

**LIFE OF
SAINT JOHN EUDES**

BY

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With an Introduction on Liturgical Devotion to the Sacred Heart by
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INTRODUCTION

This translation of the *Life of S. John Eudes* by the late Henri Joly may help, we trust, to bring to the knowledge of the English-speaking public a saint who was one of the most interesting figures in the history of seventeenth-century France. This remarkable man was endowed, superabundantly endowed, with the most varied spiritual gifts; he was an author, missionary, spiritual guide, and founder of religious institutes. Yet the work that was dearest to his heart was the reformation of the clergy. He thirsted for a pure and holy priesthood and, with that object in view, established the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, of which the chief end is, as he himself expressed it, 'to train, instruct, and exercise aspirants for the priesthood in that heavenly life which it is their duty to show forth.' Accordingly, aided by his spiritual sons, and, above all, by the grace of God, he proceeded forthwith to found six seminaries in succession, those of Caen (1643), Coutances (1650), Lisieux (1653), Rouen (1656), Evreux (1667), and Rennes (1670).

We may frankly admit, nevertheless, that these foundations, however valuable and interesting they may be, do not, in the eyes of the historian, constitute the originality of S. John Eudes. He had been anticipated as a matter of fact by S. Vincent de Paul and the Venerable M. Olier in the establishment of seminaries. But a feature which is quite special and

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particular to our Saint, and which no one previously had ever dreamed of, is that in these six seminaries which he founded he established *public worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus many years before the first revelations were made to S. Margaret Mary*. We have the actual letters in which the six bishops of the above-mentioned dioceses officially authorise, as early as 1670 and 1671, the celebration of a new feast, with an Office and Mass composed by S. John Eudes. The majority of them exhort seminarists, clergy, and the faithful to adopt this Office and Mass and prescribe for the Feast of the Sacred Heart all the solemnities observed by the Church for Feasts of the first class with an Octave. They also permit exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and recommend that a special sermon should be preached. They even go so far as to authorise the Office of the Sacred Heart of Jesus 'for the first Thursday of every month, outside the seasons of Advent and Lent, unless an office of nine lessons is to be said on that day.'

This establishment of public worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is one of the greatest works accomplished by S. John Eudes. The Church, at each stage in the process of Beatification and Canonisation, has obviously taken pleasure in publicly recognising this fact. The decree on the heroic practice of the virtues presents him to us as 'the author of liturgical worship of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.' The Brief of Beatification develops this idea in the following significant fashion: 'But the culminating point of the services which S. John Eudes rendered to the Church is that, aflame as he was with an extraordinary love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, he was the first to think, not without divine inspiration, of rendering them a liturgical cult. Therefore, he should be

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regarded as *the Father* of this gracious religious exercise, because, from the first establishment of his Congregation of Priests, he took care that his sons should solemnly celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Hearts; as the *Doctor*, because he composed the Proper of a Mass and Office in their honour; and, finally, as the *Apostle*, because he spared no effort to spread such a salutary form of worship in all Places.' The Decree approving the two miracles put forward for the Canonisation of Father Eudes faithfully re-echoes the expressions employed in the Decree on the heroic practice of the virtues. Again, the Decree *Super Tuto*, which secured for the Blessed John Eudes the final honour of

Canonisation, sets out in high relief the zeal with which 'John Eudes was the first of all to institute and propagate the liturgical worship of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.' The Bull of Canonisation itself is no less explicit. *'Plura scripta de vita Christiana et sacerdotale luculenter exaravit, necnon de rebus liturgicis egregie locutus est. Verum singulare ejus studium emicuit in salutari devotione promovenda ergo sacratissima Corda Jesu et Mariae, quorum liturgicum cultum iis praestandum, non sine aliquo divino afflatu, primus omnium excogitavit.'* (1) And now, in our own day, every priest throughout the whole world reads in the Office of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and also in that of S. John Eudes, the very same expressions and tributes of praise. We may therefore state with assurance that the great French Saint, of whose life too little is known even to Catholics, is, according to the Church herself, THE AUTHOR OF THE LITURGICAL WORSHIP OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS, and moreover, as such, takes precedence of all others.

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The new devotion spread rapidly, especially in the great religious family of S. Benedict. At this period, there was on the slopes of Montmartre a magnificent abbey of Benedictine nuns, the odour of whose piety spread a sweet perfume over the whole city of Paris. Father Eudes was in close touch with this fervent community, and whenever he visited Paris took the opportunity of visiting the Abbey where he was venerated by all. He frequently gave spiritual conferences that were highly appreciated, and, on more than one occasion, was invited to give the nuns their retreat. He took occasion of the great influence which the Abbey enjoyed to establish in it public worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This was all the more easy as the nuns recognised in this new form of worship a devotion which the revelations of SS. Gertrude and Mechtilde had long rendered dear to the children of S. Benedict. In 1674, at the very latest, they began in the Abbey of Montmartre to celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart, and employed the Office and Mass of Father Eudes. This fact is beyond question. Father de Gallifet bears formal witness to it and a still more decisive proof may be found in the Proper of the Abbey of Montmartre which was printed, in Paris, by Louis Bellaine in that same year, 1674. It contains the Feast of the Heart of Jesus for October 20, as a double of the second class, and also the Office composed by Father Eudes, adapted to the Benedictine rite.

The following point should also be carefully noted it was only a year later, in 1675, that Our Lord requested S. Margaret Mary to endeavour to have the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi celebrated as a feast; and for ten years the Saint was unable to carry out the request. It was only in 1675 that she

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began, together with some novices of whom she had charge, to pay a quite private cult to the Heart of Jesus, and it was only in 1689 that a feast of the Heart of Jesus was, for the first time, publicly celebrated in the Visitation monastery at Dijon with a Mass composed by Sister Joly. Hence the Benedictine nuns of Montmartre anticipated the Visitation monastery at Dijon by at least fifteen years. Furthermore, in the notice on Blessed John Eudes, to be found in the Martyrology, we read, in the Proper of the Diocese of Paris, the following very significant statements - *'Parisiis, in civitatis regione, ubi nunc basilica Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu aedificata consurgit, videlicet in Monte Martyrum, festum ejusdem Cordis celebrari fecit anno millesimo sexcentesimo septuagesimo quarto.'* (2)

Nor can it be maintained that the Feast of the Sacred Heart, in the form in which it was celebrated on Montmartre and in the seminaries of S. John Eudes, differs in any notable degree from the devotion promoted by S. Margaret Mary. It differs to such a slight extent that, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was the very Mass and Office which was composed by Father Eudes that was almost universally employed *even by the nuns of the Visitation Order itself*. If proof be sought it

may be found in the manuals published, during this period, by the Visitation monasteries at Pont-à-Mousson, Rouen, Nancy, and Strasbourg, as also in those which appeared about the same time in Paris. All these manuals contain the Mass and portions of the Office composed by Father Eudes. We may add that they became very popular and played a great part in the spread of devotion to the Sacred Heart.

These are facts which, unfortunately, are too little known; they will help us all the more easily to

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understand why our holy Mother the Church was enabled to assign the glorious title of author of the liturgical worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to S. John Eudes. . . . Indeed, some years before, a great Benedictine scholar, Cardinal Pitra, had written: ' It should be difficult, in France, to speak of the works inspired by the Sacred Heart, without recalling to mind the Venerable Father Eudes who deserves to be entitled Its apostle. He was the first to propagate the new devotion, and continued to do so all his life; he entrusted the same task to the Congregation which he founded, had manuals printed, inaugurated feasts, composed offices, built churches and chapels in Its honour, erected innumerable confraternities and gave the first impulse to a movement that has spread throughout the whole Church. . . . Moreover, Father Eudes is the Doctor who supplied the formularies for the new devotion, and he was Its ambassador to pastors and people, to the princes of this world and of the Church.' In our own time, another son of S. Benedict, Dom Lambert Beauduin, says exactly the same thing and, in support of his statement, brings forward extracts from the Brief of Beatification, on which we have already drawn.

We have just seen how the Church has conferred the title of Doctor of the liturgical worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on S. John Eudes. The reason for doing so--and this should be carefully noted--is that he expounds, with admirable precision, the motives for observing the feast which he had instituted.

' What solemnity is more worthy, more holy and more excellent than that which is the source of all that is great, holy, and venerable in all other

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solemnities? What heart is there more adorable, admirable, and worthy of love than the Heart of the Man-God who is called Jesus? Of what honours is the divine Heart not worthy which has ever rendered and will eternally render more glory and love to God, at every moment, than all the hearts of men and angels can render him throughout all eternity? What should not be our zeal to honour this august Heart which is the source of our salvation, the origin of all the happiness of Heaven and of earth, which is an immense furnace of love in our regard and which thinks, night and day, only of conferring on us an infinite number of blessings?' (3)

I may well ask: could this divine Heart be more splendidly exalted, even in our times, which are, without doubt, witnessing the greatest triumphs of the Sacred Heart, and the widest spread of this devotion, than It has been by S. John Eudes in the passage just quoted?

And yet this was not enough for our Saint and Apostle. In the public worship of the Catholic Church there is one essential and fundamental act--the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Without the Mass the priesthood would have no justification; some of the greatest promises of Our Lord would remain idle and unfulfilled, and souls, deprived of the Bread of Life, would be condemned to weakness and exhaustion. Father Eudes, then, was the first person to obtain authorisation from the Church to celebrate the holy mysteries in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He thereby introduced It *into the*

very centre of the Catholic liturgy, the centre towards which everything converges, and from which everything flows. Can the importance of such a proceeding be exaggerated?

Moreover, it is carefully to be noted that, as far as

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the Sacred Heart Itself is concerned, the sole act of our religion in, and by, which the Divine Heart of Jesus gives Itself truly, really, and substantially to us in order to be not only an external object of adoration, but a Heart reposing on our hearts, is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Was it then not fit and proper that, at such an august moment, Its praises should be sung, and that It should be surrounded by special honours? S. John Eudes saw this clearly and supplied a suitable and beautiful ceremonial. The first Mass of the Sacred Heart—we love to repeat the fact—was composed by him. By doing so, and we should never forget it, he inaugurated a series of great public and external triumphs of this adorable Heart. Has the perfect clarity and precision of the language employed by these French bishops in regard to the Sacred Heart, when speaking of the Offices composed by this great originator, been sufficiently observed? If a complete treatise on the motives for honouring the Sacred Heart were required, it would almost be sufficient for us to make a collection of these approbations. At the same moment as, and on the occasion of, this cult, there was a spread of doctrinal teaching of the highest value, and this is a fact that should be strongly emphasised. In support of this statement we shall, first of all, put before the reader a passage from the writings of Monsigneur de Ségur:

'In 1670, the venerable bishop of Evreux, when approving the cult of the Sacred Heart in his diocese, as well as the Office composed for that purpose by Father Eudes, thus expressed himself: "As the adorable Heart: of Our Lord is a furnace of love towards his Father and of charity towards us, and the source of an infinity of graces and blessings for all mankind, all men, and especially all Christians, are

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under infinite obligations to honour, praise, and glorify It on every possible occasion."

' In the same year, another French bishop, his Lordship of Coutances, speaking for himself, said . 1' As the adorable Heart of our Redeemer is the primary object of the love and complacency of the Father of mercies, and as It is, reciprocally, all on fire with a holy love for this God of consolation, and, furthermore, as It is utterly inflamed with charity for us, burning with zeal for our salvation, full of mercy for sinners, replete with compassion for the miserable, and the source of all the happiness and glories of Heaven, of all the graces and blessings of earth, and also an inexhaustible source of all manner of favours for those who honour It, all Christians are bound to pay It every possible veneration and adoration." (4)

It is really surprising to see how, at this period, that is to say two years before the first great revelations were made to S. Margaret Mary, the bishops of France were already setting forth, in official documents, the Sacred Heart of Jesus as THE SOURCE OF ALL THE GLORIES AND HAPPINESS IN HEAVEN, OF ALL THE GRACES AND BLESSINGS ON EARTH, and consequently how they imposed an obligation on all men, especially all Christians, 'to honour, praise, and glorify It in every possible manner.' One would think, when reading such extracts, that one was listening to a twentieth century bishop explaining to his flock the motives for consecrating the human race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Father Eudes suffered agonies when the gates of a seminary were closed against the entry of this adorable Heart. The following passage from a letter to Monsignor Médavy, Archbishop of Rouen, bears witness to the fact: 'Pray consider that all our prelates have given us their approbation and permission

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in regard to this matter. Hence, I very humbly beg you, by this adorable Heart, which is the source of all that is holy and venerable in all the feasts that the Church celebrates, by the love with which It is all on fire for your Lordship, and by all the effects of this love of which you have had experience, and which you would wish to experience at the hour of your death, *not to prevent this feast from being celebrated in your seminary as it is celebrated in others.* If you refuse me this favour, which I request with all possible respect and submission, I confess I shall be deeply pained; but, should you grant it, as I trust you will, in your kindness, you will afford me much joy, and infinitely oblige me. Do not then reject this most humble and pressing prayer that is made to you by him who is, in truth, with all his heart, and with the deepest respect, etc. etc.'

Mgr de Médavy was unable to resist such urgent supplications. S. John Eudes was ever a victorious conqueror when there was question of the Sacred Heart.

S. John Eudes had great and lofty ambitions, as well as secret intuitions, regarding the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which he had instituted. His ardent desires are clothed in language that helps us clearly to understand the place occupied by this divine Heart in his inmost thoughts.

' This,' said he, ' is the feast of feasts,' and he added: «If so many feasts are celebrated in the course of the year, in honour of the Saints, what solemnity should not this divine Heart merit, seeing that It is the source of all that is noble and glorious in all the Saints?» (5)

And, on another occasion:

' If then the Church celebrates such a great feast in honour of this Divine Sacrament (the Blessed

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Eucharist), what solemnity should not be displayed in honour of the most Sacred Heart which is the origin of all that is precious, great, and rare in this august Sacrament.' (6)

In order to render his desires efficacious, S. John Eudes summons the faithful to hasten to the Sacred Heart and, in turn, invites the Sacred Heart of Jesus to exercise over them Its sovereign sway of love:

VENITE, GENTES, CURRITE,
AD COR PATRIS MITISSIMUM;
OMNES AMAT, CONFIDITE,
AMORIS EST INCENDIUM. (7)

(O come all ye peoples, hasten to this most meek Heart of the Father; he loves you all; be confident, It is a furnace of love.)

O TE VOLO, COR FLAMMEUM,
TU SEMPER INTUS ARDEAS!
FONS OMNIUM CHARISMATUM,
TOTUM PER ORBEM DIFLUAS.(8)

(O Heart on fire, I long for thee, Burn forever within me! Source of all graces, Mayest thou spread thyself throughout the world!)

He ardently desired that the fire of Our Lord's love might be kindled throughout the world, as we may see from the following passage: ' We have an infinity of motives that oblige us to render honour and adoration to the divine Heart of our most loving Saviour, with a Most particular respect and devotion. ALL THESE MOTIVES MAY BE SUMMED UP IN THREE WORDS OF S. BERNARDINE OF SIENA, WHO CALLS THIS MOST ADORABLE HEART: FORNAX ARDENTISSIMA CARITATIS AD INFLANDUM~ ET INCENDENDUM ORBEM UNIVERSUM:

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A furnace of the most ardent charity to inflame and set on fire the whole universe.' (9)

This passage enables us to see clearly the place which the reign of the Sacred Heart over all human society occupied in the mind of Father Eudes as far back as the seventeenth century. One of the ends of the liturgical worship which he instituted was, in the admirable words of Dom Lambert Beauduin, 'the restoration of the reign of the Eternal King of ages by the sway of a boundless love, symbolised in his Heart of flesh, and manifested by the whole work of Redemption, as well as by the joyful and Glorious Mysteries.'(10)

There is no need to add how great an originator he also was from this standpoint. Books composed in our own days on the social Kingship of the Sacred Heart have not, at any rate for Eudists, the merit and freshness of originality, at least as far as their substance and fundamental ideas are concerned, for his children have already become familiar with such ideas from the works of their holy Founder.

The Spirit of God, no doubt, enlightened Father Eudes as to the extension which the worship of the Sacred Heart was to assume in the course of centuries. This would seem to be clear from a circular letter written, in 1766, by Mother Mary of S. Basil, Superioress of the Monastery of Our Lady of Charity, of Caen. We may there read the following lines:

' Although the Divine Heart has long been the special treasure of the Children of our Worthy Founder, we rejoice that It will soon be known and honoured

THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WORLD, AS OUR GOODFATHER EUDES HIMSELF FORETOLD BEFORE HIS DEATH"(11)

Furthermore, S. John Eudes was not satisfied with

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merely writing in prose and verse on the social reign of the Sacred Heart; he was prepared to sacrifice himself utterly, to be annihilated, in order to establish the reign of Jesus.

' O my Saviour,' he wrote, in a transport of love, would that the universe might be converted to the adoration of your Divine Heart! Ah how gladly would I consent, with the help of your grace, to be annihilated now and for ever more, so that the Heart of my Jesus might be unceasingly adored throughout all the universe.'(12)

It was surely fitting that it was on the occasion of revelations made by the Heart of Jesus to a spiritual daughter of S. John Eudes, Mother Mary of the Divine Heart, that our Holy Father Pope Leo XIII solemnly consecrated the whole human race to the most Sacred Heart.(13)

On February 8, 1925, the day on which the Eudist Fathers celebrated the feast of the Heart of

Mary, His Holiness Pope Pius XI, in a discourse pronounced on the occasion of the reading of the decree approving of the two miracles that had been brought forward for the canonisation of Father Eudes, compared our Saint to one of those immense vessels that traverse the ocean, freighted with riches, and leaving a long and shining track in their wake. S. John Eudes has, no doubt, left such a track by the foundation of several congregations, by the establishment of numerous seminaries, by his original and energetic apostolic labours; but, in our opinion, he has done so especially by instituting the liturgical worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, because, from this aspect-and we love with the Church, to repeat it-he is ' the first of all.' Henceforward, all who wish to study this devotion, in no superficial and incomplete fashion, but

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fundamentally and in its source, are bound to devote a long and attentive study to the life and works of this great Saint.

Before concluding this all too brief and colourless sketch of the immense and preponderant part played by S. John Eudes in the establishment of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, we feel bound to express our joy in seeing his life translated into English by a son of S. Vincent de Paul. There was a strong bond of union between the two Saints, and S. Vincent de Paul was a strong admirer of S. John Eudes. We may catch a glimpse of this from the following lines, written by S. Vincent to Father Desdames, one of his spiritual sons who was labouring in Warsaw: 'Some priests from Normandy, under the direction of Father Eudes, of whom I think you have heard, arrived in Paris to preach a mission that has been wonderfully blessed. The Court of the Quinze-Vingts'(4) is very large, but it was too small for the crowds who went to the sermons' (June 18, 1660). Moreover, the Vincentian Fathers were among the first to preach and propagate devotion to the Sacred Heart in the course of their missions and retreats in Ireland and Great Britain, as also in Australia and the United States of America. They have been assiduous, moreover, in establishing branches of the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart Association, which was erected in S. Peter's Church, Dublin, in 1874. Hence, it was only fitting that a Vincentian should help to make the great Apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus better known and loved in English-speaking countries. We thank him most fraternally, and trust that his labour may lead many souls to become familiar with the life

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and writings of our Saint, and, above all, to live that life of union with the adorable Heart which constituted the joy and delight of S. John Eudes.

J. GAUDERON, EUDIST.

Caen, at the tomb of S. John Eudes, August 15, 1931.

NOTES

1. He wrote much and clearly on the Christian and sacerdotal life, and likewise spoke excellently on liturgical matters. His rare zeal shone forth in propagating a salutary devotion towards the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and he was the first of all to think, not without divine inspiration, of paying them a liturgical cult.'

2. At Paris, in that part of the city where the Basilica of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus now stands, namely, on the Mount of Martyrs, he caused the Feast of this Heart to be celebrated in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-four.'

3. From a circular letter to all the Houses of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, 1672.

4. Cf. Ségur, *The Sacred Heart of Jesus*, pp. 57 and 58. This pamphlet is, in fact, in more than one instance, a simple reproduction of the teaching of Father Eudes on the Sacred Heart.

5. Cf. *The Complete Works of S. John Eudes*, Vol. VIII, P. 242.

6. OP. cit., VOL. VIII, P. 242.

7. Hymn at First Vespers.

8. Cf. the Hymn at Matins. All these passages may be found, together with a French translation, in the Second Appendix to Father Gauderon's pamphlet, *Le sacré Coeur de Jésus, principe de toute la vie spirituelle d'après le B. J. Eudes. (I)*.

9. Cf. *The Complete Works*, VIII, P. 208.

10. See the excellent article entitled, ' Le Sacré Coeur de Jésus dans la liturgie, by Dom Beauvain in *Questions liturgiques et paroissiales*. (May, 1923) Louvain.

11. Cf. *The Origins of Our Lady of Charity*. by F. Ory, P. 273.

12. See *The Complete Works*, etc., VOL. VIII, P. 314.

13. See *The Life Of Sister Mary of the Divine Heart*, by the Abbé Chasle, Ch. XI.

14. The Quinze-Vingts; was a hospital for three hundred (15 x 20) persons which had been founded by S. Louis, King of France. In 1779 it was transferred from the Rue Saint Honoré to the Hotel of the Black Musketeers, 38, Rue de Charentin. Suppressed during the Revolution. it was restored in 1814. (J.L.)

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IF Father Eudes, that great missionary of the first half of the seventeenth century, the founder of the Eudist Fathers, the Congregation of the Good Shepherd, and the forerunner of S. Margaret Mary, is not as well known to the general public as he deserves to be, the fault is not due either to poverty of materials or difficulty in procuring documents.

Though we have no desire to give a complete and detailed bibliography here, nevertheless, it is only fitting to refer, in the first place, to the Saint's own *Memorial*. It is brief, but definite, and supplies invaluable information regarding dates of events, and the diarist's own inmost feelings and plans, as well as the character and worth of the friendships that sustained him.

Next comes his *Correspondance*, as preserved by his Congregation. In recent times, this has been increased by unpublished letters, of which I have been allowed to avail myself, thanks to the great kindness of his Company.

In the third place come all his dogmatic and ascetical *Writings*, some of which may be regarded, in a sense, as historical, since they supply us not only with information regarding his character and talents, but also, as will be seen, enable us to gauge the situation of the Church and the state of religion in the epoch when his apostolate began.

The Saint's first biographers avail themselves of

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quite a number of these documents, enriched by the reports and recollections of contemporaries.

The earliest of these was Father H&Hérabourg, who entered the Congregation two years after the death of its founder, and who was acquainted, therefore, with many of his disciples: this work has been republished by Father Le Doré&

Although coming some years after, the (lithographed) writings of Father Costil, entitled *Annals of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary*, and *Flowers of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary*, seem to us to be even still more transparently truthful, and in closer touch with the earliest sources.

Next comes the *Life of Father Eudes*, by Father Martine, who succeeded Father Hérabourg, in 1720, as superior of the seminary of Coutances. The work is copiously documented, and the treatment most methodical. It is only the size of those two large volumes which has prevented them from becoming popular, for the *Life* is a scientific piece of work, and admirably constructed.

Nevertheless, the Congregation still felt that many points needed to be elucidated, and that certain comparisons and contrasts should be drawn. This task was entrusted to Father Boulay who, between 1905 and 1909, produced a *Life* in four large octavo volumes. The author dwells, with obvious satisfaction, on points all hitherto controverted, and is lavish in his proofs; even his digressions are always interesting.

These direct sources are increased by tributaries coming from various contemporaries of Father Eudes, Oratorians, Sulpicians, and Vincentians. . . . Such a list would be endless. Father Boulay, indeed, provides us with a lengthy one. All who desire to study the

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long and varied life of our hero(1) should consult Father Boulay's pages.

