CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SOUTH AMERICA

1. FRENCH GUIANA

In the Spiritan history of French Guiana, three periods may be distinguished: from 1775 to 1817, covering the time from the acceptance of the missions to the end of the Anglo-Portuguese occupation; from 1817 to 1893, spanning the years between the return of the colony to France and the expulsion of the Holy Ghost Fathers; and the period beginning in 1925 when the Spiritans returned to Guiana.

a. **First Period: 1775-1817**

In 1768, when the suppression of the Jesuits had begun to decimate the country's clergy, the French Government asked the Spiritans to replace these priests who had labored there so successfully for more than a hundred years. At first, the Congregation declined, for it was unable to supply at once all the priests that were needed for this mission. However, the situation in Guiana grew so desperate that the Government repeated its request even more strongly in 1770. This time the Holy Ghost Fathers considered the proposal more seriously, for they were anxious to do something to relieve the religious crisis in Guiana. It had become all the more serious because death continued to strike at the diminishing ranks of the surviving ex-Jesuits in the colony.

At first, negotiations with the Government went very slowly. Guiana was the first large territory offered to the Congregation and Father Becquet, then Superior General, did not want to continue the old system of simply placing priests at the disposal of the ecclesiastical authorities. Rather, he was just then envisioning a reorganization of the Spiritans themselves. He was planning to expand the Congregation by admitting to it not only members who would engage in teaching, but also others who would join it for the specific purpose of doing missionary work. This broadening of its scope meant that new facilities had to be created in France to take care of retired missionaries. The matter of expenses inherent in this reorganization delayed his acceptance of Guiana. Originally, the Government was unwilling to make any allocation...
of special funds for the purpose. It was not until 1775 that, thanks to the support of Father Peter de la Rue, Abbot of Isle-Dieu and Chaplain General of the Colonies, the King finally agreed to make an annual grant of ten thousand livres. The Spiritans then assumed charge of Guiana.

In the next seven years Father Becquet sent twenty-two priests to the colony, although not all of them were members of the Congregation. Because of the desparate situation there, Father Becquet had to send priests as quickly as possible and therefore appealed to several diocesan seminaries for help. As a result, the clergy of Guiana during this period consisted of priests who had no special relation with the Spiritans, others who were trained by them in Holy Ghost Seminary, and still others who were actual members of the Congregation. The exact number of members is difficult to ascertain, however, because extant records are regrettably incomplete. All we know is that the following Spiritans had entered the Society as candidates for the missions and were sent to Guiana: Fathers Seveno, Lanoe, Legrand, Duhamel, Moranville, Hérard and Hochard. To these we may add Fathers de Glicourt and Bertout, although, as we related in Chapter II, they never reached their destination. Until the outbreak of the French Revolution, these Holy Ghost Fathers labored among the Indians and the slaves, in the regular parishes and as teachers in the College of Cayenne.

The Revolution. When the French Revolution reached Guiana in 1791, the Prefect Apostolic, Father Jacquemin, openly apostatized and quickly imposed the constitutional oath on the rest of the clergy. At first, two Spiritans, Hérard and Moranville, conformed and followed the Prefect's orders. Hérard lived in an isolated country parish and found it impossible to consult his Superior. He acceded to the tearful pleas of his parishioners, who feared that the priest's refusal to swear would leave them without a pastor. Consequently, he took the oath but eliminated from the formula everything that was against the Catholic Church. In spite of the modification, the Government now considered him a "constitutional" priest. When Father Legrand, his Superior, and his fellow Spiritans took him to task for the apparent capitulation, he explained the reservation he had made and they allowed

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1He was a secular priest without any special relation to the Spiritans. He later became the constitutional (schismatic) bishop of Guiana. Before his death in 1819, however, he made his submission to the Church.
him to exercise his priestly functions without retracting his oath until it was necessary to take a firm stand.

Father Moranvillé’s conforming is harder to excuse, for he did not live in isolation. His biographer may be correct in attributing it to an unworldly simplicity that caused him to regard the whole procedure as a mere recognition of the new revolutionary government. As a matter of fact, the objectionable part of the oath was generally regarded as inapplicable to Guiana at that time. At its inception, the Revolution was not antireligious in Guiana. It opened with a public Mass for God’s blessings on the new Government (the Revolutionary Assembly had actually wanted a solemn Mass followed by procession of the Blessed Sacrament and a Te Deum) and elected Father Moranvillé President of the Colonial Parliament, enjoining him under the threat of penalty not to refuse his election. For these reasons it is quite possible that the priest did not see the implications of his action. Subsequently, when he realized that his loyalty to the Church was at stake, he withdrew his oath with all possible publicity. The infuriated Governor ordered him thrown into jail, but Moranvillé escaped aboard a Dutch vessel with a French man-of-war in hot pursuit. The Frenchmen caught up with him at Demerara, but it was too late. The British authorities there refused to extradite him and his would-be captors were foiled.

