich (1908) and at Heimbach (1914). The German Government continued to favor him. It even invited him in 1913 to the imperial reception in honor of the Kaiser’s jubilee, a celebration to which only the highest ranking personalities in the Reich were welcomed.

After the First World War, when Alsace was returned to France and the houses in this area became part of the French Province, it became necessary to restore the losses by new foundations in other parts of Germany. Meanwhile the Province had a new Superior, Father Leo Klerlein, the future Vicar Apostolic of Kroonstad in South Africa. He founded new junior seminaries in Donau-Eschingen, near the Swiss frontier, (1921) and in Speyer, the ancient Capital of the Holy Roman Empire (1922). In 1924 he was succeeded by Father John Hoffmann, who added a Provincialate in Cologne (1925) and another junior seminary in Menden, Westphalia (1927). In 1936 the Province had reached a total membership of 471 professed and 455 aspirants. No one then foresaw to what extent Father Hoffmann and his hard-working conferees were going to feel the full fury of religious persecution by the Nazis.

Later that same year, serious trouble began when Father Hoffmann and Father Pohlen, the Provincial Procurator, were sent to jail on unproved charges of having violated the complex foreign currency regulations of the Reich. Their imprisonment was followed by governmental attempts to uncover moral scandals in the junior seminaries of the Congregation. Nazi police officers subjected the boys to a brutal series of interrogations, but no trace of the alleged offenses could be discovered. Once these trials were concluded, all seminarians and Brothers were forced to enroll in labor-camps, there to be indoctrinated in Nazi philosophy. It is a flattering testimony to the solidity of the scientific and religious training previously received by these young men that

4On one of the stairway walls at Broich there remains to this day a flamboyantly Gothic-lettered sign which the Nazis had painted there in the days of their pride: “The priests and their religion will never save Germany. Only the Fuehrer and his legions can do that.” It has been preserved so that future generations of seminarians may ponder its tragic message as they pass by on their daily rounds.
The Spiritans

not a single one of them embraced Nazism. On the contrary, political instructors in the labor-camps found their searching questions so troublesome that they became reluctant to give any more lectures to such a critical audience and finally dispensed them from attendance.

Now that the seminaries were almost empty, the Nazis began to "requisition" them for other purposes. Matters went so far that at the beginning of the Second World War not a single house remained at the free disposal of the Congregation. Then, toward the end of hostilities, the Government decided to sell the Abbey of Knechtsteden for the benefit of the National Food Board. Thanks, however, to the clever maneuvering of sympathetic officials, the sale was delayed long enough to allow the arrival of Allied troops in Germany to prevent the execution of this plan. Through the nucleus thus preserved, Father Hoffmann manfully undertook the second restoration of his Province when hostilities ended.

5. The Second World War, 1939-1945

In Europe. When Hitler's armies overran most of Europe, the Superior General stayed at the Motherhouse in Paris. Because it was almost impossible for him to exercise his functions under these conditions, he delegated most of his powers to the Superiors of the different Provinces throughout the Congregation. At the same time he tried to keep in contact with the outside world by means of a secretary who resided at Vichy in the unoccupied part of France. The darkest day for the Motherhouse itself came in 1944 when the German authorities discovered that American airmen were being sheltered in an annex of the Community. Although the airmen were warned in time and luckily escaped arrest, they left too many tell-tale signs of their passage. As a result, Father Emile Muller, the Superior of the house, along with Brothers Rufus and Gerard, suffered arrest and imprisonment. Father Muller died later that same year in the notorious concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen.

Throughout Europe the war struck heavy blows at the Congregation. In France and Germany 569 members of military age were pressed into service. Seventy-five of them were killed in action. Many seminaries and other houses in Germany, the

The African Memorial Cathedral of Dakar, Senegal.
Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, and France were heavily damaged or destroyed. Worst of all, recruitment was drastically curtailed: the number of aspirants sank from the pre-war total of 2,572 to 1,128 in 1945. Although the repercussion of this decrease on the works of the Congregation did not make itself immediately felt, it was bound to create personnel problems between 1950 and 1960.

In the Missions. In the French colonies the work of evangelization was seriously hampered by the mobilization of many missionaries. Elsewhere Spiritans had to replace interned German and Italian priests as far away as Ethiopia. South Africa and Nigeria arrested the German Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers stationed in their territories. While the men in South Africa received permission to stay under surveillance in their missions and carry on their work in restricted fashion, those in Nigeria were less fortunate. The English authorities shipped them off to internment camps in Jamaica. Despite the efforts of the Apostolic Delegate to the United States and of Father Collins, then Superior of the United States Province, they had to stay behind barbed wire till 1947. In that year nineteen of them were permitted to enter the United States, and the other ten were sent home to Germany.