The preceding details have no other end than to show how this little book was composed. May it help to make the public love a man whose portrait has too long been absent from the gallery of our great French Saints! Neither the Church of France nor the noblest era of our seventeenth century can be fully known if men are ignorant of the part played therein by S. John Eudes.

HENRI JOLY.

NOTE

(1). To these works should be added Father Le Doré's *The Sacred Hearts and Venerable John Eudes*, 2 vols., Paris, 1891, and two recent books by Father Lebrun, *Devotion to the Heart of Mary: a doctrinal and historical study*; *Blessed John Eudes and the public worship of the Heart of Jesus*, Paris, 1918.

LIFE OF SAINT JOHN EUDES

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

WHEN I had at length decided on making a closer study of the life of Father Eudes, I asked a Paris priest, (*) well known both for his chronic illnesses and his supernatural gifts, if he had made the acquaintance of my hero. Between two spasms of pain, and with the brevity and decision that characterised all his utterances, he replied simply: 'He was a strong saint.' He was, indeed, a strong saint, and, it might be added, he lived in an iron age.

John Eudes was born in 1601 and died in 1680 hence he obviously belongs to the age of Louis XIII. His ideas ripened, his plans matured, and his memorable creations were established when Richelieu was in office. He even had the satisfaction of seeing them supported by that powerful minister. When Richelieu was no more, John Eudes had to carry them on and defend them by his own efforts. He preached the truth courageously in the presence of Anne of Austria, and spoke his mind with some freedom to Mazarin. He even managed to obtain a few favours from Louis XIV, despite machinations that led to his being disgraced in that monarch's eyes for some years. Yet he

(*) M. JOLY is referring him to the Abbé Huvelin. (j. L.)

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remained, right to the end, the disciple of Cardinal de Bérulle, the heir of Father de Condren's doctrines, and the rival of Bourdoise, Olier, and S. Vincent de Paul. These men formed an heroic group, a Corneilician group, one might call them if one were dealing merely with human interests, a group that restored the religious life of France, as Henry IV and Louis XIII had restored its political unity.

John Eudes was born in Normandy, in the diocese of Séez, in the little village of Ri, in 1601. 'God,' he says, in his *Memoir*, 'gave me the grace of being born of a father and mother of the middle class, who lived in his fear; I have always had reason to believe that they died in his grace and love.' His father, Isaac Eudes, was a comfortable yeoman who also exercised the profession of surgery. He had intended to become a priest, but the plague of 1587, which carried off all his brothers, obliged him to return home and look after the temporal welfare of his family. Although Isaac Eudes kept up the pious practices of his first vocation and studies---such as that of reciting the Divine Office---he soon took unto himself a wife. We have most definite evidence to show that both Isaac Eudes and his wife, Martha Corbin, were a model couple, and were rightly esteemed so by their neighbours, that they lived a simple, dignified life, and had definite ideas about authority, not only the authority which they exercised in their own home, but also that which they considered they were bound to respect in public affairs. If the Norman countryside had not suffered so severely from rapine and the manifold excesses of armed bands of pillagers, Isaac Eudes might, perhaps, have joined the League. He certainly detested Calvinists, whose fury he had experienced both in his own person and property; yet like many other Catholic

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gentlemen of Normandy, as well as the bishop who had ruled the diocese of Séez for twenty-five years, he deliberately took the side of Henry IV.

Isaac Eudes and his wife had been married for three years, and as yet had no children. After

making a vow to Our Lady of Recovery-which they promptly fulfilled-their first child was born. They baptised him John, and, throughout his whole life, he piously believed that he owed his existence ' more to prayer than to nature. His birth was followed, in the course of time, by that of six other children, two sons and four daughters, one of whom died young. The three girls subsequently married. The Saint's brothers, Charles d'Houay and Francis Mezeray, deserve a few remarks.

In Normandy it was customary, up to the French Revolution, that only the eldest son should take the family name; the others borrowed a name, if they could, from one of their father's farms.(1) This custom was followed by each of these brothers. Charles d'Houay, the younger, remained at home; he was, like his father, a surgeon, and practised in the town of Argentan. An unpublished manuscript, a portion of which has been reproduced by M. Levavasseur, tells us how devotedly he carried on his profession during the plague of 1638. 'In the whole suburb of S. Thomas,' it says, ' all the inhabitants died, or abandoned the locality, with the exception of Messieurs de la Fontenille and Bordeaux; the latter's wife also remained; the pavement of the High Street was covered with grass and not a soul could be seen moving about the place but the Surgeon of the Hospital, M. Charles Eudes d'Houay (brother of M. Mezeray and Father Eudes), who was accustomed to go to M. Bordeaux's for the remedies he needed, and these were placed in

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the middle of the street, or on the litter that came for the sick and dead.'

Francis Mezeray, as he was called, went to Paris, like many another younger son, to seek his fortune. He had been well and carefully educated, and, as a result, showed marked literary ability. His first efforts were at light verse. He placed himself under the patronage of the Abbé des Yveteaux, Francis de Vauquelin, son of Vauquelin de la Fresnaies, whose epicurean mode of life and follies, which some would go so far as to call scandalous conduct, scarcely constituted him a reliable mentor, even though he had written some charming verse. Nevertheless, he gave his pupil valuable advice-as events afterwards proved-when he told him to abandon poetry for history.

The young man was not, however, a mere armchair historian or a turner of pretty phrases. He took part in two campaigns in Flanders. He was subsequently rescued from poverty by the financial assistance afforded him by Richelieu, and he ultimately became the well-known historian. He, too, showed that he belonged to a warlike and high-spirited generation. He is very little read to-day; but Sainte-Beuve, who allowed nothing to escape him, has characterised Mezeray's talent by remarking that his style smacks of the Fronde, and even of the Republic. M. Levavasseur also tells us that when Francis Mezeray was 'an old, gouty bachelor, he still preserved the appearance of a soldier of Henry IV amidst the courtiers of Louis XIV. He persisted in singing the ballads of the Fronde, and never noticed that men were no longer interested either in Frondists or ballads.'

He died like a Christian, professing the Catholic faith, and begging-with more humility than he had ever shown in his life-that his example might be

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buried in oblivion. Mezeray dying, he protested, was more worthy of belief than Mezeray alive. He died, in x 683, three years after his brother John, at the age of seventy-three. He left a curious will which contained abundant proofs of the careful administration by which, in spite of his whimsies and irregular life, he had increased his little fortune. What is still better, he made a good use of his property. Right in the midst of numerous bequests, and next to one to his faithful old maidservant who had looked after him for thirty-six years, comes the following: 'And I give and bequeath the sum of 120 livres for a monument to my brother, the Reverend Father Eudes, though indeed his virtues

and reputation have secured for him a finer monument than can be wrought by the hand of man.'

Modern Normandy then did well, when it honoured the three brothers at one and the same time, placed their heads side by side on the same medallion, and held a celebration at which Charles d'Houay's proud response to a governor, who wished to demolish the tower and clock of Argentan, was recalled: 'We are three brothers, and we worship Truth; the eldest preaches it, the second writes it, and I will defend it to the last gasp.' It is said that on this occasion his Words Saved the tower; it was demolished only in 1727.

It is time to return to our hero. The course of this narrative will show clearly to what an extent this hereditary temperament was retained by John, who was described by Huet, Bishop of Avranches, as 'fiery and daring' (*ardens et audax*). An unusual, precocious Piety, sustained by the idea suggested to him in earliest childhood that, as he had come into this world thanks to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, he should Consecrate himself to her service, tempered his natural

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ardour, or perhaps we should say, metamorphosed it. This, I think, will be the opinion of all who believe that patient, voluntary endurance of an insult sometimes shows far more real courage than the anger that seeks to avenge it.

All our Saint's biographers relate that, when he was nine years of age, one of his companions struck him a blow: he immediately remembered the Gospel maxim and, turning the other cheek, said: 'Strike that one too, if you like.' We may add that the other child asked to be forgiven, and many years afterwards used to relate the incident when Father Eudes had grown famous by the splendour of his virtues.(2)

His parents, however, had to think about his education, for there was no school in the village. Notwithstanding his mother's fears, for she was nervous about sending the child on long journeys, as he was then rather delicate, his father decided to send him daily to a priest, James Blanette, who kept a sort of school in the next parish. Under his eyes, little John began, and that very seriously, to study Greek and Latin simultaneously. When he was fourteen, he went to a college in Caen, which had been just opened by the Jesuits in accordance with a wish expressed in 1608 by Henry IV. His mother's fears now became still more lively, and she felt the separation keenly; she said that she did not know what would become of her son in a city wherein a third of the inhabitants were Huguenots. Moreover, although the college had 800 day pupils, boarders were rarely admitted; there were scarcely more than a score of them at this time. John would have to take lodgings in the town, and this was a further and more serious cause for anxiety. Isaac Eudes, however, had much greater confidence in the tried faith and character of his son. From the

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moment of his arrival the youth secured a place in the front rank, and was a brilliant success in the Rhetoric class. On the other hand, not only did his fellow students call him 'the devout Eudes,' but neither the usual exercises of piety nor even his reception into the Congregation of Mary gave sufficient scope to his devotion, which already had had some experience of mystical flights and ascetical practices. Doubtless, John's heart and imagination had preserved all those powers intact which the usual temptations that beset the young had vainly assailed. Many moralists advise young people to think of the girl whom you will wed' as a preservative against sin. John Eudes put a heavenly interpretation on this advice. His betrothed was the Blessed Virgin, and he desired to plight his faith to her alone. Like S. Edmund, he even placed a ring on the finger of a statue of Our Lady, and thus showed himself more daring, if no less tender, than those charming young Virgin saints in

Italian pictures who stretch out tapering fingers towards the ring presented to them by the Child Jesus.

When he had finished his studies in philosophy, he made up his mind; he asked, and obtained, the approval of his confessor and decided that he would be a priest. Was this not the sequel, already foreshadowed, to the vow of chastity which he had made, and which had only been confirmed by the difficult period of adolescence? His father and mother were unaware of those secret engagements. As they were afraid lest he might go and shut himself up in some monastery or other, they began to take steps, although he was only nineteen, to have him married. They had, in matter of fact, selected a young girl, of good family, who was both beautiful and pious, and had, moreover, a dowry not to be despised. Both

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families were well pleased, and it seemed as if the parents of both the young people had nothing else to do than accept a consent which they had no doubt whatever would be given. John had no desire openly to oppose his father, and thus provoke an immediate quarrel. He gave an evasive reply to which his father paid little attention. On the following day he was brought to a party which was given by the parents of the young lady and plenty of hints were thrown out. John was polite but cold. Martine tells us (and how lifelike the good Eudist's description will seem to many a head of a family 1) that it was the father himself who was forced to be the life of the party, and supply the gaiety which he vainly tried to arouse in his son. The return home was not pleasant for either of them. 'What did he mean by such conduct? What was he about? Did he, by any chance, mean to go against his father's wishes? ' And the master of the house, after this strong language, abruptly walked away from the silent youth. The latter was now compelled to show an obstinate but respectful resistance, and even that did not suffice. He had to give an explanation. And then another crop of difficulties appeared. However, the idea that his son was to be, not a religious, but a secular priest, and that his functions would not sever him completely from his family, came to the assistance of Isaac's Christian principles, and he gave his consent. At this period, when seminaries were still unknown, the priesthood was rapidly attained. John came home on vacation in the month of August. About the end of September, after the ten days' retreat that was customary in the diocese, he received tonsure and minor orders. This was in 1621; he was then about twenty years of age.

He intended to begin at once the special studies

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which he had not yet made, and he therefore asked, and easily obtained, permission from his father to proceed to the University of Caen in order to follow the lectures in theology and controversy, and especially in controversy, for this was an essential weapon when bitter and subtle disputes between Catholics and Protestants were in such high favour. He worked hard and piously: but as he advanced in knowledge and the practice of religion he experienced all the more need of help in order that he might be capable of greater deeds. The Oratory had a house in Caen. All that John Eudes saw of it, and learned about it, attracted him. He spoke to the Superiors of the house, received some encouragement, and was not slow in making up his mind to seek admission into the young and already deservedly famous Congregation. But to leave Normandy, go to Paris for his novitiate, and then to be at the disposal of his new superiors, meant another domestic conflict. Faced with his father's opposition, and his lively and even bitter reproaches, the young man took his courage in both hands and argued his case. Confronted with his mother's tears, he thought there was no safety but in flight, and so he rode off towards Paris. He had scarcely gone three leagues when his horse stopped and refused to budge. The pious youth saw in this a sign of disapproval, or, at least, a warning that he should do all in his power to obtain the consent and blessings of his parents. He rode home, and after some moving scenes, at length obtained

the permission which he had not been sufficiently persistent in demanding. On Lady Day 1623, he was admitted into the Oratory by its illustrious founder, Peter de Bérulle. What had he left? What was he about to find?

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What he had left behind him was a countryside that resembled the rest of France at least in this, that it presented a spectacle of grave religious disorganisation.

Were the churches deserted? By no means. They were thronged, wherever they had not been destroyed by the Calvinists; for the country people attributed to the holy place, its stones, vaults, and statues, a power of justification which dispensed all who visited it from any other acts of virtue. We are told so by Father Eudes himself. 'Many people imagine,' he was to cry out, 'that, to be of the number of the predestinate, it is enough to belong to a city or parish in which the Church is dedicated to the Mother of God.' The people therefore went to church, but in what fashion? For many centuries the house of God had also been the house of the people. It is touching in many respects to observe how the church was the spot where the interests of the parish were defended and where those who had no other school or place of recreation repaired to have their children educated, and to take part in the mystery plays. . . . But abuses arose, and increased. Despite the prescriptions of several councils (the Council of Rouen (3) in 1581, of Aix in 1585, etc.) Father Eudes has left us the indignant and heartbroken descriptions we are now about to read: 'No longer is there a sanctuary or special place reserved for the sacred ministers in the Holy of Holies. All places are thrown open, not only to laymen, to worldly women, to evil-living vagrants who enter the holy places only to profane them, but even to dogs that are allowed to roam around and do what they please; the Church is a den of thieves, a lair of wild beasts, a place of profanation. . . . You see lay-folk, men and women, entering the choirs and sanctuary, taking the priests' places, and sometimes seating them

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selves above them, standing beside the altar and even leaning upon it.... And in what guise do the women come? They appear, and even enter the sanctuary, as if they were going to a ball or a dance, in luxurious dresses, with their hair curled, crisped and ringletted, their necks and bosoms bare.... How many are there who, instead of humbling themselves before the majesty of God, cast, in all directions, envenomed glances that poison hearts! How many are there who, desiring to be observed by all, and that they themselves may see all that passes, perch, if I must say so, on the pews, like birds of evil omen! How many who seat themselves on cushions, or rather on velvet thrones trimmed with gold and silver lace or rich embroideries, as if the floor of God's house was not worthy to bear them, and as if they came to Church, not to adore him but to be adored themselves!'

When the gentry made no response, as we may well imagine, to such spirited attacks, they only stirred up the young priest's indignation all the more. 'Their false sense of honour must rule and command in all places, even in those where religion reminds all Christians, without acceptance of persons, that to God alone belongs all praise and glory. Witness the quarrels, hatreds, bloodshed, and murders that often occur over the seats they demand in Church, and for the precedence which they claim, when going to the altar at the offertory. . . . Has not one of those monsters of pride been seen, in our own days, thrusting his sword through the body of a man who was at the feet of his confessor, because he would not yield up his place! Have not others been seen Coming from the confessional, and on the point of receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ, on Easter Sunday itself, when summoned to a duel, turn their backs on God and

depart to make a sacrifice of their blood and life to the Evil One, and the idol of a point of honour! ' But did all these fashionable folk regard the adornment of God's temple as a point of honour? Let us resume.

'That is not all: do you wish to see in what little consideration the majority of Christians hold the house of their God? Go to the houses of the rich and noble you will see nothing there that is not clean and decent you will see them adorned with rich tapestries, choice furniture, exquisite linen, vessels of silver often inlaid with gold and enamel. Go to the Churches: you will see many of them in dirty and filthy surroundings; tapestried inside with cobwebs, paved with dust and mud; the roof and windows open to wind, rain, hail, and snow; altars devoid of ornaments and covered with dust, priests offering the dread sacrifice in torn albs and chasubles, corporals and purificators sometimes so dirty that they make one's heart sick; chalices made of tin and begrimed at that; the Most Holy Sacrament in a ciborium of the same material and within a wretched tabernacle covered and filled with dust and dirt, without a lamp, without a light, and without any mark of religion. O God! O Great God! where is the faith of Christians? If you are their Father, where is the reverence they owe you? If you are their Sovereign, where is the fear they bear you? Lord Jesus, the time has come for you to judge the world according to your promise, for there is no longer any faith on earth ' (4)

That, indeed, is a picture which reveals the soul of the painter as clearly as the object on which his gaze is so sadly fixed 1

The poor were, incontestably, rather the victims than the authors of this deplorable state of affairs. Their faith was ignorant, ill-instructed, easily abused and

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deceived, but, at bottom, it was living. The amazing success of the missions of Olier, Maunoir, Grignon de Montfort, and John Eudes was soon to make this clear, and men were forced to admit that the vitality of an organisation is to be estimated, not by the mildness of the attacks to which it submits, but by the energy and efficaciousness of its reaction. No-if the churches were in such a pitiable state the fault was not that of the wretched peasants who were pillaged by bands of marauders, and bled white by tax-gatherers. We can see how the author of the lines we have just read sympathises with the poor in the pamphlet in which he scourges the contempt shown to the house of God, when he comes to describe the sergeants, bailiffs, and tax-gatherers arriving, on Sundays and the greatest Christian festivals, to arrest Christians 'coming out of Church, sometimes even at the very foot of the altar, and haul them away to prison, without regard either to the holiness of the day or the place, without regard even to civil and canon law which forbids such horrible exactions.'

But in this era, as in every other, clever scoundrels were not wanting who made fortunes out of public calamities. If John Eudes saw the churches in Normandy disgraced by poverty and dirt, the priests of the rest of France were no better off. When Grandet describes an official of the diocese of Lyons afflicted by the same spectacle, he supplies us with this explanation.(5) 'The cause of these disorders,' he remarks, arose, in part, (6) from this, that, contrary to the arrangements made in the declaration of King Henry the Great, promulgated on March 16, 1609, and registered in the Parliament of the same year, which were conformable to the ancient Canons and the Council of Trent that entrust Archbishops and Bishops with the duty of taking

cognisance of ecclesiastical expenditure, judges and other local officials take cognisance of such accounts, and, by arrangement with the beadles, make ill use of such revenues, turning them to their own profit rather than to that of the Churches.'

There was yet another evil in the religious life of this disturbed epoch which produced, in every sense of the word, horrible ravages; for it destroyed the mental equilibrium of the masses and brought thousands of men (7) to the stake: 1 refer to witchcraft, magic, and diabolical superstitions. It was a real epidemic, and there were few who were not partly responsible for it. The following remarks about Lorraine are equally applicable to nearly every other province that suffered from this plague. (8) 'The civil and religious wars, the incessant marching and counter-marching of troops, the repeated visitations of plague and the ensuing famines, Luther's diatribes against the devil, the movement of ideas and emotions that came from other countries, had produced a profound moral shock. Anemic bodies acted on by excited minds formed material most suitable for attacks of hysteria.' On the other hand, marauders of all ranks of society, who were, doubtless, more interested in believing in the devil than in God, dealt largely in what they called witchcraft. In this way they terrified their victims whom they further subjected to their cupidity or brutality: the general illusion could only serve to increase the audacity of the former and the terror of the latter. In this matter of fanaticism, pushed to the practice of cruelty by an exaggerated sentiment of a duty that was at once both social and religious, Protestants had nothing with which to reproach Catholics; public panics and acts of folly were rivalled by the arguments of pseudo-scientists, and the pedantry of secular

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magistrates and judges (for it was not the Church that hunted down sorcerers) caused more madness than the abuse of exorcisms. The procurator, Nicholas Rémy, 'a mild, peaceable man, a judicious writer and occasional poet,' boasted that he had sent nine hundred sorcerers to the stake. And woe to the poor ecclesiastic who, more evangelical or less silly than his brethren, made an attempt to save an accused person by employing the means prescribed by the Liturgy! A parish priest of Nomécourt, Dominic Cordier, had looked into the matter more closely than others, and convinced himself of the futility of the charges. He cured many alleged sorcerers by means of simple exorcisms. He paid dearly for it. He was denounced by a woman of ill-fame, brought before a secular judge, and actually burned alive 'for having saved from punishment a large number of Satan's clients.' (9) On the other hand, those who, from a spirit of contagious impiety, rebellion, and anarchy, toyed with these superstitions and strove (10) to turn them in some fashion to their own interests, were often in the safest position.

Historians of the missions preached, in Brittany, by Fathers Le Nobletz and Maunoir, paint exactly the same sort of pictures (in, perhaps, deeper and more sombre colours). They add that if the people were wild and untrustworthy, the nobility were gamblers, quarrelsome, dissolute, blasphemous, and brutal, and that the townsfolk, though showing more capacity for resisting evil, had grown avaricious and revengeful. Normandy was too close to Brittany not to suffer from the same evils, and Father Eudes's accusations are, unfortunately, so well marshalled as to leave us convinced of their truth.

Furthermore, he convinces us that the evil proceeded very much more from above than from below, and

such, indeed, is the universal law. Disaster may always be traced to a corrupt and dissolute aristocracy, just as salvation proceeds from a healthy, rejuvenated, and well-trying elite, nor can it be otherwise. Now, at the period of which we speak, the clergy and nobility were in just such an unhealthy condition as the rest of the people. When Father Eudes goes on to speak of what he calls the profanation of churches, he writes: 'It may be said with only too much truth that we ecclesiastics are, in this respect, as in many others, incomparably more guilty, and that the laity and divine justice will compel us to bear the chastisement of our own sins, all the more so since we make their sins our own just as much by our criminal weakness and neglect in instructing and correcting the people as by the bad example we give them.'(11)

We are well aware of the humility of the saints who, in this way, take on themselves sins against which they strive without ceasing to the last moment of their lives; but we also know who are responsible for those miseries. We have long since learned from unimpeachable witnesses to what a degree of ignorance and corruption the clergy of this period had fallen. M. Bourdoise, who was one of those who most violently reacted against the state of affairs, exclaimed: 'It may be said with truth that the worst evils wrought in the world are those accomplished by ecclesiastics.' This terrifying man, who was, as he said, always ready to travel a hundred leagues if he could only meet with three souls prepared to work for the reform of the clergy, and who was always prepared to make a journey, even if he were not asked, to see 'if things were going on even tolerably,' has been pardoned by posterity for the excessive zeal which led him, in a fit of bitterness, to call S. Vincent de Paul 'a bedraggled hen.'(12) But Father

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do Condren's biographer, Amelotte, was not afraid to write: 'The word priest had become a synonym for ignorance and debauchery.' Confessors were ignorant of even the form of absolution, (13) yet this did not prevent some of them from asking to be paid for the administration of the sacrament. A bishop, Abelly informs us, (14) wrote to S. Vincent de Paul that he was working as hard as he could, in conjunction with his Vicar General, for the welfare of his diocese, but, he added, 'with little success, on account of the large and incomprehensible number of ignorant and vicious priests who go to make up my clergy, and who cannot be corrected, either by words or example.' Another prelate wrote, amongst other things, to S. Vincent, that, 'with the exception of the Canon Theologian of my diocese, I do not know a single priest amongst them who can carry out any ecclesiastical function: you may, then, judge how great is our need for labourers. I implore you to leave your missionary here to help us in our diocese.'