In 1793, the Revolutionary Government decided that the hasty and confused oath of '91 had been invalid. It imposed a new oath, but Father Legrand and his confrères flatly refused to take it. They preferred to be banished from Guiana and take refuge in the British and Danish West Indian Islands. Shortly thereafter, Father Moranvillé followed them into exile. Three of these refugees, Father Duhamel, Héard, and Moranvillé, ultimately reached the United States (cf. Ch. III) and one of them, Father Hochard, quietly returned to Guiana with the powers of a Vice-Prefect Apostolic. There, despite the threats of a hostile Government, he managed to keep a tenuous foothold and carry on his ministry.

Meanwhile, the Paris Government had begun to deport to Cayenne priests who had refused to take the oath in France. More than three hundred of these confessors of the Faith arrived in Guiana in 1798 and 1799. Most of them died of starvation and disease within a few months of their arrival.
Cl. C. 54 ff.  

Father Legrand Returns. After Napoleon became Emperor of France, the situation in Guiana began to improve a little—enough to enable Father Legrand, its legitimate Ecclesiastical Superior, to return in 1807. In Paris, meanwhile, Father Bertout was busy with the restoration of the Holy Ghost Congregation. Legrand got in touch with him and received a promise of reinforcements. However, before they could be sent, the Emperor quarreled with the Holy See and brutally suppressed the Holy Ghost Fathers again. Communications with France were now cut off, for in 1809 Anglo-Portuguese troops occupied the colony. For ten long years, therefore, Father Legrand singlehandedly took care of the spiritual needs of the entire colony. This sorry situation obtained until 1817 when Guiana was returned to the control of France. Father Bertout at once sent three fine priests to the aid of the lonely survivor of pre-revolutionary times. Consoled by this sign of better times but broken in health by ten years of incessant labor, Father Legrand died a few months after the new missionaries arrived.

b. SECOND PERIOD: 1817-1893

Cl. C. 56 ff.  

Father Guiller. After three years of wrangling, the government finally recognized the canonical appointment of Father Paul Guiller, one of the priests sent by the Holy Ghost Seminary to succeed Father Legrand. Though somewhat inclined to be too authoritarian, the new Prefect was a man of excellent qualities. In the twenty-seven years he remained as spiritual leader of the Church in Guiana he was able to repair much of the damage inflicted by the Revolution. He reopened the Indian missions, founded new parishes, and in 1836 took charge of preparing the Negro slaves for their impending freedom.² The most conspicuous successes of his regime were in the field of education. The Sisters of Cluny opened a school at Cayenne and a famous settlement in Mana.³ The

²Slavery had been abolished during the Revolution but it was reestablished in 1817.
³In 1828 Mother Javouhey and her intrepid Sisters took over the Mana region when a governmental effort to colonize the area with white settlers had failed. After another useless attempt to develop the region with white colonists, the Sisters bought Negro slaves and began to prepare them for life as free men. By 1838 the number of these slaves ran as high as five hundred per year. Mother Javouhey’s Sisters gave them religious instruction in addition to teaching them the rudiments of agriculture and trades. Once they were ready for the responsibilities of freedom, the slaves received a piece of land in the settlement and were solemnly declared free men. Full civilian control over the Mana concession remained in the hands of the Sisters until 1847 when the area again returned to the administrative control of the government.
Brothers of Christian Doctrine followed suit with academic institutions for boys.

**Monsignor Dossat.** After the death of Father Guiller in 1847, Father John Dossat became Prefect Apostolic. He was not a Spiritan in any sense of the term, but, like his predecessor, he was fully in favor of the incorporation of the colonial clergy into the Congregation. The entrance of Father Libermann and his confreres into the society did not diminish his zeal in this direction. It served only to intensify his desire. He went so far as to offer his resignation if anyone felt that such a step would facilitate negotiations. However, Father Libermann did not deem it advisable to incorporate the whole clergy. In fact, for the greater good of the mission he even had to dissuade the pious prelate from becoming a Spiritan himself. Despite this disappointment, the Prefect remained closely attached to the Holy Ghost Fathers and did everything he could to assist in the execution of their plan to have the Guiana mission reserved for members of the Congregation. In 1851, one year before Libermann’s death, the first of the new Spiritans arrived. In this way, after an interruption of thirty-three years, the Spiritans returned to work in one of their oldest missions.