6. Development of the Congregation and Its Missions

Congregation. Prior to the Second World War, the Spiritans were expanding rapidly. Statistics show that the total number rose from 2,000 members and 1,876 aspirants in 1926 to 3,504 members and 2,572 aspirants in 1939. The war, of course, adversely affected recruitment. It caused a sudden fifty-six percent drop in the number of aspirants. However, strenuous efforts in the post war period remedied the picture to such an extent that at the end of Archbishop Le Hunsec’s generalate (1950) the total figure of aspirants had again risen to well above the two thousand mark. The number of members stood at 4,289.

Little if anything was done during this generalate toward starting new provinces. Its characteristic virtue lies in consolidation rather than extension and, in this respect the period follows a pattern that can be discerned throughout the last century of the Congregation’s history: expansion is always followed by consolidation. As the founding of new provinces under Father Schwinden-
hammer was followed by their development under Father Emonet, so also the trend toward extension under Archbishop Le Roy was succeeded by a period of consolidation under Archbishop Le Hunsec. Between 1920 and 1950, most of the existing provinces in Europe and America were able to organize themselves thoroughly by founding within their borders such houses as were necessary for self-sufficiency, viz., junior and senior seminaries and novitiates. In this way they became independent of further support from the Province of France and nearly everywhere this autonomy resulted in solid and sometimes spectacular growth.

_D. G. C. 23 ff._ Missions. With respect to the Congregation, the most striking feature of this period was that ecclesiastical and religious authority came to be vested in distinct persons. Hitherto it had been the established practice to combine both authorities in the person of the Vicar or Prefect Apostolic, because in this way there was no possibility of conflict between the two powers. However, the Sacred Congregation of Religious vigorously counseled their separation. From 1938 on, the new system was gradually introduced in most Spiritan missions. The Ecclesiastical Superior (Bishop, Vicar, or Prefect Apostolic) was appointed as usual by the Holy See, but the Congregation named separate Religious Superiors for the various regions. Here and there one finds evidence of some dissatisfaction on the part of the ecclesiastical superiors with respect to the new arrangement, but in general they accepted the innovation without difficulty. In reality, this division of authority is a sign that the missions are gradually approaching a level of organization that differs little from the regular dioceses of the Church in non-mission lands for, according to the accepted pattern, a resident bishop should not be both the Ordinary of a diocese and the Religious Superior of an order or congregation.

Outside Africa, most Spiritan missions are in Catholic countries which lack sufficient strength to be ecclesiastically self-sufficient. Even in these, however, as we will see more fully in Part II, significant progress has been made in training a local clergy and in forming an elite of Catholic laymen. Reports from the old French Colonies, as well as from Trinidad, Mauritius, and Haiti clearly portray the improvements that have taken place.

In Africa itself, the missionary work progressed with giant strides. The Holy Ghost missions saw their number of Catholics
increase from 385,563 in 1925 to 2,624,000 in 1950. Old missions were divided and subdivided and divided again to keep up with the development. In the process, sections of these missions were passed on to other orders and congregations. Despite this, the Holy Ghost Fathers still retain a territory of about two million square miles. This is more than half the size of Europe or two thirds the size of the United States, and it contains a population of about twenty-five million.

One of the most significant events of this period occurred in May, 1939, when the Holy See named the first two native prelates of modern times in Negro Africa: Msgr. Joseph Faye, C.S.Sp., Prefect Apostolic of Ziguinchor in Senegal, and Bishop Joseph Kiwanuka, W.F., Vicar Apostolic of Masaka, Uganda. It was the first sign that Libermann’s idea of an African Church ruled by an African clergy was approaching realization.

By 1941 the Church in Angola had progressed sufficiently to warrant the suppression of the old Spiritan missions in that region. The Holy See created in their stead the Archdiocese of Loanda and the Dioceses of Nova Lisboa and Silva Porto. Because of Portugal’s dislike of the Propaganda, these circumscriptions were made independent of this Sacred Congregation and assigned to the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. Thus they were no longer missions in the strictly canonical and technical sense of the term, although in all other respects they were similar to the rest of Negro Africa. The new dioceses were no longer officially entrusted to the Spiritans, although the Archbishop and one of the bishops were Holy Ghost Fathers and the Congregation still maintained its numerous personnel in these regions since hardly any other priests were available for them. At the same time the Holy See named another Spiritan Bishop of Cape Verde and asked the Congregation to extend its activities to these islands.

There is, of course, considerably more to be said about the missionary activities of the Congregation than the preceding pages would indicate. In the second part of this book we shall endeavor to present a more complete picture.

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In 1949, toward the end of his second term as Superior General, Archbishop Le Hunsec notified his confreres that he would not be available for another period of twelve years and asked the Con-
B. G. 44, 56 ff. aggregation to elect a successor. After the General Chapter of 1950 he remained in residence at the Motherhouse, where he died on Christmas day 1954.