But was this the ultimate source of the evil? No. If the Church had fallen into such a state of decadence, the fault was most undoubtedly due to long-standing abuses that had been forced on the Church by the civil power. Despite the opposition of synods and councils, the feudal system had gradually transformed the patronage, which it had forced upon the Church, into a sort of proprietary right. In the next place, the separation between services rendered and the remuneration that accrued became here, as elsewhere, more and more accentuated. It was, at first, favourites of the feudal nobility, and then, increasingly, favourites of the kings who received the greater part of such emoluments: the men who were actually working on the spot were forced to, live on a pittance that was

occasionally only a sixth of the total revenue.(15) The royal power, having become master both of temporal interests and external authority, extended its encroachments. Kings favoured religion and saw that it was practised, but reserved to themselves the right to accept or refuse the decrees of Church councils. Hence the State's prolonged refusal to promulgate the decrees of the Council of Trent and hence, too, that great Catholic Assembly's efforts at reform were, in great part, unavailing, at least as far as the Church in France was concerned.

These scandals have been fully discussed-it is quite sufficient here merely to note their existence-for, even in S. Bernard's day, they had forced him to write: ' Schoolboys, youths scarcely emerged from childhood, are promoted to ecclesiastical dignities on account of their noble birth, and escape the rod to take their rank amongst the clergy.' One need only read Bossuet, the funeral oration on the Princess Palatine, for example, to see that it was equally true of the seventeenth century. We need not insist-it would be superfluous on the plague of benefices, all of which were at the royal disposal, or on the scandal of commendatory abbots, who, in the epoch with which we are dealing, were sometimes Protestants, royal bastards, or young noblemen banished from Paris on account of their notorious disorderly lives, or because they had become a source of danger to their own families: often enough they were exiled to a provincial see, just as wastrels or persons who have made things too hot for themselves are now despatched to the Colonies.(16) We have already called attention to the efforts of a few sincerely zealous bishops. But such men were few in number. When Richelieu took possession of his see in Luçon, a bishop had not been seen there for sixty years. The

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monarchy, availing itself of the subtle distinction between the power of orders and the power of temporal jurisdiction, conferred the latter, and ultimately granted such authority to any man it pleased, with the sole obligation that he should take sub-deacon's orders, even without preparation. ' I tremble,' cried S. Vincent de Paul, 'lest this damnable traffic in bishoprics may bring down the curse of God on this kingdom.' Henry IV, Louis XIII, and Richelieu made honest efforts to go against the stream. One may estimate the extent of this moral ruin by re-reading the decisions of the Council of Conscience, with which S. Vincent de Paul had to be satisfied, when he succeeded, at length, in extorting them from the Council, under the regency of Anne of Austria. Children should no longer be nominated to episcopal sees. They should have attained the age of ten years before being provided with an abbey, and sixteen before they could obtain a priory or canonry in a cathedral church; and a man should have been a priest for one year before he could be promoted to a bishopric.

Mazarin made no delay in putting a brake on all such reforms-insufficient as they were. Olier and Eudes were not afraid to reproach him for his conduct in this respect, and hence their opposition to the Cardinal. We may then observe a double movement. On the one hand, a development of regal absolutism which, whilst associating the leaders of the clergy with the splendours of the Court, made far more use of, and compromised ecclesiastics than it helped them, as if kings were bent on demonstrating that the apparent division of Power would never be of the same value to the Church as the freedom of its ministers, and that a policy, such as that of 1682, was bound to lead, sooner or later, to a civil constitution of the clergy.

On the other hand, we have the saints, and men and women who closely resembled saints, labouring by word and example for the spiritual reformation of the clergy, the first pledge of a general reform in morals. Between these two classes came some men of worth, virtue, and even genius, who held a difficult, crossbench position, and who sincerely desired the success of the second movement and

strove to bring it about, but who frequently allowed themselves to be influenced by the first movement, and that to an extent far greater than they themselves would have wished. They allowed themselves, in fact, to be influenced to such a degree that they imperilled not only the independence of the Church but even the freedom of the body politic. There is no need to say on which side the young priest, John Eudes, took his stand.

NOTES

1. This is one example amongst thousands of the 'ennoblements,' which were laughed at, even in the seventeenth century, which persisted, in many families, to the beginning of the nineteenth, and which helped to discredit the idea of an aristocracy. John Eudes's brothers made no eta claim to nobility, when they adopted the particle 'do' and-a distinctive name. Many persons affected to believe, and endeavoured to make others believe, that they belonged to the nobility. It is interesting to note, in the case of the End% family, that it wan the younger brothers who adopted the particle, whilst the eldest retained the family name.

2. See Hérambourg, *Le Doré's* edition, P. 292.

3. The Council states that: ' Instead of exhorting and preaching the word of God to the people, in accordance with their obligations, parish priests we compelled, in the middle of the Mass, to carry out the duties of sergeants, public criers. toll collectors, ~proclaimers of rates and taxes, and the prescriptions and ordinances of secular princes, judges, and magistrates.'

4. 'A treatise on the respect due to sacred places.' *Traité de l'honneur dû aux lieux sacrés*, Vol. 11 of *The Complètes Works* (in the edition based entirely on the original text), Vannes, 1906, PP. 43 and 44. The quotations already given we taken from the same book.

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5 . Sainly French priests of the seventeenth century.' (*Les saints prêtres français du XVIIe Siècle*, by M. Letourneau, Angers and Pads. 1897, P. 210)

6. The Calvinists had also, by their pillagings, greatly contributed to this result.

7. It was at this time that the notorious cases of diabolical possession at Loudun took place. (See, on this whole question, Bremond's *Histoire Littéraire*, etc., Vol. V, ch. v, pp. 179, etc.)

8. Abbé E. Martin, *History* of the Dioceses of *Toul and Nancy*, 3 vol., 1901.

9. Abbé Martin, *op. cit.*

10. See Faillon's *Life of M. Olier*, 4th ed., Vol. II, P. 6.

11. OP. cit., P. 47.

12. We were surprised,' says M. Du Ferrier (Sulpician), in his *Memoirs*,' at the mama in which God directed him in this matter of his natural temperament ... he was harsh, and we tried to be the same, only we were a little more polite.' It is a well-known fact that, though Bourdoise was desirous of entering into relations with M. Olier and of collaborating with him in the reformation of abuses, the best way he could discover for doing so was to prohibit M. Olier from saying a mass in Bourdoise's Community Chapel at Saint Nicholas du Chardonnet, on the pretext that M. Olier and his companions 'had something in their bearing that was not entirely conformable with ecclesiastical modesty.' (Faillon, *op. Cit.*, 1, P. 228.)

Bremond, in his *Histoire Littéraire*, Vol. III, P. 228, is not quite so tolerant of M. Bourdoise's eccentricities and 'Danubian rusticity.' He has, moreover, some valuable remarks as to the extent of the alleged decadence of the French clergy in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. VOL. I, pp. 220, etc.; VOL. II, PP. 4. etc., OP. cit. (j. L.)

13. Father Cloyseau remarks, speaking of a diocesan visitation carried out. in 1619 or 1620. by the Archbishop of Aix, who was accompanied by the Oratorian Father Romillion, that ' The best fruit of this visitation was the Instruction given to the priests who, in some villages, ~ found to be so ignorant that they gave absolution with an *Awe Mafia*. because they believed that, with the Sign of the Crow, all words had power to absolve.' (Cloyseau, *Bibliothèque oratorienne*, Pousielgue, 1, 126.)

14. Abelly, Life of S. Vincent de Paul. VOL. I. Ch. 23.

15. See Abbé Lesêtre's *La Paroisse*, Vol. I, in the Collection published by Lecoffre (Paris) under the title, *Bibliothèque d'économie sociale*.

16. See E. de Broglie's Life of S. *Vincent de Paul* (Saints Series).

CHAPTER II

THE ORATORY-THE BEGINNING OF THE MISSIONS

Accordingly, John Eudes entered the Oratory. What had Peter de Bérulle, the founder of this illustrious Congregation, intended it to be? A select band of priests who, by word and example, were to labour for the re-establishment of the priesthood in all its integrity. And what exactly did he mean by integrity? He tells us himself, with all the clarity and vigour that can be desired: 'God,' he writes to the Fathers of the Oratory, 'had intended to establish authority, holiness, and learning, in one and the same Order; but, owing to the relaxation of religion, what was meant to be one has now become divided. Authority has remained with the prelates, holiness with the religious orders, and learning with the Universities. But even though they are divided God has preserved, in different parts of his Church, what he had joined together in the ecclesiastical state.' What then was left to be done by priests, properly so called, by men who were neither prelates, monks, nor professors? just what remains, even to-day, in decadent clerical bodies, such as the Russian clergy-the observance of ritual, formal administration of the Sacraments, and ceremonial that is both misunderstood and misinterpreted. Hence the primary end of the new Congregation was to be the restoration of this shattered

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union: if, along with learning and holiness, it aimed at recovering 'authority,' it was not so much the type of authority that commands as the type that persuades. And the first Oratorians fought with all their might against the three evils which afflicted the religious society of their, time. They armed themselves against luxury by the voluntary practice of poverty, against ambition by their vow not to seek for benefices or ecclesiastical dignities, and against idleness and uselessness (1) by the assiduous exercise of the functions of their sacred ministry. The Superiors, in Caen, who had encouraged John Eudes to join the Oratory, clearly perceived that his natural desire to be useful, and that his innate tendency for direct action would not be satisfied if he joined an enclosed order. The pious company to which he now turned was, in point of fact, just a body of priests who remained priests, and it cannot be better defined than by reproducing the exact terms of Paul W's Bull (which was, doubtless, drawn up according to the intentions of the founder, and of which every word should be weighed). 'Their primary and principal end is to devote themselves wholly to the perfection of the sacerdotal state, to embrace all such works as properly and essentially appertain to it, and as may be prescribed for them by the Ordinary of those places wherein they may be established, and by no others; to consecrate themselves, moreover, to the instruction of priests and those who aspire to Holy Orders, not only in what concerns learning but the use they should make of this learning, the ceremonies of the Church and all that strictly appertains to clerical conduct.'

Learning, evidently, was certainly not excluded for, if it was to be directed, it must have been acquired but the formal end of the Oratory was practical, and

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intertwined with the uplifting of the active, militant clergy, whose dignity and authority were, at this period, so gravely compromised. Rome, whilst placing the members of the Congregation at the disposal of the bishops, and submitting them to their jurisdiction, had, nevertheless, intended to give them, in another form, greater freedom of action in regard to local or temporary influences, by decreeing that, as far as their statutes and rules were concerned, they depended on the Sovereign Pontiff alone. But here we must give de Bérulle's own words. 'This Congregation, which holds a

middle place between seculars and regulars, is of necessity bound to have some elements of both, and this will be found in its dependence on the Pope, as far as its statutes are concerned, and its submission to the bishop in the exercise of its functions. You are aware of what little power our bishops in France possess over secular ecclesiastics in their employments, apart from those to which honours or emoluments are attached, and these we willingly abandon to the secular clergy, and over religious in the matter of restraining and repressing them; now, this Congregation desires to be religious (2) in spirit and intention, and to submit to our prelates, in the exercise of its functions.'

There is, perhaps, something both defective and excessive in these clear-cut lines of the Oratorian edifice. Defective, inasmuch as the Oratorians were charged with the duty of leading priests to perfection, and yet were not clearly called to train them. At this point it is important to call attention to this defect, because this precisely is what John Eudes took upon himself to remedy. Excessive, inasmuch as they were authorised, or rather invited, to establish colleges for young laymen. The founder would, indeed, have

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preferred to exclude this form of work, for it was not one of the pressing needs of the day, or, at least, one of those that were still waiting to be remedied. It is not known at whose suggestion or influence Rome added this particular employment. It was secondary, and it also constituted a danger of attracting all other energies to itself. And this, in point of fact, is what did occur. Both historians of the Congregation of the Oratory and those of contemporary and similar societies, have agreed in seeing in this circumstance one of the sources of that deviation and weakness from which the Oratory was so soon to suffer.(3)

But, in the meantime, the young Norman cleric found in the Paris Oratory surroundings that suited him for many years. He was, indeed, to remain an Oratorian for twenty years, in the course of which he had as Superiors General, Father de Bérulle for six years, Father Charles de Condren for twelve, and Father Bourgoing for two. Yet, however excellent the end of the French Oratory and however wise its organisation, it contained an element that was, perhaps, of even still greater value to the newcomer, and that was the character of the men whose duty it was to pursue the end, and maintain the organisation.

He made his first retreats under the guidance of de Bérulle: for this great man, whom S. Francis de Sales admired so much that he said he wished he could have lived with de Bérulle, loved nothing so much as the performance of the duties of his state. At the age of eighteen, he had written a treatise on Voluntary Abnegation which his confessor ordered him to publish, lest souls should be deprived of the lessons that could be derived from it. It may be said with truth that de Bérulle, whether at the head of an illustrious Congregation, or at Court, or in the course of his famous

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Ambassadorships, or under the Cardinal's purple, was never faithless for a moment to the inspiration so clearly manifested by the mere title of his first book. A rival-despite himself---of Richelieu's, whom he mistakenly regarded as as disinterested as himself, he served that minister so well that he first aroused the Cardinal's jealousy and, in the end, his secret resentment. A convinced Cartesian, a consummate theologian, a contemplative and a man of action, Bérulle took part in all the great political and religious movements of his day: the establishment of the Carmelite Nuns in France and the pacification of their monasteries, the king's reconciliation with his mother, the opposition to dangerous policies suggested by foreigners, the first idea of the siege of La Rochelle, and Embassies to Rome and London. But the moment he was free, he immediately returned to his practices of prayer, humility, and asceticism.(4)

He was a gentleman of that fine old stock who amused Henry IV by their witticisms, and were the honoured confidants of Louis XIII. Their familiarity had its source in their ancient lineage, and their liberty of speech was tempered by a sincere attachment to their Sovereign. With the help of authentic documents (5) we may see de Bérulle addressing the Pope, with mingled French and Catholic zeal, and with mingled subtlety and independence, when he was entrusted with the commission to induce His Holiness to choose between France and Spain in the matter of Charles the First's marriage. In his secret memorandum to Richelieu, written in reply to the attacks by certain jesuits, one feels, at every moment, the presence of an irony that could easily become biting were it not controlled by the sincere grief which he experienced in being forced to reply to such charges. A fervent

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supporter of orthodoxy, he loved new scientific and philosophical speculations to such an extent as to earn the lively gratitude of Descartes. A formidable enemy of the Huguenots, he was not afraid to tell them that, 'born with arms in their hands,' they could only expect to die in the same fashion;(6) but, after he had described them 'destroying our cities, ruining our provinces, and empurpling our countrysides with the blood of Christians,' he addressed them in the following noble words: 'Enter into a nobler state of mind, convert this fierce fury into a holier passion, adopt a more human, a more Christian form of combat, the *battle of mind with mind, in the search for salvation.*' And with all this he was, at the same time, as humble as the lowliest monk in a convent. He served his companions, with heart and hand, in all their spiritual and corporal necessities. After first cultivating the virtues and abilities of his disciples he then set himself the task of making them known, and was the first to go and listen to their sermons, whilst obstinately refusing to preach himself.

Such was the admirable Superior who personally took John Eudes in hand, and supplied him with methods for the preparation, development, and conclusion of his mental prayer. Hitherto, the postulant had practised, according to the teaching of the Jesuits, the more detailed method of the exercises of S. Ignatius. Whilst treasuring its precious fruits for the remainder of his life, he was, we are told, led by his new master into a more simple and spontaneous method. Father Eudes's mental characteristics, doubtless, denoted a precocious aptitude for preaching, for we read this brief note in his memoirs: 'I began in the same year, 1623, to preach at the command of my superiors, although I was not as yet in Holy Orders,

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May thy works praise thee, O Lord, and may thy Saints call thee blessed!' After a year thus spent in the Paris house, he was sent to a house for retreats, in close proximity to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Virtues, at Aubervilliers. The King and the royal princes were accustomed to visit this sanctuary, and it was here, in fact, that Louis XIII made a vow to build Notre Dame des Victoires. S. Vincent de Paul visited the Church on more than one occasion, and so did Cardinal de Bérulle, who was accompanied by Madame Acarie.

When Bérulle set out for Rome to make arrangements for the wedding of Henrietta of France with Charles I of England, he left his pupil prepared to receive the order of sub-diaconate, which was, in point of fact, conferred on John Eudes in Quarter Tense Week, September 1624. Father Gibieuf, the acting Superior, expressed a wish that John should go to Séz and receive this Order at the hands of his own bishop. In Easter 1625, he went to Bayeux to receive the diaconate; and, nine months later, in the Quarter Tense of December 1625, he celebrated his first Mass on Christmas night. He was then twenty-four years old. In this way, the chief events of his religious life nearly always coincided with the most moving feasts of the Church. No one was readier than he to meditate on

this fact, and, so to say, leisurely savour its mystical signification. Hence, amidst surroundings where his youthful enthusiasm could allow itself free scope, far from the profanations that had afflicted him in the Norman countryside, he yielded to such transports of religious emotion as he alone could adequately express. All his biographers attribute to him the following remarks: 'The Holy Sacrifice is something so great that it would require three eternities to offer it up

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fittingly; the first to prepare for it, the second to celebrate it, and the third to return thanks.'

Although Cardinal de Bérulle, despite himself, was often diverted from his favourite occupations by the political missions entrusted to him, he still kept a watchful eye on one who gave so much promise and whose virtues so well deserved attention nevertheless; he handed John Eudes over to the special care of his future successor, Father Charles de Condren. This was, in many respects, a fresh initiation for our Saint, or rather a new form of nourishment for his hunger after sacerdotal perfection. John Eudes's young master was, like Cardinal de Bérulle, a gentleman who had perceived at an early age that 'the great adventure' was not to be found in the Army or at Court, although he had been well fitted for either by his early training. According to a contemporary writer he was one of that small band who were destined to re-make the Church of France, as Noah, after the Deluge, had re-made the human race. If the comparison may be slightly modified, there was none better fitted to recall the dove that left the Ark and returned with the olive branch in its beak. As a youth, he had concealed a library of books of theology beneath the mattress of his bed, and found means to read S. Augustine and S. Thomas in the woods, whilst shouldering an arquebus, and starting some game here and there to please his father. It needed a prolonged attack of illness, that was looked on as mortal, before family opposition could be overcome, and permission given him to 'join the Church,' and his recovery was regarded, in a manner, as payment for the long deferred consent. With his amazing erudition and exquisite qualities, he was, said de Bérulle, too gentle, too simple, and too modest to be appreciated by the crowd; and his

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Superior had come to the conclusion that Charles de Condren's apostolate would not be a success in the provinces. He was formed to act upon an elite, and on it he exercised an irresistible attraction. He trained M. Olier, who was not an Oratorian, and Father Eudes, who was. It would seem as if he required a noble soul if the full extent of his charm was to be felt. But once contact had been established, men were filled with admiration, and no language seemed extravagant to express their feelings. S. Chantal's testimony that, 'if S. Francis de Sales was created to teach men, Father de Condren seemed to have been created to instruct angels,' does not stand alone. M. Olier, (7) in his unpublished memoirs, expresses himself with even greater feeling. 'Father de Condren,' he says, 'presented but a phantom and shell of what he actually was, for interiorly he was quite another being; Jesus Christ, in truth, lived within him, and his life was bid with Christ in God. . . . Our Lord who dwelt in his person, prepared him to preach the Christian religion, to renew the primitive piety and purity of his Church, and this, indeed, is what that great man desired to bring about in the hearts of his disciples during his sojourn in this world, which passed unknown to men like Our Lord's sojourn on earth.'(8)

After such testimonies we can only offer up a prayer that the Church, which has enrolled their disciple, S. John Eudes, in the catalogue of her saints, may one day render the same honour to these great men. Furthermore, her action reveals the true extent of the honour paid to John Eudes, since she decided to place him upon her altars before his teachers. Were it not that we are forbidden to indulge in speculations on this topic, we might imagine that the Saint owes this\$

privilege, in the first place, to the amazing activity with which he developed, for the good of souls, the practical consequences of doctrines common to himself and his masters, and secondly, that he voluntarily advanced to the relief of all who were in need of his well informed and enlightened charity.

Father de Bérulle, after his disciple's ordination, was anxious to safeguard his health, and it was, perhaps, owing to his intelligent solicitude that John Eudes became robust enough to bear the crushing burdens of that prolonged apostolate of which we shall treat. But, at this period, his health was impaired. Accordingly, he was sent back to Our Lady of Virtues, and there he devoted himself assiduously to the practice of prayer, penance, and the study of the Sacred Scriptures. This branch of study was, doubtless, the only one allowed him just then, if he had to follow the same regulations as Father de Condren had prescribed for M. Olier, and his other disciples, in like circumstances. Another point worth noting, as a personal trait, is that John Eudes preferred to read the Bible without a commentary. Later on, he was wont to say that this was the best means of thoroughly knowing, and drawing inspiration from, the Sacred Writings. Hence he recommended his sons never to begin by reading commentators, who should be consulted only after a full and personal study of the sacred text. Towards the end of November, he seemed to be strong enough to return to the house of the Oratorians in the Rue Saint-Honoré. (9) He continued his clerical studies and, in Particular, prepared himself for preaching by listening to the most famous orators of the day; but this life of study was rudely interrupted by the news

that plague had broken out in his native place, Argentan. His father wrote and depicted the utter desolation of the town; he described the people as devoid of all resources, spiritual and corporal, for terror had created a void around every dwelling attacked by the scourge.

The young priest quickly made up his mind. He asked permission to go nurse the sick and assist the dying. The active nature of his charity, and the character of his apostolic mind were thus clearly revealed. The Superior, who was, in the course of the following year, to give, in his own turn, an example of similar devotedness, deferred permission for a time; but yielded when the constancy of John's resolution was shown by his repeated requests. He provided the young priest with letters of recommendation, told him to ask for advice, and to neglect no precautions. John's preparations were quite simple, and were soon made; all he had to do was to pack, in a small bag, his breviary, some fresh linen, a steel box to hold the sacred species for administering the Viaticum, and the essential parts of a portable altar, in case it should be needed. Thus furnished, the young Oratorian set out for Normandy on foot, staff in hand, with his baggage under his arm.

He had first to go to Caen, and there provide himself with new letters of recommendation from the Superior of the Oratory in that city. But what he was especially anxious to find out was where was the plague raging most fiercely, and where the people were most neglected. His wishes were fully realised. 'In those places, which were indicated to him, and whither he repaired,' says Hérambourg, 'he could not obtain hospitality, either from the parish priests, or from the gentlemen of the district.' At length he met a priest, more

courageous than the others, who had remained at his post. He was 'a poor priest,' Father Eudes writes in his Memoirs, '(but not the parish priest) of the parish of Saint Christopher.' These two brave men shared the toil. From August 25th to All Saints Day, Father Eudes spent, by the side of the sick

and dying, every available moment after he had said Mass in the morning, and taken a little repose at night. (He slept in his clothes.) The epidemic was dying out in the country-side, when the town of Argentan was threatened with an attack. Father Eudes hastened thither, and, according to one of his early biographers, (10) advised the inhabitants to place themselves under the protection of the Blessed Virgin. The plague ceased. In memory of this event a statue, which may still be seen, was placed over the city gates. The danger seemed quite over when the volunteer chaplain of the plague-stricken was told that his Superior, Father de Bérulle, had been created a Cardinal. Father Eudes wrote to congratulate him, and to ask for orders. Did he return to Paris? It is not quite certain. In any case, if he did so, it was only for a short time; for we know that he was sent almost immediately to reside in the Oratory at Caen. It was the intention of his superiors that he should prepare himself there for the great and essential work of preaching missions in country parishes with his fellow Oratorians.

He spent two years in Caen, and we know very little about his time there, except that he worked hard, Prepared himself for his future tasks, made a careful study of the Casuists and, above all, fulfilled with the utmost zeal the humble duties of his state, preaching, hearing confessions, and teaching catechism. . . . Suddenly, his quiet life was interrupted by a fresh outburst of plague, and, on this occasion, the city of Caen,

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suffered its most violent attacks. Numbers of the inhabitants were dying. ' The gentry hastened away to the country, or to places in the neighbourhood. . . . The parish priests, curates, and other ecclesiastics fled, or went into hiding through fear of death. There were very few generous enough to carry out, in presence of danger, the essential duties of their state.' (Martine).