**Opposition.** The return of the Holy Ghost Fathers or “Libermannists,” as they were now called by the secular clergy, did not by any means meet with unanimous approval. A plot was formed to have them expelled from the colony. They were accused of being too much in favor of the Negroes, of freedom, and of small property holders. The clergy argued that they were too liberal in admitting Negroes to Holy Communion and marriage. When Monsignor Dossat stepped forward to defend them, he himself became the butt of local opposition. On the pretext of his administrative ineptness, the government tried in vain to have him removed from office. During the course of the years that followed, these attacks

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4In 1863 the Holy See made him a Prothonotary Apostolic.
5The Spiritans wanted to place the newly created colonial dioceses of Guadeloupe, Martinique and Reunion into the hands of the secular clergy and reserve for themselves the more difficult missions which had only Prefects Apostolic.
6We abstract here from the short sojourn of Father Hardy in Guiana during the years 1834-1835.
continued unabated but both the Prefect and the Spiritans stood their ground.

B. G. 32, 437 ff. works. Under the capable direction of saintly Father Joseph Guyodo, the Holy Ghost Fathers went to work in the Indian missions, the leprosaria, and the centers for liberated slaves. In Tonnegrande they built a church and profoundly changed the lot of the Negro population by tending to their spiritual welfare and by improving them economically through a laborer’s cooperative which they organized. At Mondelice, Father Guyodo acquired a fifteen hundred acre sugar-cane plantation in 1862. He envisioned it as a giant fabric of social works: agricultural schools, orphanages, a juvenile detention home and an asylum for the aged. A large part of this plan was executed immediately and it met with prompt success. Before long, however, owners of large plantations complained about unfair labor practices (the priest offered better working conditions than they did), and all kinds of rumors began to be circulated about the social center. Although these tales had no effect on Father Guyodo, a labor shortage did result and, when political pressure pushed the institution close to the brink of insolvency, the whole project had to be abandoned.

D. C. 89 ff. A Spiritan Prefect Appointed. In 1869, after the death of Monsignor Dossat, the Propaganda insisted that a Holy Ghost Father be proposed as his successor. The choice fell on Father Oliver Hervé, a priest who had rendered excellent service as Vicar General in Reunion. In 1860 he had given up that post to join the Congregation. After his profession he was appointed professor of theology at Holy Ghost Seminary, where he impressed everyone by his spirit of humility and obedience. Everything seemed to indicate that he would be the right man for Prefect and Religious Superior. Surprisingly, subsequent events did not verify this prognosis. As soon as he arrived in the colony there was confusion worse confounded. In no time at all had every religious community, including his own, up in arms against his procedures. Before very long he was in direct conflict with the Superior General, simply because Father Schwindenhammer had made some observations regarding his administration of the district. Father Hervé immediately dispatched a letter to Rome and bluntly told the Propaganda: “I want to know whether or not I depend on the Superior
of the Congregation in my administration. If the answer is yes, please state it clearly; if it is no, then tell him to let me alone.”

Unwilling to settle the theoretical issue of the double authority vested in Father Hervé as both Prefect and Religious Superior, the Propaganda counselled practical agreement and forbearance. Such a *modus vivendi*, however, was beyond the diplomatic abilities of the Prefect and as time went on, Rome began to regret his appointment. At this juncture, Father Hervé took steps to be raised to the episcopacy so that he might have “more elbow room.” Shortly after, when he returned to Europe in 1871 to settle some affairs for his mission, he struck everyone as a man who was mentally deranged. Oddly enough, there was no difficulty in getting him to resign and come back to Paris. Then, more strangely still, his psychological disturbance vanished completely as soon as he had relinquished his position of authority. Once again he became the humble and obedient religious that he was before and he spent the remainder of his active life as professor of theology at Holy Ghost Seminary.

D. C. 92 f. *Monsignor Ambrose Emonet*. After an interval of one year, during which Father Guyodo acted as Pro-Prefect, Father Ambrose Emonet was named Prefect Apostolic. He had gone to Guiana as official Visitor to repair the damage done by his predecessor and in a short time he became so popular that the secular clergy petitioned Rome to have him raised to the episcopal dignity. The Propaganda was quite willing to accede to this request, but political reasons prevented its execution.