But Father Eudes was quite prepared to do his duty as he understood it, that is to say without reserve or measure. He forced, so to say, the hands of his Superior, Father de Repichon, at whose death-bed he assisted in the course of the plague, and, in order to avoid spreading contagion, he lodged-if it can be called a lodging-in a large barrel which he had prepared for himself in the middle of a field. This circumstance was long remembered, and people years afterwards used to speak of ' the Saint's field.' However, on this occasion, he seems to have received more help than he had previously found in Argentan. If some communities had yielded to the spirit of the age, others preserved intact the spirit of their vocation. Thus we are told that Capuchins and Jesuits nursed the sick poor in hospital in the suburbs and even died there. Father Eudes went, by preference, to the assistance of those who were attacked by the plague in their own homes. He was helped by Madame de Budos, Abbess of the Benedictine nuns of the Holy Trinity, (11) who sent food every day to this Christian Diogenes in his kennel. The Carmelite nuns of S. Teresa's reform, who were established in the city and who already had some experience of his priestly zeal, sent him word that they were aiding him by their prayers and practices of devotion. After he had assisted many dying persons and converted several sinners-and also some Calvinists, as we are told-he was at length

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attacked, not with the plague, but with a sort of violent fever which threatened to end his life. Had he sought for death, as some of his disciples aver? In any case, he welcomed and hailed it, so to say, as his reward, but the Carmelite nuns had to send him their excuses for having obtained his recovery. We say excuses. They did so in a delightful letter, dated May 6, 1633, which Father Costil has preserved. It throws a gracious light on the relation between Father Eudes and those charming nuns.

' Most Reverend Father, we have heard that you were very much afraid that we had snatched you out of God's hands. Ah, no, do not fear that. Oh! Heaven forbid; we have not such little charity in

your regard. To rest in the hands of so loving a Father, gently reposing within the arms of his loving Providence, is sweet and pleasant; you are too happy there for us to remove you. . . . What we had in mind, in our daily prayers on your behalf, and what we desired, was the fulfilment of the verse of the psalm: *Invoca me in die tribulationis, eruam te et honorificabis me.* We do not pray absolutely for a continuation of your life, but only that you may live for the greater glory of our sole, most dear, and well-Moved Jesus. And if it be his good pleasure to take you to himself, we have resolved to endeavour rather to rejoice at your happiness than grieve at our own loss. But should this happen, we beseech you, when you are with Our Lord, to do us the favour of offering us up to him, and beg him to accomplish in us his adorable designs. We also beseech you to salute, on our part, the Most Blessed Virgin, our holy mother S. Teresa, our blessed Father S. Joseph . . . and all our holy relatives and friends. But Jesus Christ still desires to glorify himself in, and by, You, in this vale of tears, there is no remedy,

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Father; you must needs be patient; even if you were at the gates of Heaven, ready to enter in, we would draw you back. It does not matter that you have made your will, you must make up your mind to bear with this exile, for the love of him who is all in all to you.'

The decadence of religious life was, as we may see by this letter, neither universal nor irremediable. There were men and women quite ready to assist France to rise again,(12) and tie Bérulle was quite justified in saying that holiness flourished amongst the members of the religious orders—at least amongst a large number of them. But the task was to propagate, as much as possible, holiness amongst the faithful, without distinction of rank or condition. And this, precisely, was to be the life work of John Eudes. There are some Congregations, the Redemptorists, for instance, who help to remind us of what a mission, even in country districts, precisely means. A number of priests arrive in a parish and invite the people to come to Church at stated times. The missionaries share a variety of rôles amongst themselves, and devote all their energies to holding the attention of their congregations by every means which the variety of Catholic ceremonial supplies. They enquire into the special spiritual difficulties and temptations of the people amongst whom they are working. But they do not, like the parish clergy, preach on one particular subject, according to the feast or gospel of the day, but on all the essential points of the Christian religion. They also devote themselves to the task of revealing the fruits of Christian doctrine and morals, by their efforts to restore piety, to reconcile families who are at variance, to put an end to certain scandals, and to bring back hardened sinners, who have experienced, for a long period, great difficulty in confessing their sins. For such an undertaking much tact

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and persevering vigour is required. We may well believe that John Eudes had both, when we read the following verdict of one of his contemporaries—' he was a lion in the pulpit, and a lamb in the confessional.'

His merit was all the greater inasmuch as he had scarcely any precursors or models in this art. He gave his first mission in 1632, at Lessay, in the diocese of Coutances, and it was followed, in the same year, by missions at Périers, Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte, Haye-du-Puits, Montebourg, and, finally, at Cherbourg. Father Martine, speaking of them, says: 'Those holy exercises, which were then quite novel, showed, by the marvellous fruits they produced, what might be expected from missions.' They can scarcely be called 'novel' because S. Vincent de Paul had been, for some time, training his priests for this evangelical work. But it was only on January 8, in this very year 1632, that, together with his priests of the Mission, he took up residence in the priory of Saint Lazare. (13) It was only in 1634 that M. Olier, who had begun by collaborating with S. Vincent, gave his

remarkably successful missions in Auvergne. The great missions preached in Brittany by Fathers Le Nobletz and Maunoir lasted from 1642 to 1672. Hence Father Eudes may rightly be credited, in some respects, with the creation of a new form of work of which the spirit, method, and results were due to him alone.

The report of his doings spread so rapidly that the Carmelite nuns of Caen, recalling to mind that their chief Work is to pray that the Church may have good priests, hastened to congratulate and, above all, to encourage him whom, despite the charming letter we have seen, they were very glad to see alive. There can be no doubt that, on this occasion also, the community employed the pen of the same Sister who had already

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written to Father Eudes. She addresses him now in language as mystical as it is charming: 'Were it not that we wish to be conformed, in all things, to God's good pleasure, we would envy those who are called to such holy labours. Nevertheless, this privation, inherent in our condition, does not deprive us of the power of acting as you do, although in a different manner. We shall consider ourselves happy, if Our Lord will be pleased to accept the prayers which we offer up to him with this intention, and if we can help you, in any way, to lead souls to a more holy life. We often visit those souls through the holy angels whom we send out to you, accompanying them in spirit. One of our own special missions (all of which are united with yours) concern the Blessed Sacrament, which we visit every day with this intention, and Our Reverend Mother has given us permission to apply and offer to Jesus Christ all our devotional exercises on behalf of our mission. I use the word "our," because your charity has associated us with yours.'

Our Saint's first biographer tells us that the following years (1633-1634) 'present nothing that deserves mention,' and then immediately belies himself, for what better deserves mention than the following: 'He spent those two years in completing his preparations for the work of the missions, for which he had excellent qualifications and a special attraction. As John Eudes was living in solitude, he went over in his mind all that he had observed in those parishes where he had laboured; he understood the great needs of both clergy and people, and sought for means by which he could most efficaciously remedy them. He saw that it was necessary to prepare many more sermons than he had yet written on the most important truths of our religion, so as to be always ready to preach in the course

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of the missions, when we are bound to preach frequently, and there is little time for the necessary preparation. He perceived that there was no less need to study the Casuists, so as to be quite prepared to decide cases of conscience and the most thorny points of Christian morality. Lastly, he applied himself especially, during these two years, to the holy exercise of prayer, holding converse with God on the important truths which it was his duty to preach; he penetrated himself thoroughly with them, so that when he had subsequently to set them forth it was clear that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'

In all this he was in the most complete harmony with Father de Condren. We have, indeed, a remarkable letter from the latter to a Father of the Congregation in which he traces a programme that Father Eudes seems to have thought out and applied for himself. 'Do not forget,' said the great Oratorian, 'that missionary labours, if they are to be Christian, should not be continual. . . . After a mission you should set apart a fitting time for retreat and repose in God; for God should be our repose in this life as well as in the next.' And he advised the Father, 'whilst waiting for another mission,' to study the clearest, most efficacious and popular methods of dealing with controversial subjects. 'It is

not so necessary to study these questions profoundly as to learn to set them forth, and to explain them briefly and clearly.' (14) Such, in point of fact, was the method of John Eudes, and we need not feel surprise that if Father de Condren had to teach it to others, he had no need to teach it to our Saint.

After these two years of fruitful repose in God, Father Eudes was again summoned to evangelise the countryside. In 1635, Mgr d'Angennes, Bishop of Bayeux, asked him to give five missions in the district

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around Caen. The new Bishop of Saint Malo next summoned him to his diocese, where the spiritual state of the people was even more lamentable. Ignorance and sensuality were associated with a sort of fierce wildness, congenial to the old Breton race, and, at this period, the latter characteristic was increased by the contagion of Calvinist hatred and diabolical superstitions. We should not be able to discover this from the historians of the missionaries, Fathers Le Nobletz and Maunoir, but Father Eudes lets us hear of it in a letter written to Madame de Budos, in which he recounts some of the incidents of this mission. Happily, he also tells us that the preaching of the missionaries had provoked, in those sturdy souls, outbursts of piety, which were rapidly directed into proper channels. On his return from Brittany, he proceeded to give missions around Caen and in Ri, his native village, where the members of his own family gathered around him. It was at this period he became acquainted with M. and Madame de Camilly, excellent Christians, who were from now onward to take such a prominent part in his existence. They paid the expenses of his missions; for it was almost always necessary to find charitable persons prepared to defray the expenses of ten or twelve priests and the special religious functions which they carried out for the thousands of Christians who flocked in from the surrounding countryside. Finally, we have now reached the moment which comes, sooner or later, in the lives of all great men, when their views become clear and definite, inevitable decisions taken, and methods fixed. Hitherto, the priest, in the pursuit of his youthful ideal, had seen all his tasks lying together before him. Now, confronted with the need for definite action, he had to examine his motives, form an estimate of what he would be able to accomplish, and

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arrange his tasks in the order in which he could take them up. Hence we should pause here to seek for the ultimate source of our Saint's great undertakings, and of their development which never ceased during all the various stages of a long lifetime.

NOTES

1. The words 'useless' and 'uselessness' frequently recur, and thus clearly bear witness to his predominant preoccupation.

2. In the context the word 'religious' refers to what is appropriate to a religious order.

3. Including the last, and by no means the least, eminent oratorian, Card. Perraud, *L'Oratoire de France aux XVIIe et XIXe siècles*, Paris.

4. 'On the evening of the treaty of Angoulême, whilst the Courts of both Henry IV and Mary de Medici, who were now reconciled, were already indulging in luxury and intrigue, amidst this crowded throng, where joy assumed such diverse shapes, according to the interests and powers of the various individuals, the man who had laboured indefatigably and with unspeakable courage for five months, was nowhere to be seen. When the Prince of Piedmont, his brother the Cardinal of Savoy, and the most eminent courtiers knocked at the door of his lodgings, he was not at home. Both the King and Queen frequently expressed a desire to see him, but he could not be found. Hidden in a confessional, in the monastery of

the Carmelite nuns of Tours, he spent the whole day of public rejoicings in the most rigorous fast and continual prayer.' (Abbé M. Houssaye, *Le Cardinal de Bérulle et l'Oratoire.*)

5. See Houssaye's book, already referred to.

6. In his book, *Les Grandeurs de Jésus*, Dedication to the King.

7. Quoted by Faillon, *Vie de M. Olier*, 4th ed., 11, 238.

8. Batterel, in the second volume of his *Memoirs*, published by Father Ingold (Paris, Picard. 1903), supplies us with the following portrait supplied by de La Mothe-Goulas, gentleman-in-waiting to Gaston d'Orléans: 'Imagine the rarest mind and the noblest soul in the world: he possessed "the arts and sciences with their most hidden secrets; he was not ignorant of anything that come within the scope of human knowledge; like Solomon, he discoursed from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall. He spoke, and wrote, easily and well. His conversation was so gracious and Pleasing that no one left his presence without having yielded to his charm. He loved to laugh during recreations; but when dealing with religious subjects he seemed to have been instructed by angels.'

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Never did the Christian religion seem so beautiful as when he spoke of it. He gave it a charm that might delight even the most impious.'

9. Built by de Bérulle; at the present day it is a Protestant church, but is still called 'the Oratory.'

10. Father le Beurrier, who completes Father de Montigny's account.

11. She had been nominated Abbess at the age of fifteen, but was quick to realise all that her duties entailed and to accomplish them. Father Costil writes in his *Annals*: 'Having found her monastery without enclosure, community life, regular religious dress, true silence and scarcely any observance of rule. she remedied all this in time by her patience, meekness, and good example.'

12. S. Francis de Sales, writing on November 8th, 1618, states: I have found such progress in piety in Paris that I am quite amazed.'

13. S. Vincent de Paul had begun to preach missions in 1625. Seven years later he moved from the Collège des bons Enfants to Saint Lazare. (T.N.)

14. *Lettres du P. de Condren*, edited by the Abbé Pin. (Lettre X1X.)

CHAPTER III

THE SOURCES OF HIS DOCTRINES-FATHER DE BÉRULLE-FATHER DE CONDREN FATHER EUDES'S BOOK ON 'THE KINGDOM OF JESUS'

THE teaching of Father Eudes seems to have been drawn from two different sources: the dogmatic lessons of his masters in the Oratory, Fathers de Bérulle and de Condren, and the practical lessons which he himself had learned from contact with the people whose evangelisation he had undertaken.

It goes without saying that the basis of his Superiors' teaching was the Catholic tradition, which they defended against the attacks of the Reformers and interpreted with irreproachable orthodoxy. But it is no less certain that an individual doctor may feel drawn to one particular dogma, which he proposes to state more clearly, and in such a manner as to throw new light on certain aspects of it, or to draw from it new applications which he considers apt for the enlightenment of faith and piety. Here, the task of the historian is quite easy, as far as de Bérulle is concerned, for Urban VIII, the head of the Church, tells us that: 'Father de Bérulle is the apostle of the Word Incarnate.' The Incarnation is, indeed, the Christian mystery most deeply studied and realised in the course of that great century. The Oratory, faithful to its traditions, even in our own times, regards the day on which 'the grandeurs of Jesus' is celebrated as its own special

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feast, and we know that the title of Cardinal de Bérulle's chief work is *les Grandeurs of Jesus*. He believed that the greatness of Jesus was to be seen in his birth to life eternal in the bosom of the Father, in his birth to temporal life by the conception of the Blessed Virgin, and in his birth to a glorified life by his passion and entombment. If we consider the divine nature, we may, perhaps, regard the mystery of the Word Incarnate as the central mystery of our religion and the one which, in a way, leads on to our Redemption. If we view this mystery from the standpoint of the creature, it is of incomparable importance to us, for, as Bérulle says, 'it owes its being to the first of these births, its supernatural life to the second, and its glorious resurrection to the third.' Let us consider this second birth more attentively. By the Incarnation the human race is elevated to the highest possible point of honour, because its union with the divine nature is thereby consecrated in the unique personality of the Word. The acts of Jesus were humanly divine and divinely human, the union of the two natures has been wrought in him by the most perfect communication that could possibly be effected.(1)

This communication should be maintained for the salvation of the human race. And what, indeed, maintains it if not the bond established between God and his creature by that form of the creature's life and respiration in its God, which we call adoration? And yet God could be worthily adored only by himself. Hence the Son has come to render him a fitting homage. How is it rendered? By the perpetuity of his oblation or sacrifice. Priests are associated in a special manner with this sacrifice, and the priesthood was instituted by Jesus Christ to that end. Before there were any religious orders founded by saints in the

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Church, there was and ever shall be an order that owes its origin to Jesus, and that order is the priesthood. Lastly, as to the faithful-if they desire to live by that divine life in which human nature is called to participate, they must renounce self, and make a sacrifice of the life which is only too human: then only shall they have a share in the power of the Incarnation. Nevertheless, there is

another condition-they must distrust their own strength and turn to those who have previously and more fully participated in the divine life, and, above all, to the Blessed Virgin in whose womb the union of those two natures took place.

Such is a summary of the dogma. It is replete with the greatness of Jesus, God and man. The mystery of the Incarnation is, in truth, the centre of created and uncreated being: the centre to which everything is related in the world of nature, in the world of grace, and even-which is more daring-in the order that surpasses both nature and grace combined, 'joining, whilst surpassing them by a new bond.' (2) Now this centre shall never be displaced, because there will always be only one God-Man.

This beautiful exposition of religious metaphysics and theology was sharply attacked by rival communities. The Oratory regarded it as a point of honour to remain loyal to it, and, some years later, Malebranche courageously developed its most metaphysical aspect. According to the author of *A Treatise on Nature and Grace* and the *Metaphysical Discourses* the mystery of the Incarnation not only explains the whole of the Catholic religion but the creation of the Universe itself. 'Yes, Most undoubtedly,' he writes, 'the Incarnation of the Word is the first and chief of God's designs, and the one that justifies his sway; it is, if I am not mistaken, the Only solution for thousands of difficulties and

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apparent contradictions. And, indeed, a world without God was unworthy of God. God could have no end save himself and, on the other hand, the world cannot be confounded with God. How then can a world that is not God be rendered worthy of the designs and decrees of God? By being destined from all eternity to be visited by the Son of God, God himself. I affirm,' the philosopher goes on to say, 'that it is because of Jesus Christ that the world subsists, and that there is nothing beautiful or pleasing in the sight of God save that which bears some relation to his well-beloved Son.'

It is obvious that the man who wrote those lines was saturated with Bérulle's theological teachings. It is no less clear that he has developed them and, in the eyes of many, ventured into a region of metaphysics which his predecessor had only skirted. It is a controverted point amongst Catholic theologians as to whether the Incarnation was solely a consequence of the fall, and if, in case man had not sinned, God would have none the less become Incarnate in a flesh that he would have raised to a glorious state. S. Thomas leaned towards the negative solution; Bérulle was doubtful (despite two or three veiled expressions). Malebranche was quite definite on the matter and, indeed, the principle which we have just seen him assert led him to this conclusion. He does not, indeed, speak of an Incarnation properly so called, but he does maintain some form of union with the Universe. 'If God had not become man, he might have become an angel.' 'Hence,' he says, in the *Treatise on Nature and Grace*, 'it is clear that, even if man had not sinned, a divine person would have united himself with the work of God in order to sanctify it and render it worthy of its Author, because it is

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bound to subsist, so to say, in a divine person, so as to render God a homage worthy of his divine Majesty!'

Let us, for the moment, leave aside the hypothesis of those who wish to explain the universe and creation. God has, in point of fact, become man in order that the human race may become, or become once more, worthy of its Author. The Incarnation is, in truth, the central dogma of the Catholic religion, and the mystery so proposed to our faith must needs have a long series of consequences for our edification and salvation.

Amongst these consequences Father de Condren had chosen the following. Jesus, no doubt, honours his Father. But that this honour may be acceptable, the world to which he has come must be purified. Hence Jesus offers himself to his Father as a victim of expiation. He is, at one and the same time, the victim of man and of God; and, as his sacrifice is to be perpetual, inasmuch as the human race is sinful, he is a being who perpetually participates in this quality of victim: he is a priest. M. Olier, who was inspired by those great dogmatic teachings of the first Oratorian Fathers, has written the following noble lines on this theme: 'In the new Law, wherein priests are priests in Our Lord, they should be so holy and raised above earth as no longer to be compelled to make atonement for themselves, but only for others. Even though a priest should never have offended God, he is, by his ministry, laden with the sins of all men.' At what precise point did Father Eudes, who, in a way, began where Father de Bérulle left off, summarise those sublime ideas for himself, and draw from them more practical conclusions? His greatest work, although (or perhaps because) it is his first book, is called *The Kingdom of Jesus*. (3) The Gospel tells us that

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Jesus told his disciples, 'The Kingdom of God is within you.' But this Kingdom can only be set up through the Passion of Christ and, consequently, through his Incarnation. Ever since the foundation of the Church our whole religious life is orientated towards the Man-God, Jesus Christ. Some men have foolishly believed that true religion demands that we should go straight to God, the Eternal Spirit. S. Teresa—following the universal tradition—says in reply that the person of Jesus Christ is an essential support for human infirmity. Furthermore, Father de Bérulle had pointed out to 'those new inquisitors,' as he calls his opponents, (4) that he had done no wrong to 'the Holy Trinity or the Eternal Father by thus elevating the state and greatness of Jesus.' John Eudes undertook to demonstrate this truth even more fully.

Jesus is not only a teacher whom we are bound to hear, a Master whom we should obey, a Saviour in whom we place our hopes, a model, as it were, for external imitation. He is far more than all these: he is something that dominates and embraces them - he is our life. 'All the sacred writings teach us that Jesus should live within us; that we should live only in him; that his life should be our life; that our life should be a continuation and manifestation of his, and that we have no right to live on this earth save in order to bear, manifest, sanctify, and make live and reign in us the name, life, qualities, perfections, dispositions, inclinations, virtues, and acts of Jesus Christ.' (5)

Here we see, side by side, the practical and doctrinal spirit of the missionary; the former is more freely developed, but it is solidly established on the latter. From the very beginning of his treatise, Father Eudes shows that he considers Christian morality and

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Christian action as the vital, habitual, and essential element. He speaks in the name of a faith which he himself possessed, and which he assumed in his hearers. To speak plainly, he was principally thinking of the poor, whose dim and uninstructed faith sought light from his preaching: they were, of course, Christians in heart and desire, but they were ignorant of how to be Christians in reality. He went to the poor and neglected, and explained to them the practices of the Christian religion demanded by the Church; he went amongst them and endeavoured to sustain and guide them.

It is evident, now, in the first place, that, as Jesus is God and has come to dwell amongst us, he should be the principle of everything that is good throughout the universe that he regenerated. 'He is all in all; he is the being of all that is, the life of all living things, the beauty of all that is beautiful, the strength of the strong, the wisdom of the wise, the virtue of the virtuous, the sanctity of

saints.'(6) Yes, but neither the sanctity of the saints nor the wisdom of the wise exists of itself, as does the beauty of the starry sky; where we have holiness we have saints, and where we have wisdom we have the wise. Father Eudes, at this point, is not so much arguing against Jansenism or Quietism as doing something far more essential. He is expounding his own doctrine, and that doctrine is the direct antithesis of both these errors. In the Kingdom of Jesus, which is to be established within us, we are neither the subjects of a tyrant, nor mere idle, lazy citizens. And the proof of this statement has been summed up in one great saying of S. Paul: 'I fill up in myself all that is wanting to the passion of Christ.' It has been shown how the Apostle's remark, at first sight so strange, contains the whole

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spirit of sanctity. Olier gave a finer interpretation of the passage than Bossuet (7) subsequently attempted. Father Eudes interpreted the text according to the mind of Olier. The mission of Jesus Christ is not, or, rather, will only be fully accomplished when all those for whom he has come will be gathered together; and, consequently, 'the time of his fullness' will be fulfilled only on the day of judgement.

We may go still farther, and we should not be afraid to enlarge the scope of the Apostle's statement. It is applicable not only to saints but, according to the Venerable M. Olier and S. John Eudes, it applies to every priest, for every priest renews, or continues, the Passion of Jesus Christ by the sacrifice which he offers at the altar, and the oblation of himself which he is bound to make for the redemption of those souls committed to his care. And even that is not sufficient. (8) The Son of God intends to consummate, and accomplish, all his states and Mysteries in us—that is to say, in each one of us. 'He means to perfect in us the mystery of his passion, death, and resurrection by making us suffer, die, and rise again in, and with, him.' Such is his action; now, what is ours?

It is surely obvious that we must prepare for his coming. We must put to death our own natural, carnal will, for it is a veritable Anti-Christ. We must choose between the life of nature and the life of Christ. To choose Christ is to share in his passion and to be prepared to bear witness to him, if necessary at the price of one's life. Are we then to prepare for martyrdom? Father Eudes had, indeed, a burning desire for martyrdom properly so called. He prayed for it, offered himself for it, and, in his enthusiasm, urged all his readers to take the same resolution. It did not astonish him that thousands of the faithful should give their

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lives for Jesus Christ who had died for them. It is a simple matter of justice that they should die for him, and they are, moreover, rewarded by the joys of love. No-what really did astonish him was to see Christians so firmly attached to this miserable life. (9) And here the devout author is so anxious to persuade us, that he exercises all his skill and energy in removing the difficulties that block our path. Yes, he continues, every one of us should be a martyr, at least in disposition and will, and we should accept all our sufferings in union with those of Jesus Christ. But let no man deceive himself! Whosoever does not desire to be a martyr of Jesus is a martyr of the Devil; whosoever will not embrace the cross is subject to the tyranny of sin; he is the martyr of his own self-love and passions, and he certainly gains nothing thereby.(10) Why hesitate? So far, as we may see, the Christian who attends the school of Father Eudes is far from being a passive pupil. But the energy demanded of him by our Saint should not simply be turned against self, in order to annihilate man's natural, interior corruption. 'Our earthly life has only been given us in order that we may fulfil the great designs of Jesus in our regard. Hence, we should spend our days and years in co-operating with this work of the Consummation of the mysteries of Jesus within us. We should co-operate by our good works, by prayer, by a frequent application of our mind and heart to contemplating and honouring the

different states and mysteries of Jesus throughout the different seasons of the year, in giving ourselves to him so that he may operate in us, for the sake of those mysteries, all that he operates in them for his own glory.' One may easily note how carefully all these expressions have been weighed, and how clearly the writer shows the

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attitude he has taken up, without any unnecessary controversy, against the errors of his own time.

We shall not now go into all the divisions and subdivisions, accompanied by detailed and definite commentaries, adopted by Father Eudes, who asks that each moment of the day should be sanctified by faith, hatred of sin, detachment from self, and prayer in its five forms, all of which should bring us to the four fundamental dispositions. Further means of sanctification in the week are the soul's daily association with the mysteries of the life of Christ, and the discharge of the duties of one's state in life. All these may be found in most treatises on asceticism. It is more important for our purpose to call attention here to how such prescriptions are, at the same time, extended and modified.

The Kingdom of God is within you; but the life led there is not a solitary one. God is our Head and we are his members—we—that is to say, once again, every one of us. In the mystical body which Christ has formed, no one member can isolate itself from the others, any more than one member of the body can isolate itself from the head. Whenever a true Christian prays for himself he prays, at the same time, for the living and the dead. 'The love of God and one's neighbour are inseparable' - 'Therefore, look upon your neighbour as one whom God loves, no matter in what state he may be; for God loves all that he has created, even the devils, in so far as they are his creatures, and he hates nothing that he has made; sin is the only thing he has not made, and God has a horror of sin.' Christian charity, therefore, is nothing else than a continuation and fulfilment of the charity of Jesus, and we should love our neighbour as Jesus loved us. We shall see later on how John Eudes

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combined precept with example. His charity made him feel the need of toning down, even in his writings, any element in his teaching on martyrdom that seemed too terrifying, and anything that might seem to engender a spirit of pride. He writes, 'But, nevertheless, when God is pleased to grant us consolations, they should not be set aside or contemned, lest we become guilty of pride and presumption; hence, no matter from what source consolations proceed, whether from God, nature, or elsewhere, we should strive carefully to make a good use of them, and, in this way, make all things, no matter whence they come, be of service to God.'(11)

That is the language of a saint, and especially a French saint—at any rate, it is the language of a real, true saint. John Eudes was endowed with all the elements of holiness, and, without excluding individuals, and bearing in mind the decisions taken by the supreme authority of the Catholic Church, we may insist once more on this point: that, amongst those great Catholic heroes of the seventeenth century, it was the man who had been most bitterly attacked and persecuted in his own day, the man who had been most ready to pour forth his gifts of mind and heart into the bosom of his neighbour, who was finally given precedence of so many of his great contemporaries in the golden book of the Catholic Church. Quite recently a witty and charming writer devoted an article to Cardinal Newman,(12) characterised by a sincere respect and an admiration which is of happy augury. In the course of this essay he asked how it was that a friend of the illustrious Cardinal's, who admitted all his merits and talents, and even genius, had failed to receive from him an impression of sanctity. 'Was it that Newman was wanting in two essential elements

of holiness, purity and humility? 'The essayist says, 'Certainly not,' and such an admission is at once edifying and prophetic. But these two elements of sanctity are not the only ones, and this rather unecclesiastical 'postulator of the cause' of a great Catholic Englishman has no difficulty in supplying an answer to his own question, and an excellent answer it is: 'Newman's device, his watchword,' he remarks, '*is God and myself*. He was alone with his God in the world. He will never be an apostle. He shuts himself up in a majestic, private interview. In brief, he is a spiritual aristocrat.' That was his weakness. Neither Father Eudes, nor S. Vincent de Paul, nor M. Olier forgot the other 'element,' which is just as important as purity or humility. 'God and my rights,' is an English maxim, and it has been a great force in the world. 'God and my brethren who are one with me,' is an apostolic device and the watchword of saints. Father Eudes never forgot it, either in his life or in his writings.

A person who opens this book for the first time-it is primarily a simple exercise *of devotion*, which was subsequently completed by *Discourses* and *Meditations* on Humility-may be tempted to say that the author has not left a single action of a man's life at his own free disposal, and that he has intertwined all our actions, great and small, from the moment we rise until we retire, in one long prayer, directed towards one end, namely, that each moment of our existence should find a place-and the most important one at that-for meditation on one of the states of the life of Jesus Christ. Such a life, one may think, is fitted only for contemplative monks; it is not, and it cannot be, the life of a man who has his worldly duties and obligations to fulfil. But Father Eudes is not so

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absolute. He certainly blames those persons who allow so many occasions, in their social and private lives, to go by almost without giving a thought to Jesus, just as he blames, but much more strongly, those who systematically exclude Christ from their lives. But he insists on pointing out to the former that, even if they let one occasion pass, twenty others will occur. And he has, I think, shown clearly (it is no formalism) that, if we wish to sanctify our daily actions, it is not necessary to interrupt their usual course, or plaster a special formula on to them. His explanation of this subject is clear and charmingly simple. 'I have suggested,' he says, 'these little practices so as to point out the way you should follow if you would walk always in the presence of God, and live in the spirit of Jesus. His Spirit will teach you many other practices, if you take care to surrender yourself to It at the beginning of your actions. For I beg you to note carefully that the practice *of practices*, the secret *of secrets*, the devotion *of devotions*, is, not to have an attachment to any special practice or exercise *of devotion*, but to take great care, in all your exercises and actions, to give yourself to the holy spirit of Jesus, and to do so with humility, confidence, detachment from all things, so that, finding yourself without attachment to your own spirit, devotions, and dispositions, the Spirit of Jesus may have full power and liberty to work within you. ... Should It inspire you to make use of the foregoing exercises, and others to be given later on, and should these be a source of grace and blessing to you, so much the better, make use of them. If It should draw you on to others still more excellent, or in which you find greater grace and unction, follow your attraction with simplicity and humility.(13)

We shall have occasion to revert to the teachings of

Father Eudes when we come to examine how he applied them to the spiritual guidance of priests, and the inauguration of devotion to the Sacred Heart. But we have, here and now, quite sufficient information to enable us to understand what was the spirit that inspired and informed him, as he travelled about evangelising the people, and constantly endeavouring to extend the bounds of his

apostolate.

NOTES

1. O Greatness of Jesus, to be the only one worthy of rendering perfect homage to the Divinity! O greatness of the mystery of the Incarnation, which establishes a state of infinite dignity within a creature.' (Les *Grandeurs de Jésus*, Second Discourse.)

2. *Seventh Discourse*. Leibnitz, who borrowed extensively from Malebranche, may have, directly or indirectly, drawn on some of these ideas, just as Pascal found, in the Sixth Discourse, the following sentence: ' He is an intellectual sphere the centre of which is everywhere and the circumference nowhere.'

3. The full title is: *The Life and Kingdom of Jesus in Christian Souls*. (English translation, B.O.W, London.)

4. *Sixth Discourse*.

5. OP. cit., Father Le Doré's edition, p. 104.

6. OP. cit., P. 273 (Jesu, puritas virginum, as the Liturgy says).

7. See Joly's *Psychology of the Saints*, pp. 23, 24.

8. See especially PP. 311, etc.

9. Commentators on Pascal have frequently called attention to a similar amazement.

10. See P. 296.

11. P. 277.

12. In *the Journal des Débats*. 11 P. 452.

CHAPTER IV

HIS MISSIONS, LABOURS, AND PROJECTS UNTIL HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE ORATORY

Let us for the moment keep to a chronological sequence of his labours and view them, so to say, from without, and as a mere series of events. He was constantly giving missions from 1638 to 1642, first in the dioceses of Bayeux and Lisieux, whither he was summoned by their bishops, who first encouraged and subsequently praised him to the skies. (1) At Caen, the Catholics, who were already quite prepared to repent of their misdeeds and lead lives more in conformity with their reawakened and now enlightened faith, came in crowds. Many Huguenots went to hear him from pure curiosity, and were held by the orator's talent; and a certain number of them abjured their errors in his presence. 'The fruits of these missions,' he says in his Memoir, 'were greater than can be set down.'

And yet the state of the country had made it difficult for men to listen to counsels of resignation and words of peace. Though the era of Mazarin's fiscal policy and Louis XIV's splendid prodigality had not yet arrived, nevertheless Richelieu's enterprises demantled large supplies of money; taxes weighed heavily on the people, and revolts broke out in the provinces. Normandy was first thrown into confusion and then stained with blood by the Barefoot insurrection and its

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subsequent pitiless repression. Father Eudes, therefore, set himself the task of showing the people that divine authority is infinitely more powerful and formidable than human, and that it behoves men not to provoke God's anger by outrage and disobedience. It is well known that the people listened to him, and that he produced a profound impression; this fact goes to show that his preaching was suited to the needs and disposition of his audience.

In the meantime, the Superiorship of Caen had fallen vacant. The enemies of Father Eudes—we shall come to them in a moment—subsequently accused him of having repeatedly begged this office with tears, and of having finally wrested the appointment from the feeble Father de Condren. There is no proof in support of this accusation. Neither the character of Father de Condren nor of Father Eudes, nor, indeed, that of the Oratory itself, will permit us to attach the least credit to this charge. What is true is that the Fathers of the Oratory at Caen requested Father de Condren to appoint Father Eudes their Superior, and that this petition was at first refused. Father de Condren was afraid lest the office of Superior might be incompatible with all the developments which he hoped for from Father Eudes's missions, but, at the repeated requests of his confreres, he yielded.

The new Superior was not slow to dissipate his master's fears. Scarcely had he been installed (according to some authorities, in the second half of 1639, according to others in 1640) than he gave a mission, in 1640, at Mesnil-Mauger; and, in 1641, after preaching a course of Lenten sermons in Lisieux, he gave five missions in succession, all of which were greatly blessed, as he tells us, at Urville (in the diocese of Bayeux), Remilly, Landelles (in the diocese of Coutances), in the

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city of Coutances itself, and, lastly, at Pont-Audemer. As we may see, the new Superior was not particularly keen on seeking out cultivated congregations and large cities. He went wherever he thought he might be useful. He also seems to have availed himself of that increased authority, in the eyes of the clergy, which was the result of his recent promotion to the office of Superior.

During the mission at Remilly, he began to give special conferences to the ecclesiastics of the neighbourhood. He wished to remind them of their obligations, and, with that end in view, endeavoured to bring them together at fixed hours on stated days. Hence he added the rôle of reformer of the clergy to that of missionary. He thus became an imitator and rival of S. Vincent de Paul, who had, in 1633, established the ' Tuesday conferences 'for the priests of Paris, and also of M. Olier who had, in 1636, organised similar meetings in Puy and Noyon. There is nothing in this to diminish the glory of Father Eudes. All of us are at liberty to imitate the saints and especially to co-operate in the completion of their labours. But, before we follow our hero along the new path he has begun to tread, let us not be in too great haste to abandon our pursuit of him in his primary work-the missions which he was to continue during the whole course of his life, and which earned for him his most memorable Successes.

The tales and eulogies of panegyrists are often suspect. It is safer to listen to the hero himself, when one is certain-as one can most assuredly be here-of his Christian humility.

One of the earliest biographers of John Eudes,

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Hérambourg, who joined the Congregation only two years after the death of its founder, and who was his favourite disciple, has preserved for us some portions of the Saint's letters, in which he supplies us with the clearest idea of the zeal that animated him on the missions, and the powerful attraction that he exercised over large crowds of people. In October 1641, he wrote, in the midst of his labours, to one of his children: ' I cannot tell you what a blessing God is giving this mission at Vasteville. It is certainly marvellous. I have not preached inside the Church for some time, because, although it is very large, nevertheless it is too small on this occasion. I can truthfully say that we have more than 15,000 persons present on Sundays. There are twelve confessors, but, without exaggeration, there is work for fifty. People come from places eight or ten leagues distant, and their hearts are deeply touched. There is nothing to be seen but the tears, nothing to be heard but the groans of poor, penitent men and women. The fruits observed by the confessors, in the sacred tribunal, are marvellous; but what does afflict us, is that we cannot confess a quarter of the people. The missionaries are exhausted. They meet with persons who have been waiting for eight days, without having been able to go to confession, and who throw themselves on their knees whenever they meet a priest, begging, with clasped hands and tears in their eyes, to be heard. And yet this is the sixth week since we came here. Ah! what a great work is the missions! And how necessary I What an evil to put any hindrance to them! Oh! if those who have prevented us from giving several missions in this diocese only knew the harm they are doing! Let us pray, my dear brother, that the Lord of the harvest may send labourers, and let us frequently say to him, Domine mennis,

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Mitte operarios in messem tuam. What are all those bachelors and doctors of theology in Paris doing, whilst souls are perishing in thousands for want of someone to stretch out a hand, withdraw them from perdition, and preserve them from eternal fire? Certainly, if

they would listen to me, I would go to Paris myself and shout out in the Sorbonne and the other colleges: " Fire Fire! The flames of hell are consuming the world Come out all you doctors, bachelors, priests, and ecclesiastics, and help us to quench them! " '

Such, in truth, is the missionary's ideal: knowledge and learning should be devoted to the uplifting of the populace. Father Eudes was quite well fitted, beyond the shadow of a doubt, to preach to the great ones of this world, as well as to devout and chosen souls, but when he did so, it was to

reach and save, by means of, and in union with, such souls, the crowds whom the Saviour had taught him to sympathise with. A man of whom we shall have much to say, M. de Renty, often asked to have missions preached, and he defrayed their expenses. Hence his testimony is worth having.

He wrote on one occasion to a nun, an intimate friend of his: 'Our great God has granted me as also all the poor people in this district, the grace of a mission preached by Father Eudes; he is a really apostolic man, and so, too, are his companions. Help me to thank the Lord for this great favour, for such it seems to me to be, when I consider not only the crowds who are attending it from all around, but even more the conversions, restitutions, reconciliations, and changed moral dispositions.' He adds that, as far as himself is concerned, he would like 'to be divided in pieces over the whole world,' so as to have a share in such a great work. On another occasion, he wrote to a friend who was living in the Burgundy College in Paris, 'Our

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mission, which only finished last Sunday, prevented me from giving myself the honour of writing to you sooner. It was accompanied, thanks be to God, with great blessings, if I am to judge by the manner in which the people behaved, by the number of acts of restitution which have been made, and by the quantity of profane novels and tales which were brought to be burned in public. Lastly, the missionaries would have liked to have been a hundred in number, instead of eighteen, in order to satisfy the people. They began at four, five, and seven o'clock in the evening. It is impossible not to be moved on seeing the fervour of the poor people who leave everything aside to go and hear the word of God. And this tribute should be paid to Father Eudes, namely, that he should be regarded as an admirable and extraordinary instrument of God in the ministry to which he has been called. Truths uttered so strongly, nakedly and holily cannot be resisted. (2) I shall say no more on this topic; it would take too long to go into details. There were more than 12,000 people present on the last day; a whole hillside was covered with them: it was a picture of the day of judgement.'

It would certainly take too much time 'to go into details.' Nevertheless, one cannot but recall the fact that people came from places six, seven, fifteen, and even more leagues distant to listen to John Eudes, despite the harsh wintry weather; that a woman travelled, in stages, more than a hundred leagues in order to be present at one of his missions; that many servant girls, unable to obtain leave of absence from their masters, hired others to take their place and in this way purchased an opportunity of hearing and speaking to him. A great variety of gifts was required for the exercise of such an influence. He needed a knowledge of how to

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choose, and rule, collaborators, and of how to inspire and retain men's confidence by methods removed from the faintest breath of malevolent suspicion. It was necessary for him to know how to attract simple souls by methods appropriate to their simplicity, and to kindle their imaginations and hearts, without giving grounds for criticism, more or less well founded, or of running the danger lest, once the first strong impressions had faded from such minds, nothing would remain. We have the most circumstantial accounts that not one of these gifts was wanting to our Saint, and that he had them even in an extraordinary degree.

As mission followed mission, the success of the most recent gave a foretaste of what was to come, and simple human curiosity helped to attract the people. Father Eudes, the leader of the missionary band, the better to respond to the expectation of the people, kept his collaborators grouped around him, and prepared for each new mission by a three days' retreat. He exacted from his colleagues great tactfulness, and even respect - which was not always easy - for the parish priest, who was to receive them. He requested them to accommodate themselves, as far as reason and conscience

would allow, to the mentality, humours, and feelings of those with whom they should have to deal. They were to hold a spiritual conference amongst themselves once a week. And, at the end of the mission, each missionary should make a three days' retreat in order to examine himself, and utilise the experience he had acquired, with a view to future missions.

From the reports of eye-witnesses, or the first recipients of these reports, we may clearly perceive that Father Eudes neither neglected nor omitted anything that could contribute to the interests of any section of his bearers, In the first place, he devoted to his

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work all the time that it demanded. He was not satisfied with merely passing *through towns* and villages; and he did not believe that to speak five times a day meant that a lasting impression had been secured. Writing to Mgr de la Vieuville, the Bishop of Rennes, in 1669, he says: 'In order that a mission may produce some change in the lives of the faithful it is essential that it should last for at least seven or eight weeks. All the missions which we preach in the smallest country parishes (which he preferred to all others) last at least six weeks. Otherwise, one just puts a plaster on the sore, but does not cure it. Weeds are cut down but not rooted out. One makes a noise, but there is no result.'

Nothing could escape such untiring patience. The greater portion of his missionary effort was directed towards the fathers and mothers of the largest families; but he also carefully looked after the children. They were taught their catechism and, if necessary, prepared for first Communion, after they had first publicly asked for their parents' blessing and forgiveness. Divine worship was carried out within and around the church with all the pomp calculated to touch and influence men's minds; processions of the Blessed Sacrament were held and hymns were sung (this was a matter to which Father Eudes devoted special attention). Moreover, open-air meetings were held, at which obscene books and drawings were burnt.^a (3) Inquiries were made as to what steps should be taken to bring about reconciliations and effect those acts of restitution to which we have already referred. The missionaries were successful in nearly all such attempts. They also found time to give special conferences to the nobility, to the working-classes, and to monks and nuns whose monasteries chanced to lie within the parish; leagues were

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organised against swearing and blaspheming, and also against duelling. The missionaries did not fail to visit the sick, and they had one or two poor men to dine with them every week.

As we may see, his method was complete, and each of its elements was admirably co-ordinated with the whole. However, method is not everything: it is essential to know how to use it, and make it live. Now our Saint seems to have been, above all else, a most gifted preacher. None of his sermons, indeed, has been preserved and we may reasonably suspect some arrangement, in accordance with the taste of the age, of the fragments supplied us by his earliest biographers. If we examine his authentic writings, *which his* latest editors tell us have been freed from all retouches, his controversial and ascetical works, and some of his letters, which were written more carefully for the spiritual direction and consolation of certain souls ' we shall find more than one passage of an oratorical nature which will help us to form some idea of his style. They have none of the faults noticeable in books of sermons composed before Bossuet's time: there are no fictitious divisions, no far-fetched comparisons, no display of secular learning interspersed with the most uncalled for jests. At times he borrows striking and metaphorical expressions from the language of his contemporaries, but there seems to be nothing in his writings of the triviality of the preachers in the days of the League, or the affected refinement so dear to the wits

of the Hotel Rambouillet. He avoided such faults because he deemed them incompatible with the dignity of the priest, of which he had such a *high idea*, and with the majesty and, one may even add, the awe attaching, in his eyes, to apostolic labours. Moreover, the boldness of his appeals never transgresses the

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freedom appropriate to God's representative on earth and, if his vehemence is tempered by any element, it is that of humility or charity rather than prudence, of which, however, he had a full share.

He was often forced to improvise, but never did so unless compelled by circumstances, and, if he did so with success, this was due to the fact that he had, as a rule, prepared all his discourses. But this preparation, part of which, as we are told, was the adoption of a well-defined plan, chiefly consisted in devout meditation on his subject and on the texts of Scripture that went to form the foundations of his sermons. If he occasionally took delight in certain developments of his ideas, and found it difficult to abandon a thought which he was so anxious to expound, this was not due so much to reminiscences of scholastic exercises, or an attempt after an elegant style, as a desire to show forth all the edifying aspects of the truth on which he preached. Armed as he was with learning, piety, a profound knowledge of the needs of souls and the education that could then be acquired by a diligent student in the Jesuit schools, as a preacher he was well fitted for his task. However, in addition to all this gesture and movement are necessary. Now Father Eudes was both an animated and vigorous preacher. Neither his health, which was delicate for a considerable period, nor his austerities prevented him from reaching a ripe old age; and he could speak and act vigorously right to the end. If he had not, like Father de Bérulle and M. Olier, the outward appearance of a nobleman, or, like Father de Condren, the air of a refined and attractive mystic, if he did not, to use a modern phrase, look distinguished, he had a well-made frame, a broad, high forehead, and a well-shaped nose; like the priests of his day, he wore a moustache and short beard, and

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his entire appearance was softened by an air of recollection and charity. His voice had, in the course of time, grown strong, and was so resonant and skilfully modulated as easily to attract popular audiences.

It is stated that good judges, of whom Bossuet is one, were accustomed to say: 'That is how we should preach'; which probably meant: 'We should, like him, lay aside all the trappings of spurious science and literature and only be preachers of Christ.' Huet, the Bishop of Avranches, inserted a qualification in his eulogy of Father Eudes that rather savours of his own sceptical turn of mind. 'Father Eudes,' he wrote, 'had a natural gift of vehement eloquence, more calculated to move an audience by terror than win it by sweetness.' This judgement may, perhaps, have been quite correct, in as far as the sermon properly so called is concerned, but, in the course of a mission, sermons, whilst always remaining a most important feature, only attain their full value in so far as they are in harmony with the exercises taken as a whole. The exercises of a mission are intended to prepare the listener and, so to say, complete his training, by bringing home to his mind and heart such desires and regrets as may have been aroused by the sermons on the great truths. Now, all witnesses agree in saying that Father Eudes was as mild and gentle as a confessor and adviser as he was vehement as a preacher. As for the vehemence by which, when he spoke in public, he produced those results that made him famous, the well-known story of Camus, Bishop of Belley, shows, in an amusing fashion, that his effects were not due to hackneyed, rhetorical artifices. In the course of a sermon on divine justice and the terrors it should inspire in a sinful soul, Father Eudes, in whom everything was eloquent, for everything was animated by a burning

charity, produced such an effect that his affrighted congregation cried aloud the words which he had himself just uttered: 'Have mercy, my God, have mercy.' Sometime afterwards, the Bishop of Belley thought to produce a similar effect by cleverly leading up to a climax. . . . Was his audience aware of the device, and had it seen it coming? Had it been too obvious through all the nicely balanced sentences and periods? What we do know for certain is that when the orator paused for his dramatic effect, he met with nothing but silence. But this mishap did not prevent Camus from doing justice to a preacher whose style of eloquence was beyond the bishop's reach. 'I have heard,' he said on one occasion, 'many preachers, but never one who can penetrate so deeply into the heart of man as this good priest.'