B. G. 32, 440 ff. During the nine years he spent in Guiana prior to becoming Superior General of the Congregation, Monsignor Emonet saw his mission enter into a period of bloom such as it had never experienced before. When the Jesuits had to give up serving the notorious prisons of Cayenne and the deportation centers in Guiana, he was able to replace them with his own confreres. Other priests looked after the spiritual interests of thousands of laborers in the gold mines. Mission work was undertaken among the independent Negroes and the Indians who dwelt in the almost inaccessible regions of the interior. And even though the Brazilian government objected to the missionary invasion of these politically contested areas, the Spiritans continued their widespread work among jungle tribes and ranged as far inland as Para, Brazil.
The last few years of Emonet's administration were saddened by a revival of anticlericalism in government circles. Members of religious congregations were, as usual, the first to be attacked. In 1881, just before his departure for Europe, Monsignor Emonet had to watch the secularization of his College, which had been founded originally by the Jesuits and was now operated by the Spiritans and the Brothers of Christian Doctrine.

*D. C. 94 f.; B. G. 32, 443 f.*

*Father Joseph Guyodo.* When Monsignor Emonet resigned in 1881, the universally respected and popular Father Guyodo took over the reins of administration. However, four years were to pass before the Government would permit him to be appointed Ecclesiastical Superior of Guiana. The saintly priest, who had already spent thirty years in this mission, did not stand by idle while the authorities systematically proceeded with their program of secularizing the schools. From the standpoint of economics, their action was sheer folly, for in the secular schools the cost per student was twenty-four times as high as in the church-sponsored schools, and the educational results were notably poorer. But economics and the interest of the tax-payer never make much impression on men who are bent on driving the Church back to the sacristy.

As time went on, Father Guyodo effectively counteracted the government scheme by opening parochial schools which were so successful that the secularized schools with their costly facilities and expensive staffs remained almost empty. Obviously, this was a great setback for the anti-clerical Governor and his associates. They now began to regard the Spiritans as a dangerous political threat. In addition to their parochial work, these tireless campaigners for Christ had created a network of social and educational establishments all over the country. Their influence on the people was so great that Governor Grodet feared a political upheaval at election-time. For that reason he did his very best to make life intolerable for them, hoping thereby to force their departure from the country. But the Holy Ghost Fathers held their ground, despite the fact that their activity was hampered by all sorts of ridiculous restrictions.

*cf. pp. 226 f.*

The final blow fell in August, 1891. As of that month, all the pupils of the secularized Tonnegrande school were suddenly withdrawn and transferred to a parochial school. This move so
infuriated the Governor that he arbitrarily dismissed the Prefect Apostolic and had him shipped back to France. Then, fearing a public protest against the exile of this beloved priest, he called out the army and the police force to maintain order when the hour of departure neared. As time went on, the other Spiritans suffered the same fate as Father Guyodo and one by one they too had to leave the country. Governor Grodet’s victory did not last very long, however. One year after he had exiled the Prefect, he himself was deposed and had to leave the colony in disgrace. The armed forces were again called out, this time not to prevent demonstrations in his favor, but to protect him against the furious mobs who lined the way shouting derisively at the little cesaropapist.

c. Third Period: 1893 to the present

Although the Spiritans had been expelled from Guiana, they remained officially in charge of the spiritual welfare of the colony and tried to provide it a longe with secular priests trained in Holy Ghost Seminary. Their departure had left too many vacancies, however, and a number of parishes remained without a pastor. Even Cayenne, the capital itself, had only one priest to aid the Prefect. Moreover, as the older secular priests died or went into retirement, the progressive persecution in France affected Holy Ghost Seminary to such an extent that replacements became more and more infrequent. Churches fell into ruins, missions in the interior were abandoned, and apostolic activity had to be restricted to basic services in the larger towns.

Alarmed by the situation, the Propaganda finally enjoined the Congregation to use its own personnel for the service of the old French colonies. As far as Guiana was concerned, this order was complied with in 1924 after Monsignor Eugene Fabre resigned as Prefect Apostolic there.7

The Return of the Spiritans. In 1925 the Holy See named a Holy Ghost Father, Monsignor Leo Delaval, Prefect of Guiana. On his arrival he found that his entire clergy consisted of eleven

7He stayed on in the colony and worked till his death in 1935 as a simple priest.
priests, of whom six were exhausted by age or disease. Thus he had a net complement of five priests capable of aiding him in the gigantic task of reconstruction. Moreover, of all the flourishing Catholic schools that had once existed, only two were still functioning. The only encouraging feature of it all was the enthusiastic welcome with which the people greeted the return of the Spiritans. They had not forgotten the marvellous work these priests had done before they were so ignominiously expelled from the country. Father Guyodo in particular was held in reverent memory.

Although handicapped by personnel shortages elsewhere, the Congregation zealously endeavored to repair in Guiana the ravages of many years of forced neglect. Little by little its priests took over most of the abandoned parishes and soon the fresh breeze of a revitalized Christianity was blowing across the land.