Whilst reserving a right to return once more, on suitable occasions, to the Saint's chief missions and courses of sermons, we may now regard ourselves as sufficiently well informed as to the moral and religious value of his apostolate amongst the people. But we cannot leave this portion of his career without a reference to the influence which he exercised over his colleagues; for it marks a transition in his life, and one that was to lead him to labour even still more fully and by still more methodical means, at the reformation of the clergy. If he had shut himself up in one of the Oratorian houses he would have lived only with a body of select, educated priests. We learn from one of Father de Condren's letters (4) that John Eudes had only a few of his own confrères with him on the missions, and hence had only too many opportunities of observing the deficiencies of those with whom he was associated.

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De Condren, after recalling the great successes of his young pupil in Normandy, adds: 'Nevertheless, this good priest has only one Oratorian Father with him. God has given him the grace of enabling the people to draw assistance from the priests who are with him, and of enabling the priests to help the people.' Doubtless, the influence for good, which the Saint exercised on his companions, is not the least remarkable feature of what we have been told he accomplished in the course of his missions. He was in charge of a sort of temporary community of priests whom he trained to observe recollection, and to whom he communicated his own enthusiasm. He not only taught them piety - the mere fact that they were with him proves that they were not devoid of it - but also prudence. He consulted with them as to the best means of avoiding any occasion for carping criticisms or evil-minded insinuations. He put them on their guard against anything that might lead them to be accused of seeking their own selfish ends. Hence it was his wish that, in cases where they had secured restitution, the money should not pass through their own hands. He also taught them to devote themselves to all men without distinction of persons, and never seem to despise the ignorant, the wretched, and the poorly clad. There is an amusing story of how two of his young confrères were asked one morning to go and hear the confession of a poor woman dressed in rags. Each in turn refused, saying that he had something else to do. Their Superior was quite well aware of the reason of their refusal, and, after dinner, said to them: 'They were looking for you this morning for a woman who did not seem to be very well off. At the present moment, there are two young ladies asking for you at the door. Have you any answer for them?' 'Oh, yes, certainly,

certainly,' said the two young priests; and, looking out of the window, they asked: 'Where are they?' 'Certainly, certainly, where are they?' he repeated after them, in the same tone, and then began to laugh heartily, for he wished to teach them a lesson. Then, adopting a graver tone, he paternally admonished them. (5)

His amazing activity was not in reality wasted on the trivial details of his ministry, or, rather, it made use of them as means for rising to wide views for the future. The great missionary was anxious for the expansion and continuation of his work, and the first thing to do was to fix upon the best methods. He did so in a book, published about 1634, entitled *A Catechism of the Mission*. It is written in the form of question and answer, and is precise and even minute, like most of his writings, for he well knew that devotion should be built on doctrine, that charity needs an objective, and that both charity and piety need to be guided lest they turn aside or faint by the way. Yet all this elaborate detail does not chill the fire of his propaganda in the slightest, or prevent him from demanding a great deal in the way of free and intelligent co-operation from his colleagues. 'My dearest brethren,' he says in the preface, 'the aim and object of a mission and of missionaries is to raise the dead, that is to say, to re-establish the grace, spirit, and life of Christianity, which is extinguished at the present day amongst the majority of Christians. This life consists in three things: first, to make God known, by a knowledge of the principal mysteries of the Christian religion; secondly, to make him loved, that is to say, to lead men to love him and induce them to love what he loves, and what he demands of them; thirdly, to hate and fly from all that he hates and forbids.'

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'You are all missionaries, sent by God for the same end as that for which the sovereign missionary our Lord Jesus Christ, was sent by his eternal Father into this world; that is to say, to enlighten it with the light of life, to enkindle the fire of divine love and the hatred of sin. And that is why God has granted you the favour of calling you to such a high vocation; if you yourselves desire to live by that true Life and avoid eternal death, you must labour hard and continually to establish these three things in Christian souls.... Hence I offer you this little book, which contains the most important and necessary matters regarding the three stages of the Christian life. I have arranged it in the form of questions and answers so as to make it easier and more instructive. It is for you to make use of it as time, place, and persons demand, sometimes selecting questions that seem most suitable for children, and sometimes explaining others to the people. May God be pleased to grant his spirit both to you and to me!'

God, indeed, had granted the saint his spirit; but were others as well prepared to receive it? Was there a sufficient number of men who had received such a preparation? The famous Congregation, which he had entered, invited, and, in fact, admitted, only a picked company. Wherever he had gone, just as wherever the sons of S. Vincent de Paul and M. Olier had gone, much good had been accomplished. Many of the reforms which he had effected were destined to last for forty and fifty years, wherever he had given missions; and the pious practices which he had taught the people were still faithfully observed. But there were only too many parishes left without assistance. In the most favoured districts, new generations were rising, and young people growing up who had

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never been taught or trained. In short, the best possible use had been made of the priests actually on the spot, but it was essential to train a new parish clergy, who should, in the first place, be resident, and then well-instructed and edifying men. Was the priesthood alone, with all its dread functions, to remain untrained, when members of every other trade and profession had to serve a long apprenticeship? We know quite well that Father Eudes was not the only man who cherished such ideas. The evil was too manifest, and had produced too lively a reaction, not to induce others to seek for remedies. According to M. du Ferrier's unpublished Memoirs, he had two most important interviews with Father de Condren, towards the end of 1640. De Condren repeated several times that something more remained to be done, but refused to be more explicit. At length he Spoke. He was alluding to the establishment of seminaries. (6) Whilst the two priests were discussing the proposal, a lay-brother came again and again, knocking at the door, first, to say that it was time to say Mass,

next, that the time for saying Mass had gone by, and, finally, that it was long past the hour. Father de Condren, doubtless, had a presentiment that his days were numbered, for, on the following day, he took to his bed, and died a week afterwards. Time then was precious. Hence de Condren, the apostle of Jesus the Victim, the author of such exquisite reflections on the Sacrifice of the Altar, had not hesitated to say to the lay-brother: 'What we are doing here is even still more precious than what you wish me to go and do.' (7)

It was December 30, 1640. A year afterwards, to the day, M. Olier opened the Vaugirard seminary, which was the cradle of Saint-Sulpice; and, in the

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beginning of January 1642, S. Vincent de Paul prepared the seminary of the Bons-Enfants for the Vincentian Fathers. As we may see, what actually did happen is what always happens when some great project is afoot. The same idea strikes several different men, because it is inherent in the logic of things. Some are satisfied with seeing an idea realised in their own minds, and proceed no further. One or two have the necessary strength and perseverance to realise their ideas. Often enough those who have only contemplated their own dreams will complain that others have stolen or plagiarised them. We are forced to say that this is true of the Oratory, and is the cause of its protracted disputes with Father Eudes.

Father de Condren was now dead. He had had the honour of training the Venerable M. Olier and also, no doubt, Father Eudes. After his death, the Oratory certainly did make some attempts along the lines which he had indicated, but they were incoherent and spasmodic. In a few places it had what it called College Seminaries. It even prided itself on possessing a real seminary in Saint Magloire; but it is stated, in a document in the National Library in Paris, that there was only one student in that college. It was only when the idea had been taken up, and brought to a successful issue, that the Oratory claimed it. But it was now too late. It may be urged that Father Eudes was in fact an Oratorian Father. Up to this, indeed, he had been a member of the Oratory, but, in reality, he could only realise Father de Condren's plan by leaving the Congregation. After all these years the whole affair can now be seen quite clearly: each one's part can be assigned, and there is no longer any room for controversies, quibblings, or mutual recriminations. Let us return to Father Eudes. It has been proved

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and is now admitted by all (8) that, in the course of this year, 1641, he undertook three great projects at one and the same time. He did not merely entertain them as ideas, but seriously prepared to carry them out. These projects were the foundation of Our Lady of Charity, for the conversion and salvation of fallen women; the erection of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, for the establishment and direction of seminaries, and, lastly, the organisation of devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Perhaps, it was the establishment of the Order of Our Lady of Charity that first occurred to him; it would seem as if he had been thinking about it ever since 1634. But the erection of seminaries is, undoubtedly, the work which seemed to him to be the one to which he had been especially called. It led to his withdrawal from the Oratory, and that is a subject with which we must now deal. The richness and complexity of his great designs will not permit us to follow strictly chronological order at this point.

When Father Eudes planned the establishment of Seminaries he thought at first that he could do so without leaving the Oratory. He had entered the Congregation with enthusiasm. In it he had met men of the first rank whom he was admirably fitted to understand, and whom he could not but love.

Father de Condren had just died, and Father Bourgoing, though rightly praised by Bossuet, was by no means as great a man as de Condren; our Saint, however, had neither the time nor opportunity for any disagreement or coldness with Bourgoing. He confided his ideas to his superiors in Paris, and was surprised that they met with a cool reception. ' Father Eudes,' says his second

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biographer, Father Costil, 'had seen with pain that an idea, so useful to the Church, and the need for which he had more than ever recognised in the course of his missions, was so lightly regarded (in the Congregation) that he was refused permission to receive into the house of the Oratory in Caen some ecclesiastics who wished to be trained in the exercise of their functions.' What was the motive of this refusal? Was it the difficulty of procuring money, or an exaggerated idea of the difficulties to be met with in the course of the undertaking, combined with no great liking for the efforts required? Was it the fear of not finding sufficient support from the bishops, some of whom were already suspicious of the Jansenist tendencies of some Oratorians? (9) Was it a desire not to withdraw their members from the many splendid colleges which had been established, despite the advice of Cardinal de Bérulle? or was it simply the state of mind of certain superiors whose first impulse is always to reject any and every suggestion put forward by their subjects?

There is room for any or all of these conjectures. What we do know is that Father Bourgoing certainly deserved what one of the most illustrious modern Oratorians, Cardinal Perraud, has said of him: 'To the theological disputes, which were at this time occasioning Father Bourgoing much anxiety, were added the internal dissensions provoked by the system of government which he believed should be carried out in the Oratory. His confrères rightly complained that this was not according to their primitive traditions, and, in 1654, Father John Morin published a book in Orleans, in which he denounced certain abuses of power as equally incompatible with the Canons of the Church and the ancient usages of the Congregation.'

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Such, in all likelihood, was the spirit in which the new Superior General permitted a certain distrust and apprehension of Father Eudes to become manifest. Father Bourgoing's letters to his confrère were long preserved, and the Saint's earliest biographers had them under their eyes. They revealed, it would seem, obvious embarrassment, and were filled with expressions of consideration, and even praise . . . The superiors were aware of all his plans; they were ready to support them in the most useful possible manner . . . only they gave no help and did nothing. In the following year (1642) he was summoned to Paris, on the pretext that his health required attention. He was also to inaugurate, at Saint Magloire, conferences for ecclesiastics similar to those established by S. Vincent de Paul. At the same time, a sort of enquiry was held into his conduct. Its results, and especially the testimony of the Archbishop of Rouen, Mgr de Harlay, should have encouraged the Congregation to put their trust in the apostle of Normandy, and support his enterprises. As a matter of fact, the Superiors soon sent him back to missionary work. He preached missions, then, at Saint Malo, Saint Pol de Leon and Saint Lô, which were, according to himself, even still more abundant in graces and blessings than the preceding ones. He was hard at work in Saint Lô when he received from Richelieu a flattering letter summoning him to Paris.

The Cardinal, who had heard of his excellent qualities, projects, and successes, wished to consult with Father Eudes on the religious welfare of the kingdom, as he had discussed it with Father de Condren, S. Vincent de Paul, and M. Olier. Father Eudes was quite delighted with these overtures. He anticipated quite legitimately that excellent opportunities might

be placed at his disposal, and that he might obtain a most valuable support, in case it were needed. However, he was unwilling to interrupt his labours, and it was not until All Saints Day that he presented himself at the Cardinal's palace, and received a welcome of which Martine gives a description which we may hope is both true and accurate. And, indeed, this account is highly probable. . . . Richelieu then, according to Martine, spoke of his anxieties, as a Catholic and as a statesman, in regard to Calvinist intrigues. He explained the means which he proposed to adopt, in the King's name, against heretics, who were showing such very little hesitation in summoning aid from abroad. He would buy over some, and crush others. But the success of the heretics had been due, in only too great measure, to the deficiencies of the clergy, and to abuses and scandals. (10) Richelieu intended to remedy all that, by appointing good bishops. Moreover, he needed the support of all men who had the same ideas as himself in regard to bringing the people back to love the Catholic Church, and respect her Unity.

Father Eudes did not let the matter rest there. He had his own suggestions to make. The Cardinal took a lively interest in them, and soon gave convincing proof that he had. It is certain, for the fact has been established, that he supplied Father Eudes, through his niece, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, with a sum of fifteen hundred livres, (11) for the preliminary expenses in connection with the establishment of a seminary. At the same time, he gave orders to the Abbé de Beaumont (tutor to the Dauphin and, subsequently, Archbishop of Paris) to make arrangements with Father Eudes as to the terms of the letters patent which would have to be submitted to the King. Furthermore, we are told that he applied to Cardinal

de Bérulle and his disciple the words addressed to Solomon's ambassadors by the King of Tyre: 'Let us bless God for having given David so wise a son.'

From the moment Richelieu took the work under his protection, things began to move. The letters patent, from which we shall presently give a characteristic passage, were issued about the beginning of December 1642. The name of Father Eudes is not mentioned; nevertheless, there can be no doubt that his ideas, style, and even expressions are to be found in this document. The supplementary notes in support of the petition had, as was customary, furnished the essential elements of the text. But Father Eudes considered that it would be safer if the letters patent were issued in the name of the Bishop of Bayeux. His own personality would thus disappear or, at least, would be covered by that of his bishop. It was a clever piece of tactics, and did honour to his prudence, one might even say his diplomatic skill.

The royal deed begins thus: 'As it has been represented to us by His Lordship, James d'Angennes, bishop of Bayeux, that the maintenance and progress of virtue, and of the Christian and Catholic religion, depend on the good lives of ecclesiastics, and as he is desirous of establishing in the city or suburbs of Caen a Company, or Society, of priests and ecclesiastics intended for the priesthood, living together in community, under the title of *Priests of the Seminary of Jesus and Mary*, whose chief end should be the imitation and continuation on earth of the life, actions, and sacerdotal functions of Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Founder of the holy order of Priesthood, as far as that is possible to men, with God's grace, as well as the life and virtues of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, choosing her as their special protectress, and, by this means,

endeavouring to arrive at the perfection of the sacerdotal state, according to its institution, labouring by their example and instruction to establish piety and holiness amongst priests, and those who aspire to the priesthood, teaching them to lead a life in conformity with the dignity and holiness of their state, and to carry out with order and decency all sacerdotal functions, as also to devote themselves to instructing the people in Christian doctrine by means of missions, sermons, exhortations, conferences, catechisms, and other exercises, both in the said city and bishopric of Bayeux, Caen and other places in the same diocese, and to take charge of, and direct, all other good works that may be entrusted to them; all this in dependence on, and under, the orders of the said bishop, and, in general, to do all that priests are obliged to do in fulfilment of their duties in the sacerdotal state, by which means the said Lord Bishop and his successors, and, in accordance with this example, the bishops of other dioceses may usefully make provision for all those essential matters with which bishops have to deal daily, as also to fill benefices and ecclesiastical offices with persons who will acquit themselves of them worthily, to the honour of God and the edification of the Church; We have listened gladly to this proposal and, desiring to contribute as far as is in our power to the fulfilment of such a holy work . . . we hereby consent and approve, etc., etc.'

Whilst these letters were being expedited to Bayeux, Father Eudes, who was still a member of the Oratory, carried out the orders of his superiors. He gave the conferences at the College of Saint Magloire, which he had been requested to preach in the preceding year, and earned for himself in Paris, which for so long had been the recognised arbiter of reputations,

a clear acknowledgement of that fame and authority to which his successes in the provinces had entitled him. When the proper time arrived, he forwarded to the Bishop of Bayeux, along with the letters patent, an abridgement of his plans, and a complete list of all that he would need, if his Congregation were to be founded, and a dwelling house and Chapel established. The Bishop, in his reply, states that he is, in matter of fact, the diocesan of Father Eudes, who has prepared, carried out, and arranged the whole affair. He recognises the fact simply and, as for the future, with no less graciousness, entirely relies on the wisdom of the founder. 'My dear Father,' he writes, 'in the age in which we are living, we very rarely encounter anybody willing to abandon his own glory and yield it to another. You, perhaps, are the only example to be found. You freely and generously present me with the work of your hands, and of the care and diligence which you have shown in your dealings with the King. I joyfully accept them, not that they are my due, but because it is a great glory to be adorned by such a noble deed. . . . I think that, when calling your Congregation into being, it would have been wiser to examine into the means of its future support and maintenance. But as I have seen by your letter, and learned from its bearer, that you are anxious for the advancement of the work, I have made up my mind to entrust the whole matter to your prudence, of which we have had so many proofs that I believe I am neither doing myself a wrong, nor injuring the dignity of my office, by trusting to it. Reflect, then, on what you can do for the greater glory of God, and continue your good prayers and kindnesses to me. I beg you to do so, with all my heart, and believe me to be, your most humble and devoted confrère and servant. . . .'

Thus all was ready, and, on March 25, 1643 (the Feast of the Annunciation clearly played a great part in the Saint's life), the founder and his first companions quietly took up residence in their new home. John Eudes had ceased to be a Father of the Oratory.

The Congregation took his defection very badly. It is superfluous, at the present day, to study,

in all their detail, the charges, counter-charges, complaints, responses, and replies to which this separation gave rise. It was certainly hard for the illustrious Congregation to see one of its ablest members withdraw, and, by his departure, deprive it of successes which Father Eudes himself would only too gladly have attributed to the Congregation. But the Oratory had allowed the opportunity to pass, and was bound to regret it. It should have considered that recriminations were both useless and somewhat undignified. Some of its members were so moved by jealousy as to feel an obligation to calumniate their former associate. They alleged that he had deceived the Bishop of Bayeux and obtained, in his name and without his consent, letters patent, of which the Bishop alone should have had the benefit. They also maintained that the sums of money which he had received in Paris and Normandy, should be returned to the Oratory. Lastly, they went so far as to contest the Saint's right to withdraw from the Congregation. Father Batterel thought it his duty to print in extenso a document (12) which, when examined, is manifestly one of those ingenious forgeries which were frequently produced in the course of the Jansenist controversies. (13) According to this document, when Father Eudes entered the Oratory, he had made a personal, solemn vow never to leave it. This would be a suitable place for a theological discussion as to whether such a private vow is or is not

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valid, and whether or not it had been dissolved, in law and fact, by the fundamental rules and repeated decisions of the Congregation he had joined, which are in accordance with the inscription over the gates of the Oratorian College at Juilly, 'Let him enter who can, and let him who wishes leave,' were it not that such a discussion would be futile, seeing that the document is obviously not genuine. As a matter of fact, Father Eudes went where God had called him; and his action was amply justified by the decisions of superiors to whose authority the Oratory itself was bound to defer. Had he any supernatural revelations? His adversaries pretend to believe he declared that he had, for they regarded him as a visionary. His sons and biographers have piously examined all his writings, and found nothing that resembles a revelation. At the most, one may conclude that certain passages do express, in carefully veiled language, a profound sentiment of a duty over which he had for long meditated, in the sight of Christ and his Mother. In any case he availed himself of his liberty to undertake a work in absolute conformity with his vocation, with the encouragement of all that was most Catholic in France, and, to crown all, in relief of the most pressing needs, and in response to the most authentic wishes of the Universal Church.

NOTES

1 The following missions, in chronological order, are mentioned by the Saint in his Memorial: 1632, Lessay, Periers, Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte, La Haye-du-Puits, Cherbourg, Montébourg; 1635, Beneauville, Avenay, Evrecy, Villers-Bocage; 1636, Pleurtuit, Plouer, Cancale, Le Fresne; 1637, Ri; 1638, Bremoy, Estreham, Pont l'Evêque; 1639, Caen (Saint Etienne). Lisieux; 1640, Mesnil-Mauger; 1641, Urville, Remilly, Landelles, Coutances, Pont-Audemer; 1642, Rouen, Saint Malo, Saint Lô; 1643, Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte, Valognes; 1644, Honfleur; 1645, Estrées, Vimoutiers, Arnay-le-Duc, Conches; 1646, Thorigny, Le Bénay, Lion-sur-Mer;

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1647, Nogent-le-Rotrou, Fouqueville, La Ferté-Vidame; 1648, Autun, Beaune, Fère-en-Tardenois, Citry-en-Brie; 1649, Saint Sauveur-Lendelin, Bricquebec, Alleaume, Saint-Sever; 1650, Vesly, Denneville, Raveneville; 1651, Paris (Saint Sulpice), Corbeil, Bernay, Marolles; 1652, Coutances; 1653, Pontoise, Lisieux; 1654, Cisai; 1656, Lingèvres; 1657, L'Etainville; 1659, Vasteville, Villedieu; 1660, Paris (Les Quinze-Vingts), Mauregard, Paris (Saint Germain-des-Prés); 1663, Saint Germain-de la-Campagne, L'Etainville, Saint Lô; 1664, Meaux, Ravenoville, Cretteville-en-Beauptois; 1665, Granville, Chalôns-sur-Marne; 1666, Caen (Saint Pierre), Mesnil-Durand,

Cerisy- Montpinchon, Caen (au Château), Saint Eny; 1667, Evreux, Besneville, Perey, Brucheville, Rouen (Cathedral), Marigny; 1668, Carentan, Montfarville, Le Plessis, Montsurvent, Cenilly, Quettehou; 1670, Rennes, Fougères, and two other missions, in parishes whose names have not been recorded; 1671, Versailles; 1673, Saint Germain-en-Laye, Elbeuf; 1674 and 1675, several missions in parishes whose names have not been preserved; 1676, Saint Lô.

2. This adverb reminds us of the phrase of a discriminating critic, M. C. Martha, on the style of Epictetus---« Athletic nudity.»

3. Such a reaction resembles the attempt which several excellent societies have made in our own time. but, unfortunately, these efforts have been of little avail, owing to the supineness of the civil authorities.

4. OP. cit., Letter I.

5. So Father Costil says in his Annals.

6. Faillon, Life of M. Olier, I, 290, etc.

7. The narrator adds: ' At last, after we had kept on conversing until the midday hour had struck, he said to me, " Brother Martin will be annoyed: let us put it off until to-morrow morning." He then went to say Mass. I withdrew, and never saw him again.'

8. He mentions the fact explicitly, and goes into details in his Memorial.

9. It is well known that, at this period, and on account of those very Jansenist tendencies, Father Bourgoing was not on the best of terms with M. Olier, who was afraid lest the Oratorians might establish a house in his parish of Saint Sulpice.

10. Richelieu himself should have been well aware of the responsibility of the monarchy, which attached so much importance to its right of conferring ecclesiastical benefices on its own creatures.

11. Batterel, in his Memoires Domestiques de l'Oratoire, gives 14,000. It is a manifest exaggeration.

12. This was due, doubtless, to their admiration for Livy and other Latin historians, who invented characteristic speeches for their protagonists.

13. See my book on *Malebranche* for a discussion on the retractation attributed to him (falsely, as I believe) by the Jansenists.

CHAPTER V

S. JOHN EUDES LEAVES THE ORATORY-TRIALS AND FRIENDSHIPS-THE COMPANY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT-MARY DES VALLÉES

THERE was nothing hasty or brusque in the Saint's passage from life within the Oratory to life outside its walls. Hence the founder was quite well able to find, in his new mode of life, an abundance of helps, intimacies, and friendships, the benefits of which he had already experienced. Those who were to afford him the most efficacious assistance in his struggles had been, for the most part, spectators of his first attempts, and they accompanied him, or followed in his footsteps along the path he now began to tread.

He had plenty of friends, and we should need a long list if we were to mention individually the members of communities of both men and women who were united to him in hopes and prayers. But the chief names, those that tower above such devout or charitable groups, deserve something more than a passing mention.

When Father Eudes was delivering his conferences at the College of Saint-Magloire in Paris, and, incidentally, obtaining Richelieu's assistance, he had made the acquaintance, and frequented the society, of S. Vincent de Paul. He probably established a closer relationship with M. Olier; for the latter, in 1642, in a memorandum in which he defended his remarkable

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friend, Mary Rousseau, mentions side by side, in the list of eminent persons who had been witnesses and guarantors of her great worth, Fathers de Condren and Eudes. It was on this occasion that he made a remark which has often been quoted: (1) 'Father Eudes, that great preacher and rarity of our age, often came to consult her.' Both of them had been sons and admirers of the first masters of the Oratory. Both were to buckle on their armour and courageously combat the jansenist intrigues which, for a time, threatened to compromise the honour of their Congregations.

Amongst those who gave Father Eudes the most devoted, valuable, and continual assistance were the Bishop of Lisieux, Mgr Cospéan, and two laymen, M. de Renty and M. de Bernières de Louvigny. Their names will frequently recur in this story. Cospéan was a Fleming by birth, and had taught in the Sorbonne. He was regarded as one of the most learned and devout priests of his age, and he had been one of the first to contribute to the purification of pulpit eloquence. He was consecrated bishop in 1607, and, although he lived, as a rule, in Paris, like all the other bishops of the time, he often visited his diocese, which he governed actively, well, and paternally. His apostolic zeal was on a level with his charity; and he manifested the same simple, frank, affectionate, and friendly disposition to all, both high and low. He was a great favourite at Court, and was accustomed to address the Queen as 'my dear daughter.' In 1617, he drew up and presented to the King, in the name of the clergy, a petition against duelling. In 1626, and again in 1632, he defended Papal rights. He had, for a time, maintained friendly relations with jansenius, his fellow-countryman, whose real tendencies had not yet been revealed; but he showed himself a

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resolute adversary of Jansen's teachings, and wrote a book *On Frequent Communion*, which may be regarded as a refutation of Arnauld's book bearing the same title.

M. de Renty, who, we are told, in his modesty asked to be addressed as 'Baron,' although he

was in reality a Duke, had, in his youth, been of a quarrelsome, haughty, and sarcastic disposition, but this did not prevent him from being an intrepid and intelligent officer. The reading of the *Imitation of Christ* brought him a long way on the road to detachment from all earthly vanities; and, whilst ever remaining 'most civil and polite,' he earned this encomium from his Jesuit biographer, Father de Saint-Jure: 'He was one of the most fervent of those laymen who had been raised up by God to enkindle the lukewarm zeal of the clergy.' His position in society, and the fact that he had five children, did not prevent him from acting as spiritual guide to a large number of layfolk, and even ecclesiastics. He helped to promote every charitable or pious undertaking, every foundation, mission, and work of Catholic organisation, or propaganda, at home or abroad. To all of them he was an active and generous contributor. In fact, the whole religious history of the age resounds with his name.

A third friend of the Saint's was M. de Bernières & de Louvigny, whose influence was chiefly exercised in his native city of Caen, where his charity was known to all. He had been seen, on more than one occasion, walking through the streets of the city, bearing a sick man on his shoulders to the hospital. When he obtained the post of treasurer of France, in the city of Caen, he made no change in his mode of life, and even had a house called the *Hermitage* erected, in which he proposed to lead a life of prayer and good works with some companions. However, we should have

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only a very imperfect idea of the charity of these three men, and of the help they rendered Father Eudes, if we were to consider them as mere individuals, and did not assign each of them his respective place in that singular association known as 'The Company of the Blessed Sacrament.'

The history of this society, which was for a long time unknown, has, very properly, excited much interest during the last fifteen years. M. R. Allier, in his careful study of the Company, whilst accusing it of many secret undertakings, that were carried out with a certain harshness, has examined its origin, works, and enterprises, with a patient and methodical curiosity that has resulted in many fresh discoveries.(2) What was this Company? Some say: a hidden league, a Secret Society. It was, indeed, secret in this sense, that it carefully selected its members, and insisted that the general public should not be free to join it, or discuss its activities. The King, (3) however, knew, and approved, of the Company, and that is equivalent to saying that Richelieu, the master politician of the Kingdom, had also given it his approval. The Company numbered some bishops amongst its members, but it was fully determined on having nothing to do with others. Simple-minded Protestants who are surprised at this fact, and who show themselves, in this respect, so jealous of the honour of the bench of bishops, might possibly reflect that, as the Company was, above all, Catholic, it was not bound overmuch to consult Court prelates, who were perpetual absentees from their dioceses, and it is hard to blame the Company for not having done so. It did not, as a rule, wish to receive members of the religious orders, properly so called, for the very good reason that, as such religious were subject to superiors,

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they would not be sufficiently free in their movements, and also might possibly interfere with the Company's liberty of action. It is scarcely necessary to add that the Society was never accused of interference, rebellion, or want of due respect. After it had been approved of by the King, it endeavoured to make itself known in Rome, and obtain a brief of approbation. Rome, with its customary prudence and tact, did not send the brief; but, though on its guard, it did not directly disapprove of the Company, and M. Allier tells us that, 'through an amusing error, Rome even gave it a blessing.'

The brief history of 'The Company of the Blessed Sacrament' is, therefore, an honourable

(and, one is tempted to say, a glorious) proof that corporate action has its roots in our native land, and that the initiative of its citizens was able to find an outlet, under a government that was pre-eminently strong and national. The political system which led up to, and ended in, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (we know only too well how it was effected) was one which, from its very origin, under Mazarin, and despite Anne of Austria's efforts, was resolved not to tolerate a state of affairs that Louis XIII and Richelieu had allowed. Catholics should remember at this point, that Mazarin ceased to summon the Council of Conscience, at which S. Vincent de Paul had been accustomed to assist Richelieu in nominating better men to bishoprics than those who had been formerly appointed. The political system of autocracy, which thus signalled the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV, was really an attack both on Catholic liberty of association and the dignity of the episcopate. As for Protestants, one may, perhaps, suggest to them that, if the Monarchy, in its defence of Catholicism, had had the good sense to rely, for a very much longer

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period, on the activities of the type of men who went to make up the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, it would not have punished heretics with persecution and exile. Above all, it would not have given Catholics themselves the idea that the civil power had a right to reserve jealously to itself the guardianship of Catholic interests, and that, for the future, it was the secular power which was responsible for the preservation of those interests by secular means. If Catholics had learned to rely more on themselves, they would neither have asked so much from, nor relied so much on, the civil power. Every single arbitrary or violent act gives rise to others of the same kind, and all who defend the freedom of the human conscience are equally sufferers from such infringements of liberty. After the dissolution of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament came the declarations of 1682, and the prohibition against Sulpicians appearing in the Assembly of the Clergy. Next came the spoliation and exile of Protestants. In point of fact, Protestants were not the first to suffer from the Monarchy's ill-advised proceedings, and its policy of Absolute Government.

But let us return to the Company of the Blessed Sacrament. Who were its most active members? None others, indeed, than Father de Condren, M. Olier, and S. Vincent de Paul. Apart from these, there were none more zealous, and lavish in personal service, advice, assistance, and pecuniary help than the three friends of Father Eudes to whom we have just referred—Mgr Cospéan, Baron de Renty, and M. de Bernières de Louvigny.

This preliminary sketch needs to be supplemented by details furnished by the history of the 'Cabal.' At the Council of Conscience, S. Vincent de Paul, Mgr Cospéan, and the Bishop of Beauvais constituted what

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was called 'the party of the Saints' as opposed to the faction of 'the powerful.' In 1643, Mgr Cospéan intervened, in the name of the Company, with a request to have a rule of the Lateran Council regarding the admission of girls without dowries to convents, applied to all convents of women. When Mazarin wanted to rid himself of the troublesome watchmen who criticised his choice of bishops and abbots, one of the first to go was Mgr Cospéan.

The Baron de Renty was, almost from the very beginning, 'the soul of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament,' as the historian of the Society calls him. He is merely repeating the testimony of Father Rapin who mentions that de Renty frequently presided at the meetings, and was always zealous in preserving 'the spirit of peace and charity' in the Company. Whenever the Baron took the Chair all were delighted to see him guiding the Company with so much prudence and tact that meetings were better attended than ever. Under his presidency, not only were conferences held with the utmost

exactness, but they were attended by persons of the highest dignity. In the course of ten years, he was re-elected superior on eleven different occasions.' There was no enterprise,' says his biographer, 'that had aught to do with the honour of God and the welfare of one's neighbour of which he was not the promoter and principal agent: and very often he was both together. He had correspondents throughout the whole Kingdom, who kept him in touch with all the goodworks that were being undertaken. From all quarters he received letters asking for advice about difficulties that had arisen in the establishment and efficient administration of hospitals, seminaries, places of pilgrimage, and certain associations of virtuous persons who wished to combine in

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order that they might have greater freedom to seek after their own salvation, that of their neighbour, and the carrying out of all manner of good works.' The Company had its headquarters in Paris, but there was a large number of branches throughout the Kingdom. De Renty himself founded one in Dijon, in 1643.

There was also a branch at Caen, which de Bernières & de Louvigny had founded, and of which he was the acknowledged head. He composed for its members a book of instructions called *The Interior Christian*, and the very title is a confirmation of what was commonly said in Paris, namely, that de Louvigny was the most 'spiritual,' meaning thereby the most mystical, member of the company, at least as far as its lay members were concerned (and, indeed, it is not quite certain whether even that restriction is necessary).

What, then, were the Company's occupations, enterprises and creations? The instances which we have already given do not exhaust the list. Nothing concerning the Catholic religion, its defence and progress, came amiss to the Society. It did not confine itself - far from it - to works of piety and the guardianship of orthodoxy. It was, above all, a charitable Society; and yet to call it a Society of S. Vincent de Paul under the guidance of S. Vincent de Paul himself, would not be a complete description. It embraced a multitude of goodworks and was, in many respects, well in advance of some of our most modern Catholic social enterprises. The latest historian of the Company has been forced, when trying to explain its undertakings, to borrow quite a number of modern social-welfare terms: 'Young Women's Association' - 'Prison Society' - 'The Worker's Information Bureau' - 'Anti-Pornographic League' - 'Society for the Protection of Public Decency.' . . . He might almost have added

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'Catholic Young Men's Society,' because de Renty, having heard of a shoemaker who devoted himself, body and soul, to the spiritual interests of his fellowworkmen, asked to be introduced to the man, entered into the friendliest relations with him, promoted his influence as far as he could, and ultimately joined him in establishing a club for Christian companionship. A large number of the members of the Company of Merchant Taylors followed suit, and de Renty was appointed, by the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, official protector of these societies. There is no need for us to prolong this digression in order to show that such an association was bound to come to the assistance of Father Eudes. In matter of fact, his name is not mentioned - as far as we are aware - by any of the active members of the Company; but the close and constant friendship that subsisted between the three friends should leave no room for doubt, and, if we may venture a guess that John Eudes would have been most careful never to compromise the association by divulging any of its activities, we need scarcely fear contradiction. We can also see from the published documents that Richelieu's niece, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, who was the first benefactress of Father Eudes, and who took the liveliest interest in his missionary work, as she herself told Mgr Cospéan, was called, 'the good friend of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament,' and its 'banker.' She interested herself in all its activities and aided its missions in Barbary and the East. At a later period, she summoned the

members to meet in her own house, when Mazarin's enmity had begun to cause them anxiety. Hence it may be taken for granted that her first contributions to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary were known to, and approved by, the directors of the 'Cabal,' Lastly, we find the following

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statement in a manuscript recently discovered amongst the departmental archives of Calvados (4): 'Without the help of a powerful society which protected the new Congregation, it would have been destroyed at its inception.' De Bernières, therefore, was not the sole supporter of the work, nor de Renty nor Cospéan. The fact of this collaboration in no way diminishes the greatness of any of these men: I should rather say it only serves to increase it. When the proceedings of the Association were first discovered, there was a momentary attempt made to lessen the part played by S. Vincent de Paul. It was asked whether the honour of all those creations, so long attributed to his personal inspiration, should not be paid, at least in great part, to this secret society. Honours are divided. Neither the genius of great men, nor the glory of saints, consists in ignoring help and helpers. (5) On the contrary, it consists in finding, discovering, and combining them, as far as that is possible, and doing it in such a way as to keep them well in hand, and directed towards definite ends. Martine tells us frankly, on several occasions, that John Eudes was accustomed to discuss his projects with his illustrious friends, that he consulted them, and that they entered into his views because he had invited them. Here, again, the initiative comes from our Saint; and he has the further merit of having attracted such noble and disinterested souls to work along with him. All that we have hitherto seen, and all that we are about to see, of his ideas, and the working out of his projects and plans, will help to confirm this view in the most striking way.

The lives of great religious founders frequently present an attractive mingling of the mystical and the

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practical. It is their mysticism which renders them so daring on behalf of God, and their practical turn of mind which enables them to avoid all entanglements, and ultimately secures the success of all that their enthusiasm had first suggested to them. Moreover, nearly all the great religious founders had their ardour sustained, their hopes strengthened, and their discriminations sharpened by the collaboration of a woman no whit less alert or holy than themselves. Is it because a woman *refuses* to recognise difficulties that she ignores objections, and persists in advancing? Or is it that she has a clearer perception of certain minute factors which escape the wider view of the man whom she advises? It matters very little. At times she will obey, and, at times, induce him to yield to a mysterious inspiration that she herself cannot explain. What we do know for certain is that S. Vincent de Paul was assisted by Mademoiselle le Gras, that M. Olier would have accomplished far less without the co-operation of Mother Agnes and Mary Rousseau, and that S. Peter Fourier could no more have dispensed with Alice Leclerc than S. Francis de Sales could have dispensed with S. Chantal. As for S. John Eudes, he wrote in his *Memorial*: 'In this same year, 1641, God granted me one of the greatest favours I have ever received from his infinite bounty; for it was then I had the happiness of first knowing Sister Mary des Valées, through whom his gracious Majesty bestowed on me a great number of signal graces. After God, I owe this favour to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, my most honoured Lady and most dear Mother, whom I can never sufficiently thank. I bless thee, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent of this world. Thou hast done so because such was thy will.' The very tone of

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these words enables us to see that we are now verging on, without penetrating, that high and truly

supernatural element which is, as we are bound to admit, the basis of the life of every saint of God. Nevertheless, we are not dealing here with phantoms and chimeras. We may remind the reader that the Saint stated that the three great projects which he had begun to carry out, are all to be referred back to the year 1641. His reference to this year 1641 cannot be lightly dismissed, because it carries us back to his interview with Richelieu, and his meetings with the members of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament.

The priest to whom I referred on the first page of this book, and from whom I borrowed a definition of John Eudes, had also a brief comment to make on Mary des Vallées: 'She was the flower of his life.' A wild-flower, a flower the perfume of which was by no means enervating; it would, perhaps, be even more correct to call her a flower of Calvary. In the first place-and this fits in very well with the character of John Eudes-she was not one of those great nuns who, sprung from aristocratic families, preserved, beneath their coarse serge and instruments of penance, so great a part of their natural dignity and charm. 'Sister Mary des Vallées,' as her holy friend called her, was just a simple country girl who never became a member of a religious Congregation properly so called. She was, it would seem, a Dominican tertiary, hence the name 'Sister '-and was also, no doubt, a member of the Society of the Heart of the Admirable Mother, which the Saint instituted about 1648. (6). If this is not the place to discuss the strange case of Mary des Vallées, or to form an opinion on those extraordinary phenomena in her history which provoked so much discussion, nevertheless we cannot refrain altogether from

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mentioning her, both on account of the flood of calumnies which she brought down on the head of Father Eudes, and the line of conduct which he adopted in her regard. (7)

She was born in 1590, at Saint Saviour Lendelin (in the diocese of Coutances) in a poor labourer's cottage. She was reared by her parents without any more attention to religion than was usual at that time in country districts. After her father's death, she lived, and suffered, in the most wretched misery. She had to suffer even still more from the brutality of her step-father and the infamous conduct of a family in which she had been placed as a servant and, subsequently, from a different sort of infamy in another family to which, weary of fighting, she had fled for refuge. At this period, it certainly does seem as if (leaving aside the assertions and counter-assertions of panegyrist and defamers and looking at the facts alone) there was in reality a touching contrast between the natural innocence, spontaneous piety, discriminating candour and simplicity of this young girl and the atmosphere of mingled brutality and impurity in which she lived. If her senses and imagination may, perhaps, have been influenced by her surroundings, her heart most certainly was not. One is even forced to believe that the vitality of her faith assumed a pleasing form because, instead of being lessened by the examples that lay under her eyes, it converted her step-father and the adulterous woman who had taken him into her home.

If those with whom she lived had not very much faith in Jesus Christ and his Mother, they had only too terrible and vivid a belief in witchcraft, magic, and sorcery, of which there was a veritable epidemic. Hence we are told, and S. John Eudes himself relates the incident, that, on one occasion, a young man,

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angered by her refusals, pushed her in a crowd, and that, surprised and terrified, she at once fell into a swoon. From that time forward, she suffered in every part of her body, day and night, for three years; and no human remedy could afford her relief. She was regarded by all as possessed by an evil spirit, and the utterly barbaric methods which were employed to prove that such was the case

(contemporaries supply the most realistic details) only succeeded in producing some external manifestations of possession.

We shall not spend too much time over these preliminaries. We are at liberty to form our own opinions on the matter. The teaching of the saints, and of the Church, is that the initial character of such extraordinary phenomena is of but little account; what really does matter is the use made of them by the person concerned. Pride impairs and poisons transports which, at first sight, seem to spring from the highest and purest sources. True love, humility, and courage transform into holy and meritorious states the most wretched bodily miseries, of whatsoever nature and in whatsoever part of the human organism they may be found. (8)

Now what was Mary des Val1ées' own opinion of her extraordinary condition? According to her director, it was this: ' Why am I possessed, and whence comes it? I know quite well that I did not give myself to the evil one, and I have been assured that neither did my parents, for I never gave them any reason for doing so. Hence, it is God who has willed it... That is why I accept it, with all my heart; and, for the love of him who has placed me in this state, I desire to live and die therein, if such be his good pleasure... (9)

But a still greater trial awaited her. The evil spirit soon reduced her to such a state that she was physically unable to receive Holy Communion, and she remained

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in that condition for nearly thirty-six years. Her own bishop had opportunities for observing the facts. She ardently longed to receive Holy Communion; her resignation was admirable; she suffered the torments of the damned, but accepted them as a victim in order to spare others from real and irremediable damnation. M. Boudon, the saintly Archdeacon of Evreux, who knew her well, tells us that Mary des Val1ées-like a true saint, but unlike a visionary-refrained from forming- any judgement as to the nature and origin of her states. She submitted herself in all things to the decision of the Church, and it was this fact precisely which earned for her the admiration of those who, like Father Eudes, studied her case, and were filled with amazement. After S. John Eudes had seen and heard her, and after consulting her other spiritual guides, he set down his own observations and explanations (he has insisted strongly on this latter point) (10) but arrived at no definite conclusion. Lastly-and this is what is of most importance-he has been shielded by his own prudence and the decisions of competent Catholic authorities. If, in the midst of her mysterious sufferings, which were, however, accepted in a spirit of pure and enlightened faith, the poor girl had revelations, had visions, as it were, of his great future undertakings, she transmitted them to Father Eudes, and he may quite rightly have been inspired by them. Why? Because he saw that they were in perfect conformity with the good of souls, and because he formed his judgement of the woman who communicated them to him from her heroic resignation. He may have found it hard to penetrate the surface below of the phenomena to which she was subject; but he never doubted, for a moment, the excellence of her advice and the beauty of her faith and courage. Even if she were in

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a crisis of physical suffering or-and this sometimes occurred-'in a state bearing the signs and marks of infancy,' when her countenance showed the simplicity, gentleness or gaiety of a child apparently deprived of the use of reason, nevertheless, so Father Costil tells us, if spoken to on matters that concerned the service of God, she answered with intelligence. She sometimes explained her state by means of allegories and symbols which those who were accustomed to her had no difficulty in interpreting.

As a result, all who came into frequent contact with her felt bound to adopt an attitude of deep, attentive respect, as if confronted with something august and probably supernatural.

To sum up, coarse libels and pamphlets were multiplied in vain. Whenever a competent ecclesiastic or theologian passed through Coutances, he was asked to examine Mary, and the conclusion was always the same: that the virtue and confidence of the girl were, on any and every supposition, admirable. Granted this foundation, it was hard not to believe in her supernatural inspiration. Up to the end of the life of Mary des Vallées and even after her death, such eminent ecclesiastics as Fathers Coton and Saint-Jure, and Mgr Auvry, formed the same opinion of her case as that reached by Father Eudes. They were unanimous on one point and they left the other an open question. After her death the Saint wrote (March 2, 1656) to M. Manchon: 'It has pleased God to deprive us of the creature who was dearest to us on earth, our dear Sister Mary,' and he paid her this rare tribute: 'I heard her confession: three times in the course of the last eight days, and I have carefully gone into and examined her whole life; I can vouch, with the utmost truth, that I have not discovered the least venial sin in

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the whole sixty-seven years of her life.' Afterwards he wrote in his will: 'I beg you to bury me with the rosary and scapular which Sister Mary des Vallées gave me.' The belief in her sanctity was so widespread that disputes arose over her remains. She had asked to be buried in the seminary chapel and, after a brief interment in the Church of Saint Nicholas, her wishes were carried out. Three years later, on December 15, 1658, Mgr Auvry signed a number of decrees in Paris. In one of them, whilst forbidding the publication of any extraordinary miracles in regard to Mary des Vallées, he again pays tribute to her virtues, but reserves to the Holy Apostolic See the decision on the extraordinary *graces which, he had reason to believe, she had received from God.* In another, 'given at the Palace of the Most Eminent Cardinal Mazarin,' he authorises the removal of her body to the Church of the priests of the seminary, because, he says, 'the deceased laid the first stone of the Church of the said seminary when it was being built.' (11). It was, certainly, a great honour that a simple tertiary, who had been suspected, calumniated, and abused, who had drunk such deep draughts of suffering and insults, who had no other education than the catechism, should have been chosen to lay the first stone of such an important building. Those who knew her must have had a rare appreciation of the value of her prayers. May we not say that this stone was a symbol of the great part she had played in the creations of S. John Eudes, and that she herself was one of those mystical stones which will always be found, placed with humble faith, in the most hidden and obscure corner of every enduring building?

NOTES

1. And altered—at least in one word—by M. Faillon. I have been permitted by M. Monier to re-establish the true text from the

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manuscript in Saint Sulpice. The word 'rarity' was regarded as open to criticism, and the word 'marvel' substituted. The latter word passed into general circulation.

2. The work was preceded by the publication of the official proceedings of the Company in Paris, and by studies by Father Clair, and it was followed by articles by M. Rebelliau. The title of the work is *La Cabale des Dévots*, Paris, Armand Colin.

3. See in Allier's book, page 46, the letter from Louis XIII to the Archbishop of Paris. It is a

full and complete approbation of the Society and even of its secrecy ' on condition that some one of the members shall be known to me, and shall inform me, from time to time, of the most important matters that have taken place. You will therefore give me much pleasure by granting your blessing to this assembly. and giving it your approval in so far m that depends on you.' Signed and dated May 27, 1631.

4. See A.Allier, Op. Cit., P. 239.

5. See La Psychologie des Grands Hommes, by H. Joly, ch. v.

6. This society was, like some others, composed of lay-folk who remained in the world in order to devote themselves to charitable works: in this particular society only virgins and widows were admitted; married women were excluded.