The separation of Church and State gave the Spiritans an opportunity to enforce the Church laws regarding Christian burial and baptismal sponsors. This decision gave rise to a vain attempt on the part of the local powers to expel the Congregation. The majority of politicians in the local legislative body did not fulfill the necessary conditions for acting as sponsors at baptism and those who presented themselves were promptly told so. Deeply chagrined, they voted the expulsion of the offending Spiritans. In this, they appear to have forgotten that their entire control over the clergy disappeared when Church and State had separated. Local laws now lacked the power to exile Holy Ghost Fathers. Their presence in the colony was based on a most solemn metropolitan decree of 1826, and this decree could be changed only by an equally solemn decision of the French Parliament. It would have been foolish to think that this august body would attach any weight to a colonial politician's ruffled feelings about not being able to act as Godfather at a baptism. Consequently, the Spiritans blithely stayed on.

**Vicariate.** After Monsignor Delaval died in 1931, fourteen months of negotiation finally brought about the result for which Father Libermann had striven some eighty years earlier: the Prefec-

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8In 1900, seven years after the Holy Ghost Fathers had left, the inhabitants of Cayenne insisted that the mortal remains of their apostle be transferred from Africa (where he had gone to end his days) to an honorable burial-place in their city.
ture was raised to the rank of a Vicariate. In 1933, Father Peter Gourtay became its first Vicar Apostolic, the first "Gangster Bishop," as the newspapers called him with an obvious reference to Guiana's infamous convict prisons and detention centers. However, the days of its inhuman penal institutions were numbered, for in 1934 Father Adolph Naegel, a Spiritan who had been prison chaplain for ten years and knew all the sordid details, became a member of a government commission charged with evaluating the system. He had the great satisfaction of seeing the government concur with his blistering condemnation of a penal program that never reformed a prisoner but always poisoned the atmosphere of the colony. As a result, France's most dangerous criminals were no longer deported to Cayenne. Instead, the prisoners' ship began to repatriate those who had been incarcerated in Guiana.

Diocese. The steady development of the Vicariate was decelerated by the Second World War, but it took on an even faster pace when peace returned. In Cayenne, everything is patterned
now along modern parochial lines, with a variety of youth organizations, pious associations, study circles, and other activities. On Sundays, the thirteen hundred seats of the great cathedral can no longer accommodate the crowds. Even now, however, it is still nerve-wracking work to deal with this varied population to which all the races of the earth have contributed their share. Then too, in the up-country missions, river traffic is still the major avenue of communication. In that particular area, the priestly work closely resembles the program followed in the jungle missions of Brazil’s interior.

In spite of the historic, ethnic, and geographic handicaps, however, Guiana’s religious development progressed so satisfactorily in the last quarter-century that the Holy See created the Diocese of Cayenne in 1956. It named the incumbent Spiritan Vicar its first Resident Bishop.

**List of Ecclesiastical and Religious Superiors of French Guiana**

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**Prefects Apostolic**

Fr. Robillard, 1775-1777
Fr. Dominic de Glicourt, C.S. Sp., 1777 (never reached his destination)
Fr. Radel, 1778-1787
Fr. Jacquemin, 1787-1792
Fr. Legrand, C.S.Sp., 1792-1818
Fr. Matthew Hochard, C.S.Sp., 1793-1803 (Vice Prefect)
Fr. Paul Guiller, Sp. 1818-1845
Fr. Nicholas Viollot, Sp., 1845-1847 (Vice Prefect)
Msgr. John Dossat, 1847-1868
Fr. Alphonse Thoulouse, 1851
Fr. Réné John Guilmin, 1851-1853 (later Prefect Apostolic of the Malgaches Islands)
Fr. Joseph Guyodo, 1853-1868
Fr. Oliver Hervé, C.S.Sp., 1868-1872
Fr. Joseph Guyodo, C.S. Sp., 1872-1873 (Pro Prefect)
Msgr. Ambrose Emonet, C.S.Sp., 1873-1881
Fr. Joseph Guyodo, C.S.Sp., 1881-1892 (Pro Prefect 1881-1885)

*Sp. indicates Holy Ghost Fathers in the broad sense of the term. C.S.Sp. denotes Holy Ghost Father in the strict sense.
Fr. Marius Pignol, 1892-1904
Msgr. Marcel Beguin, 1904-1912
Msgr. Eugent Fabre, 1914-1924
Msgr. Leo Delaval, C.S.Sp., 1925-1931

Vicars Apostolic
H. E. Peter Gourtay, C.S.Sp., Titular Bishop of Arad, 1933-1944
H. E. Alfred Marie, C.S.Sp., Titular Bishop of Mundinizza, 1945-1946

1956: Diocese of Cayenne
Bishop Alfred Marie, C.S.Sp., 1956

2. BRAZIL

a. EARLY EFFORTS

Back in 1845, Father Libermann had considered making a foundation in Brazil. A wealthy French emigré had made him an offer of land, a house, and a chapel, in the neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro. Although nothing came of the plan, the vision of three million abandoned Negroes who were said to be living in the country haunted Libermann for a long time. He realized that “a vast field could be opened there for our labors.” In 1863, the same fate befell a projected mission to the State of Pernambuco, where the Congregation had been invited to undertake the evangelization of Indians and Negroes who belonged to the labor force of an immense estate.

Foundation of a College. The first Spiritan settlement was at last made in 1885 at Para or Belem on the north coast of Brazil. Spiritan-trained Bishop Macedo asked the Congregation to take on a Seminary-College he had just founded in his episcopal residence. Although the plea was at first turned down for lack of personnel, the Bishop succeeded in getting the support of the Pope for his cause, and the Congregation finally agreed.

At first, the College of Para was quite successful. But in 1890, the Brazilian government, which was then dominated by Freemasonry, withdrew all subsidies, and thereby made it difficult
to continue operations. The situation worsened when Bishop Macedo died and his successor imposed new and more burdensome conditions on the Holy Ghost Fathers. By then, several other colleges were functioning in the area and, since the original urgency no longer existed, the Superior General decided to withdraw his men in 1897.

b. MISSIONS IN THE INTERIOR

This decision did not mean that the Spiritans would be leaving Brazil, for, as was recorded in Chapter X, the Congregation agreed that same year to work in the vast jungle diocese of Manaos.

The population of the prefecture of Tefe, which was separated from the diocese and entrusted to the Spiritans in 1910, amounts to about fifty-five thousand souls. Racially, many of them descend from the Portuguese and Negro settlers who inter-married with Indian tribes that had been evangelized by Jesuits and Carmelites in the eighteenth century. Their main sources of income are fishing, gathering Brazil nuts, and tapping rubber-trees. Over and above these Christians, there are uncounted numbers of uncivilized Indians deep in the jungle.

The land itself is wilder and more primitive than the imagination of any city-bred person can picture. Giant streams of yellow water, several miles wide and bedecked with floating islands of vegetation, push their way through towering forests of huge trees whose hidden mysteries of wealth or desolation are barred from man’s prying eyes by forbidding walls of impenetrable undergrowth. Mud and swamps and luxurious jungles, crossed and recrossed by river upon river, are broken here and there by primitive settlements of stilted huts on little clearings along the banks. It is a world such as an imaginative artist might conjure up to recreate the face of the earth in some prehistoric period. Roads are unknown; vehicular traffic unthinkable. Rivers alone constitute the usual means of communication, although recently aeroplanes have begun to roar through the silent waterways to bring these wild fastnesses closer to the outside world.

Many of the Spiritans working in this steaming “Green Hell,” as the land has been called, spend their days floating down rivers and streams to visit each tiny settlement one by one. Their arrival is the great event of the year: baptisms, confessions, marriages, Mass and sermon, everything must be squeezed into a single day,
for tomorrow Father is expected down the river at another little clearing. After Mass, the missionary blesses the graves of those who died since his last visit. Then there follows a joyful fiesta in honor of the beloved guest and the newlyweds whose union he has sanctified. A second short exhortation follows and then the priest is conducted ceremoniously to the mission boat which will carry him down to the next settlement.

Occasionally, they will tell him about Indians hidden in a nearby jungle-clearing. Very likely, unless lack of time or his advanced age forbids it, he will then venture to approach them in company with a guide. The excursion is tiring and dangerous, for he will have to cut his way through the forest or swim across uncharted streams where electric eels may shock him, anacondas may crush him to a pulp, and schools of voracious piranhas may strip his body clean to the bone in a matter of minutes. Then, too, his reception by the Indians could be more or less unfriendly when he reaches his destination. He braves these perils nonetheless, because he knows that no one but a missionary will ever persuade these backward denisons of the wilderness to resume contact with the rest of humanity. In no other way can these scattered remnants of ancient tribes escape the threat of extinction.⁹

There are, of course, a few central stations with resident priests, Brothers and Sisters, churches, schools and workshops. Their clean white buildings and the shining spire that surmounts them greet the weary river-traveller from afar and provide a Mecca for the surrounding people who come in from all sides for festivals and Church solemnities. On these occasions, Tefe, a village of eight hundred and the capital of the region, takes on temporarily the character of a metropolis. It is in these larger stations especially that one finds technological schools, workshops, and training laboratories where Spiritan Brothers teach the mechanical trades and agricultural methods which hold the key to the future of these backward regions.

B. G. 25, 632

 Prefecture Divided. The giant Prefecture of Tefe, which the Holy See carved out of the Diocese of Manaos in 1910, proved to

⁹Several Spiritans have done valuable work in studying the Indian languages and customs of these regions. The best known of these specialists is Father Constant Tastevin, the author of a dozen scientific studies on the subject, who became professor of ethnology in Paris.
be still too huge for effective coverage. It extended over the entire two thousand mile course of the Jurua River and spread back over its watershed. In 1933, the situation improved greatly when Upper Jurua became a separate Prelature and was confided to the German Province of the Holy Ghost Fathers, under the direction of Bishop Henry Ritter.

The other part of the original Prefecture continued to receive whatever personnel the hard-pressed French Province could spare from its numerous commitments in other areas. As time went on, however, its position became more and more precarious. In 1936 Monsignor Michael Barrat, the Prefect Apostolic,\(^\text{10}\) had to report that his eight remaining missionaries averaged nearly seventy years of age. One by one these heroic men went to join their confreres in the cemetery of Boca de Tefe at a time when World War II

\(^{10}\text{Appointed in 1910, Msgr. Barrat kept valiantly to his task until 1946, when he resigned at the age of eighty-three.}\)
made replacements impossible. Fortunately, the German Fathers of the Upper Jurua found it possible to release two of their own priests to come to the rescue of this hard-pressed mission.

B. G. 42, 27 ff. When peace finally came, the Spiritans moved quickly to remedy the situation. In 1946, the Dutch Province, which then had a hundred and twenty priests available for immediate dispatch to foreign countries, took over the Prefecture. Ten priests and four Brothers were sent to Tefe at once. Father Joachim de Lange, a former missionary of Angola, became the new Prefect. Under his direction, the mission soon entered into a new period of efflorescence. Abandoned river-parishes were reopened, new ones were founded, the Seminary-College was adequately staffed, and the technical school was reopened. Motorized boats now make it possible for the Fathers to visit the remote settlements in their parishes more frequently. Moreover, the Brothers have built several new churches, enlarged others, and constructed a college for two hundred girl students at Tefe. They also run the workshops and teach at the trade school in Boca de Tefe. To insure a steady flow of supplies for the efficient operation of the missions, the Fathers opened a procure at the famous jungle city of Manaos, Capital of the State of Amazones, and took over one of the parishes there.¹¹

B. G. 42,30 The Holy Ghost Seminary of Tefe, which was founded about thirty-five years ago, has begun to justify the hope that a more numerous local clergy can be formed. To date, it has already supplied the Jurua and Tefe missions with six priests, and an encouraging number of candidates are now preparing themselves for ordination in the senior seminary.

B. G. 41, 493 In 1950, the Holy See recognized the Church’s great and rapid progress in this area by raising the mission to the rank of a Prelature, headed by Bishop de Lange. Comparable strides have been made in the Prelature of Jurua, which since 1947 is directed by Bishop Joseph Hascher. The two jurisdictions now care for nearly 150,000 souls, operate eighty schools and staff one college-seminary. Their Spiritan personnel has increased to forty-two.

B. G. 42, 34 ¹¹It is interesting to note that the Diocese of Manaos still does not have more than half a dozen diocesan priests. The rest of its clergy consists of priest-procurators of religious orders that have missionaries working in the interior.
List of Ecclesiastical and Religious Superiors

Ecclesiastical Superiors

Tefe
Till 1910 Tefe was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Manaus.

Msgr. Michael Barrat, C.S.Sp., 1910-1946, Prefect Apostolic
H. E. Joachim de Lange, C.S.Sp., 1946-1950 Prefect Apostolic;
since then Prelate "Nullius" with episcopal rank


Francis-Xavier Libermann, 1897-1898
Louis Friederich, 1898
Auguste Cabrolie, 1898-1909
also Religious Superiors till 1954

H. E. Henry Ritter, C.S.Sp., 1933-1942 Prelate "Nullius" with episcopal rank
H. E. Joseph Hascher, C.S.Sp., 1947- Prelate "Nullius" with episcopal rank
also Religious Superior till 1939.
Aloysius Engel, 1939-1943
Rudolph Lenzbach, 1943-1948
also Religious Superior, 1948-1954
Henry Pohlen, 1954- (resides in Sao Paulo)

Also Religious Superior till 1939.
c. PROVINCES IN FORMATION

All the works described above are in the interior of Brazil, for after the closure of the College of Para, Spiritans no longer had any houses in the more populous and civilized areas nearer to the coast.

B. G. 28, 255; 31, 4
A semi-private effort toward establishing the Congregation in the East was made in 1916 when Father Joseph da Silva, a Spiritan missionary from Portuguese Angola, went to visit his family in Rio de Janeiro. On this occasion, he was the recipient of many invitations to bring the Holy Ghost Fathers to that part of Brazil. Father da Silva stayed on in Rio as director of an orphanage, but his efforts to obtain additional personnel were unsuccessful and in 1923 this work was abandoned.

B. G. 42, 28
When the Dutch and German Provinces began to send more men to Brazil after the Second World War, Bishop Hascher and Monsignor de Lange took the initiative in a new endeavor to establish a province in the South-East. In 1950, the General Chapter gave its blessing to the project. Since then, great progress has been reported by the German and Dutch Fathers. Brazil, which is larger than the United States and almost equals Europe in size, offers plenty of room for expansion. The two sponsoring Provinces can forge ahead independently.

B. G. 41, 474
Spiritans from Holland laid the first foundation-stone of their effort in 1948 by arousing public interest in the missions through the establishment of an ethnological museum in Teresopolis. In 1955, this interest reached a productive level when they introduced a Brazilian division of the Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood with central offices in the capital. That same year also they opened the headquarters of the future province in Rio, where they had taken over the parish of St. George four years before. Most of their activity, however, is presently concentrated in the Territory of Minas Geraes: one parish in Governador Valadares (1955), one in Sete Lagoas (1954), one in Belo Horizonte, (1957) two in Virginopolis (1957) and the Shrine of Bom Jesus in Matozinhos (1949). In the same Territory they have assumed responsibility for the College of Curvelo since 1951, and in 1954 they opened a new Seminary-College at Itauna. At the moment, this province in formation has eleven houses in the State of Rio and the Territory of Minas Geraes, and sixty aspirants in its junior seminary.
Meanwhile, the German Spiritans selected the city of Sao Paulo as the headquarters for their new province. Their activity is centered on the State of the same name. Two large city parishes of St. Boniface (1953) and St. John Climacus (1955) in Sao Paulo have been added to those of Jacarei (1952), Alfredo-Marcondes (1953), Eminianopolis (1953) and Laguna (1957) in the State of Santa Caterina. The junior seminary of this future province is situated at Eminianopolis. At present, the circumscription numbers seven houses in southeast Brazil and a procure in Rio de Janeiro.

3. PERU

St. Louis College. In 1891, Spiritans were called to extend their labors to the city of Lima, where there were only five parishes for 150,000 Catholics. At that time estimates revealed that Peru did not have more than ten percent of the clergy it needed for adequate spiritual service. Yet, in the face of this appalling shortage of priests, the Papal Delegate, the Redemptorist and Vincentian Superiors, and several prominent laymen of the city told the Fathers shortly after their arrival that the greatest immediate need did not lay in direct ministry, but in a first class Catholic college that would educate the country’s youth. “There are many colleges and schools in Lima,” they said, “but there is not a single one to which Catholic families can safely entrust their sons.”

Within a year, the Spiritan college already had more than a hundred and fifty students—for the most part, sons of Lima’s upper-class families and of the highest government officials. It was obvious that these young men, the future leaders of the nation, had to be imbued with sound Catholic principles, for informed sources did not hesitate to attribute most of the country’s woes to the poor training of its youth. Even two years of civil war, which broke out shortly after the college opened, did not stop its development. It had become so important in a few years’ time that the President of the Republic came in person to preside at its commencement exercises in 1897.

Strangely enough, the very success of this institution killed it. Its growth necessitated the construction of large buildings and the augmentation of its teaching staff, just at a moment when the Congregation was passing through a grave financial crisis and had
Main building of the Seminary-College at Itauna, Minas Geraes, Brazil.

Holy Ghost Seminary-College, Tefe, Amazonas. One would have to travel several weeks by water to find a building of comparable size in this Brazilian State.
Dark and forbidding, impenetrable walls of jungle rise along the innumerable rivers of Brazil's interior, except where little patches have been cleared and a humble chapel serves as the gathering place when the mission boat stops for its visit.
to use a larger part of its man power to keep up with developments in Africa. Consequently, Archbishop Le Roy closed the College in 1898.

4. ARGENTINA

Although the Holy Ghost Fathers are not yet established in this South American Republic, the last General Chapter expressed itself in favor of an Argentinian foundation. It charged the Province of Portugal with the task of investigating the feasibility of a Spiritan endeavor there.