7. See Adam. Le Mysticisme de la Renaissance ou Marie des Vallées. (Bremond has a chapter on S. John Eudes and Mary des Vallées in his Histoire Littéraire, etc., Vol. III, Part III, ch. ii.)

8. In this second case many nervous phenomena still persist call them hysterical symptoms if you prefer-but the curve, so to say, which spiritual resistance has subsequently imposed on the complex states of the subject, no longer permits us to diagnose them as cases of ordinary, simple hysteria, in which the spiritual faculties are thrown out of gear, and the nobility of the soul engulfed in a condition of egotistical boredom. On one occasion Pins IX pointed out that, in the domain of ideas, a proposition which is heretical in the mouth of a heretic may not be so in the mouth of m orthodox person. This remark can only look simple to simpletons; it is profound for all those who desire to reach fundamentals. Hence we find in S. Augustine, and even in S. Paul, propositions which have become jansenistic in the mouths of jansenists, if only in theirs. The same is true in the order of facts m in the order of ideas. An undoubtedly hysterical phenomenon, in the case of an hysterical individual, is not necessarily so in the case of a normal person, and who is to decide whether a person is or is not hysterical? A professor who was recently holding forth at the Ecole des Hautes Eludes, and who alleged that he had conclusively demonstrated the existence of hysteria in S. Teresa, laid down two prepositions: (i) There is no phenomenon. taken in itself, that can certainly reveal hysteria: (2) There is no phenomenon, however insignificant it may appear in the *eyes of* the uninitiated, that cannot, by the aspect

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under which it presents itself to an experienced observer, reveal the presence of hysteria; and he gave as an example-not expectoration, at which I am astonished-but sneezing. Agreed. These two propositions are very interesting. From them we may deduce that we cannot arrive at a conclusion as to the character of the whole from a single isolated phenomenon, but that it is from the character of the whole we are bound to form a conclusion as to the essential nature of the symptoms.

Now, in the cam of a person fighting against attacks.s of an alleged nervous disease, where shall we find the dominating factor, the characteristic feature of the whole, if not in the mastery which the person is, or is not, able to preserve over his dispositions, feelings, beliefs, and resolutions? The Stoics had already maintained that it is not our sensations and imaginations---for they do not depend on us--- that count, but the use we make of them. The Christian is still more bound to say the same. (See, on this point, *The Psychology of the Saints* and *S. Teresa in The Saints Series*.)

9. From the MS. *Admirable Life of Mary des Vallées*, by Father Eudes. An incomplete copy has been preserved in Quebec. See Boulay, *Vie du Vénérable Jean Eudes*, 1. 340, and Adam, op. cit., 197.

10. The notes, which he drew up about 1655, supplied a pretext for the most formidable campaign of calumny waged against him in 1674.

11. As a large number of manuscripts dealing with Mary des Vallées from various standpoints may be found in public libraries, it is only proper to put persons on their guard who may be surprised at some of the remarks in them attributed to Father Eudes, and taken, as it is said, from his writings. He had to make the following protest in his lifetime: ' All the other statements in your letter are also utterly untrue, as are similar ones in a defamatory libel which has been written against me. It is crammed with material taken from my writings on the life of this goodgirl. But the authors have acted just as Protestants do with Catholic books, they have taken only the objections and omitted the answers. So the author of this libel has selected what is strange and likely to surprise the reader in these accounts of Sister Mary without adding the explanations which I have given. Moreover, he has also inserted several ridiculous things which he has taken from pamphlets that I never note.' (Letter to M. Trochu, dated January 2, 1675, Caen.) These explanations of S. John Eudes have, unfortunately, never been discovered.

The remains of ' the Saint of Coutances ' were piously preserved in the Chapel of the old Eudist seminary, now the Chapel of the State Secondary School. By order of His Lordship, Mgr Guérard, they were again exhumed, examined, and finally transferred to the Cathedral on August 4, 1919.

CHAPTER VI

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SEMINARIES, AND OF THE CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY -FURTHER MISSIONARY WORK

FATHER EUDES was not a man to hold back, once he had made up his mind, and he now proceeded to carry out his purpose quietly and unostentatiously. He was as little likely to yield to threats and calumnies as to promises and advances that came too late. A contemporary libel foolishly thought to serve the Oratory, and discredit the man who had left it, by the following statement: (1) ' His superiors at once did all in their power to recall him after he had left and, to that end, issued an order, dated May 28, 1643, inviting him to return to Caen, and live and labour there with his fellow-Oratorians. Father Bourgoing, who was then General, made him every imaginable offer, promising to supply him with the means of working according to his own ideas and inclinations, if he would not leave the Congregation. The Father General promised to leave him always at missionary work, ecclesiastical conferences and seminaries, and that he should not be taken from Normandy, to which he seemed attached; also, that he would leave Father Eudes with the Bishop of Bayeux, whom he showed he was anxious to serve, so that he might be entirely at the Bishop's service, and labour under his jurisdiction, and in his diocese. In a word, the General, like a

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charitable father, did everything in his power to withdraw a child whom he loved from the path of error and illusion on which he saw Father Eudes setting out.'

Such returns are possible only in the case of those who have acted from a passing whim, and even then, such persons are of no advantage to anyone. In this case, an open separation was certainly better than the suggested compromise, in which it is hard to know whether the General of the Oratory was to command or to obey. Father Eudes, then, held fast to his resolution and took up his residence, with five companions, in a house which he had rented.

It was not his intention merely to establish an ecclesiastical seminary: he meant to found a new Congregation-the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. It was to be constituted on the same lines as the Oratory and Saint-Sulpice, 'without any solemn vows save those of Baptism and Holy Orders.' Nevertheless, it was to have a special character of its own, and to be deeply imprinted with the particular devotions which the Saint was now about to endeavour to induce the Church to accept. The general public, remembering the Founder's great missionary successes, simply called the house The Mission. In point of fact, Father Eudes fully intended to unite the training of his young priests with that of preaching missions, and this, in itself, was an admirable idea; the training of the clergy, the propagation of a special devotion, and missionary work were therefore to go forward hand in hand.

Hence, scarcely was he installed, with his chapel half furnished by Madame de Budos, Madame de Camilly, and some Bernardine nuns, than he set out again to give missions. He did not worry himself

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overmuch in drawing up Constitutions and an elaborate set of rules; he contented himself with inaugurating studies and devotional exercises, and here he followed the main lines of the Oratorian system.

He preached two missions in succession, one at Saint-Saviour-le-Vicomte and the other at

Valognes. His fame as a missionary increased to such an extent that, from now onwards, accounts of marvellous events, such as that of a storm averted from an openair gathering by the mere words of the preacher, began to circulate. He was ably assisted, at Valognes, by Father Manchon, who was one of those who had followed him to the seminary. Scarcely were these missions over, than he was back again in Caen, where he gave himself up to the double task of founding Our Lady of Refuge, and putting his own Congregation on a more stable footing.

We have just said 'his own Congregation,' because he realised it was essential to develop it, if he was to establish seminaries beyond the limits of the diocese of Bayeux, which he fully intended to do. Now such an extension of his work required approbation from Rome. Hence he proceeded to take the necessary preliminary steps. He was well aware that these were bound to be slow. The Bishop of Coutances, Mgr Matignon, and, especially, the Bishop of Bayeux, Mgr d'Angennes-who had already given him so much encouragement-were resolved to support him as far as in them lay. Both wrote to Pope Urban VIII, and both referred to the founder in the most eulogistic terms. 'Eight months ago,' wrote Mgr d'Angennes, (2) on October 22 1643, 'I established in Caen, a city of this diocese, a seminary under the title of a *Seminary of the Priests of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary*, which has been confirmed by letters

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royal. I wished thereby to provide an opportunity for those about to be ordained priests and admitted to the government of souls, of acquiring instruction from priests of eminent science and probity, of learning the method of administering the sacraments holily, and of carrying out the sacred ceremonies in a worthy manner. Finally, in order that these candidates for the priesthood may acquire the necessary aptitude and dignity for the regular exercise of their ministry, I have placed at the head of the seminary the aforesaid Master John Eudes(3). All those who wish to labour for their own perfection, and the salvation of others, will find in him a master who, though bound by no special vow, enjoys the same rights, and lives under the same rules as the rest of the clergy.

'Nevertheless, he and his companions do not mean to confine their charity within the walls of a seminary. They place themselves unreservedly at the disposal of their Lordships, the Bishops, to preach missions; at the disposal of the parish priests, to hear confessions, and at the disposal of the faithful, to supply their manifold spiritual needs, as I myself have frequently witnessed. All their functions will, I trust, tend to the greater glory of God and the edification of the Church, if they are strengthened and solidified by the Apostolic blessing.'

A new period now opens in our Saint's existence a period of tentative efforts, explanations, and a fight against intrigues, such as all founders have had to experience. These difficulties were all the more liable to be aggravated by the turn which French politics had just then begun to take. Richelieu was dead. Louis XIII had speedily followed him to the grave. Anne of Austria was beginning to come under the influence of Mazarin, who had already started his

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regrettable policy of reaction against the chief religious reforms of his predecessor. This was shown by Mazarin's refusal to convoke the Council of Conscience, the dismissal of Mgr Cospéanto his diocese, and the removal of S. Vincent de Paul from the Council. This gave Father Eudes a still stronger motive for obtaining assurances of the attitude of the Court in his regard. He visited the Louvre in person, (4) at about the same time as he despatched his petition to the Sovereign Pontiff. In Paris, he obtained with difficulty what might be called a sprinkle of holy water on his plans from the Royal authority. So much so, indeed, that the idea occurred to him, for a moment, of uniting with a Congregation which was rather similar to his own. This was called the Congregation of the Blessed

Sacrament (such is the title given it in the Bishop of Valence's approbation, dated January 16, 1639) which had already been authorised by the Holy See. It is true that this Congregation only established seminaries and colleges; but, once it had begun to enjoy the benefits and powers conferred on it, it would, no doubt, extend and perfect its work. Such, in all probability, was the Saint's idea. We may also suppose that he was encouraged by the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, for the head of the Congregation of that name, Mgr d'Authier de Sisgau, had his full share in the 'spirit' of the former, and enjoyed its complete confidence, as may be seen from the proceedings of the celebrated 'Cabal.' Nevertheless, this suggestion had no result.

As nothing more remained for Father Eudes to do in Paris at the moment, and as he could never remain idle, he set off to preach a mission at Honfleur, to the great joy of his saintly protector and friend, Mgr Cospéan. His apostolic zeal just then received a double

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consolation. In the month of January 1644, the Bishop of Bayeux officially recognised his Congregation by letters patent, and, in August of the same year, a rich gentleman, Blouet de Than, offered himself and the greater part of his fortune to help on the new enterprise. As far as Normandy was concerned, all there was going well, but from Rome came only further requests for information. Urban VIII died just then (1644), and it seemed as if all would have to begin over again.

It was about this time (the end of 1644) that a regular hurricane of calumnies, insults, and libels began to rage. This was destined to continue, or break out at intervals, in the course of the next twelve years; but, at this period, it was unusually violent. In those trying days he was opposed not only by those whose vices he attacked, or whose unbelief he disturbed, not only by Jansenists, whose heresy he unmasked, but also by several priests who regarded him as an ambitious intriguer and a charlatan. The donations which he had received for his Congregation aroused fierce jealousy; he was accused of having inveigled young Blouet de Than to join it merely to serve his own interests. Friends were not wanting to point out his misdeeds and, what was hardest of all, even the Baron de Renty-only for a moment, it is true-felt his confidence shaken by these persistent attacks, and ceased to have anything to do with the servant of God. Happily the Baron soon saw his mistake, and once more united his forces with those common friends whose fidelity had remained unshaken. In the front rank of the latter was Mgr Cospéan, who wrote to the Saint: 'I beseech you in the Lord to let me know, openly and frankly, who are the calumniators who are attacking you or, rather, the Holy

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Spirit himself, the author of grace. I suspect, my dearest son and Father, that they are the same men whom you have opposed in your glorious defence of the Truth. I beg you, therefore, to let me know who they are in order that my suspicions may be removed by a knowledge of the truth. God God! what men!'

The Saint was badly in need of such assistance. If his Congregation and seminary seemed to be firmly established, yet they had not, so far, the pledge of permanence, which he was prudently seeking by means of the Parliament's verification of the King's letters patent, (5) the approbation of the General Assembly of the Clergy of France, and, above all, that of the Court of Rome. In order the better to deserve these favours, he drew up the rules and constitutions of his Company in twenty chapters. It is superfluous to analyse here all the Christian and sacerdotal prescriptions which may be found therein, all the exercises of piety which they recommend; in short, all that may be found in all constitutions of a similar nature. Nevertheless, it is important to recall how the Saint insisted on devotion to Jesus and Mary, to Jesus loved in his Mother, and to Jesus served and adored by the worship paid, with special piety, to his Blessed Mother. Two great Oratorians had already infused a

new life into the traditional scholasticism by their ardent and reasoned devotion to the Incarnation and the glories of Jesus. Their pupil, whilst preserving the sublimity of their transports, tempered and, in a sense, humanised them by his constant advice to imitate the Holy Family. The rules which he drew up contain detailed prescriptions on this head.

Whilst he was working at this book, his friends were not inactive. Mgr Cospéan, in particular, did not spare himself. He wrote to his colleague, Mgr

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d'Angennes, the Bishop of Bayeux: 'This affair means so much for the glory of God and the advantage of his Church that we should spare no effort to bring it to a successful issue. I therefore beseech Your Lordship to allow the petition to the Parliament to be presented in your name, in the same way as the letters (patent) were granted.' Furthermore, as a lawyer of the Rouen Parliament, named M. d'Anfreville, was a personal friend of the bishop's, the latter became still more urgent and eloquent in his request to the former.

'Father Eudes, who is a real saint, and who, in my opinion, may truly be called the apostle of Normandy, has established a seminary in Caen, by order and authority of the Bishop of Bayeux, and has obtained letters patent from the King for this establishment. It now remains for the Parliament to register them. I beg you, sir, kindly to lend your assistance, as soon as you can, and to do me the honour of believing that the seminary in question is not the property of a new religious order, or the invention of any particular individual, but has been ordained by the Councils of Trent and Rouen, by the express will and commands of our Kings, and, moreover, that Father Eudes has gathered such great and extraordinary fruits in Normandy that no one would credit the fact if he had not seen, as we have, the results, and we assure you, in conscience, that nothing can be more apostolic than this new undertaking.'

Despite these appeals, to which Mgr d'Angennes conscientiously added his own, the petition, for the moment, produced no result. In Paris, the Saint was more successful with Anne of Austria, but even then he met with difficulties, for the Oratory had addressed a long and diffuse remonstrance to the

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Queen Regent in which it was pointed out that the ambitious efforts of Father Eudes were tending to the break-up of the Congregation. For a moment, these suggestions produced an effect, but luckily S. Vincent de Paul, who had not lost the Queen-Mother's reverence and respect, intervened, and put the matter in a more favourable light. Shortly afterwards, the Queen despatched a fresh authorisation to John Eudes, duly authenticated, and approved by the Nuncio. (6)

In 1645, the petition to the General Assembly of the Clergy of France was, in certain respects, not quite so successful. It is true that neither Mgr d'Angennes nor Mgr Cospéan was able to attend the assembly; the former, on account of his advanced age, the latter, on account of Mazarin's opposition. The documents in this case are of quite special interest. The petitioner had, in point of fact, sent a fairly full and detailed plan of his foundation to the Assembly, accompanied by an account of his methods, and a sketch of his future plans. It began in this fashion:

'The priests of the seminary of Caen, which has been established, and is ruled, by His Lordship the Bishop of Bayeux, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Lordships, beseech you to be good enough to protect, favour, and further the design of their seminary, which consists of priests who are entirely consecrated, without any reservations, to your service and commands; this consecration

is in conformity with the holy intentions of the holy councils and the provincial and general assemblies, and even with the ordinances of our Kings. The holy Council of Trent, the Council of Rouen, the decree of the Assembly of 1625, the Estates of Blois, the Ordinance of Melun, and all great prelates (7) have ever regarded the establishment

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of seminaries as essential: in the first place, for the instruction of priests in all that concerns ecclesiastical matters, and their own interior piety; in the second place, to afford greater assistance to parishes; in the third place, to facilitate the preaching of missions to the people, and, lastly, for the performance of such other necessary functions as are required by every bishop for the better government of his clergy.'

The petition then went on to give a full account of the mode of life in the seminaries, 'which are, in the first place, to depend, in all matters and places, on the government of the bishop.' There were reasons, to which circumstances gave a special weight, for the repeated insistence on this point, as also on the fact that both himself and his associates were simple priests. The bishops, as a rule, distrusted the offers of communities to establish seminaries, as they feared lest such bodies might prove too independent. If they thought of selecting the priests of Saint-Sulpice,' says M. Olier's biographer, 'it was because they had not yet been established as a Congregation.'(8) Furthermore, Father Eudes was not unaware of the fact that, if the priests of S. Vincent de Paul had been successful in their relations with the bishops, this was partly because they also claimed that they did not form an Order in the strict sense of the word, and that Urban VIII's Bull had stated that their object was 'to give missions in country places, and also ecclesiastical retreats, and that these were works of which the bishops felt the need, and which rendered services most agreeable to their Lordships.'

Throughout the whole petition Father Eudes was most careful to insist on the services of all kinds which his Congregation proposed to render to dioceses and parishes in the matter of hearing confessions, preaching,

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teaching the Catechism, and assisting the parish priests always 'in accordance with the good pleasure of their Lordships the bishops.' He even went farther. He begged the Assembly to exhort bishops and priests to establish similar seminaries, and then went on to say that all these establishments should have a common centre, and that it would be well if the Assembly were the recognised head of all seminaries. He added, and this was likely to arouse some anxiety and mistrust in more than one prelate:

'Fourthly, as the said Assembly would be the head of all the above-mentioned seminaries, it would behove the Assembly to ordain that, under its control and guidance, there shall be appointed another head, who will see that the rules are carried out, assist the various houses by his personal knowledge of their members, present an account of all that happens to Your Lordships, and, finally, accept all the necessary rules and prescriptions from Your Lordships' hands.'

In dealing with the question of the organisation of seminaries, the Saint pointed out the necessity of rendering them completely distinct from colleges, or seminary colleges, by establishing what is called to-day a 'Major' or 'Great seminary,' entirely distinct from the 'Minor' or 'Little seminary.' Here he was acting according to the mind of the Council of Trent, and in opposition to tendencies that are apparently deep-rooted, since Pope Pius X had quite recently to remind the bishops of Italy of the necessity of such a separation.

Some have alleged that Father Eudes, in thus insisting on the need for union and a central government of the seminaries, was actually seeking the position for himself. There is absolutely no ground for attributing to him such ambitious designs, and everything goes

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to show that his relations with S. Vincent de Paul and M. Olier would have prevented him from even dreaming of such an idea. We may also add that most of these proposals had already been brought forward, in 1625, by a parish priest named Godefroy, and the report of the Commissioners, issued in 1645, says so expressly. The modifications introduced into the new petition dealt chiefly with the number of seminaries and their internal organisation. However this may be, the Assembly acted as such bodies usually do when confronted with the proposals of a non-member. After two months' examination it said—as we may suppose—that it would only be proper to hear the views of the other founders of seminaries. (9) It then eliminated from the proposals all suggestions that seemed too general, but it approved, and praised, Father Eudes's special work. It even opened out prospects of its future extension and enlargement.

'The Assembly, having carefully considered the matter, pointed out the many difficulties to be met with in the proposals, and did not consider them suitable . . . nevertheless, it is satisfied with the zeal (of these priests), which it praises, and exhorts them to continue their work in *the dioceses to which they may be called*, as they have hitherto done in the diocese of Bayeux.'

Whilst the Assembly was thus deliberating, the founder resumed the negotiations with the Holy See which had been interrupted by the death of Urban VIII. On this occasion, the negotiations were extended to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary and the Congregation of Our Lady of Refuge. They were entrusted to Father Manoury, one of his first associates, who was also one of the youngest and most devoted of his subjects. He was the bearer of a petition from

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Father Eudes and his brethren: they besought the Holy Father for a number of privileges, the granting of which would have at least constituted an indirect approbation and recognition. Propaganda stated that it needed fuller information, and, without doubt, did not consider itself in a position to decide on the complaints which have been alleged against a man of whom, indeed, it knew very little. It demanded supplementary information from the Bishop of Bayeux; but almost immediately news arrived in Rome (premature at first, but afterwards only too authentic), of the death of Mgr d'Angennes (March 16, 1647). Everything was again held up, and Father Manoury returned home from the Eternal City.

Such was the result of the negotiations that were carried out at this epoch. To say, with Martine, that they were fruitless is a manifest exaggeration; for the position which the Saint had acquired in Normandy was now assured, and the hope of obtaining further concessions had secured at least a semi-official toleration. In the meantime, all that was left to the Saint was to persevere in his labours, and that exactly is what he did; for whilst Father Manoury was engaged in preparing and carrying on the negotiations, his master was preaching some of his finest missions.

Two of these were given in the diocese of Lisieux. In the course of the first, which was preached in Estrees, he brought about a wonderful reconciliation between two noble families. They had been rent, for ten years, by such bitter quarrels that several of the male members had lost their lives, and even the women never left home without carrying loaded pistols, ready for any emergency. There was such a great concourse of people that he was compelled to preach in the fields, and somebody pointed out to the Saint that some

members of the two families were listening from behind a hedge. He thereupon made such a moving reference to their quarrel that he succeeded first in bringing one, and then another, to confession and, by dint of repeated appeals and pious exhortations, he established a solemn peace between them. This was the sort of victory for which he had the greatest ambition, and it was one of his most memorable.

Two other missions had been asked for, and their expenses defrayed, by the Baron de Renty; these were to be given in the diocese of Autun where the Baron had some property. The Saint was also successful here. At Conches, he brought about the reconciliation of twenty families. At Arnay-le-Duc, he put an end to certain scandalous manifestations of freethinking and superstition which, at this period, so often went hand in hand. In the following year, 1646, he returned to Bayeux, and without any delay preached three missions at Thorigny, Beny (the birthplace and manor of Baron de Renty), and at Lion-sur-Mer. If the eager attendance of the people was the reward of his zeal and the consecration of his success, the process of time brought in its train that mixture of joys and sorrows which is never wanting to the active and courageous. Death carried off Mgr d'Angennes, Mgr Cospéan, and Father Chrysostom, the monk who had stood him in such good stead with Louis VIII, Richelieu, and Anne of Austria. On the other hand, the number of his disciples was increasing and, amongst them, were such valuable recruits as Fathers Finel and Le Mesle who took the place of two of his earliest companions who had abandoned him when they saw how persecutions were accumulating. M. de Renty who, as we have seen, would have wished 'to divide himself into pieces' in order to follow the

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Saint wherever he went labouring for the religious restoration of France, felt his confidence in our Saint and his ardour to defend him daily increasing. He had brought Mary des Vallées to Beny, summoning her there as a powerful reserve. A nun of Pontoise, Mary of the Blessed Sacrament, a daughter of Chancellor Marilhac, had revealed the holiness of Mary des Vallées to the Baron, after she had beheld an apparition, in which Mary was described as 'a poor girl who, dressed in rustic clothes, hidden and despised, and regarded as a witch and madwoman, was warding off the wrath of God.' Mary of the Blessed Sacrament had made a note of the words and the date of the apparition, but she kept them secret until her dying day. M. de Renty, who had heard the story, was, therefore, well prepared to understand 'the poor girl.' Mary des Vallées, in her turn, communicated to Father Eudes the promises, which she said she had received from the Blessed Virgin, regarding both his Congregations. She declared that he need have no fear as to temporal goods, for he should always have more of them than he required.

But this development of faith in the supernatural in the souls of Father Eudes and his friends, in no way exposed them to the dangers of idleness and Quietism. When there was a recrudescence of attacks and calumnies (they were periodical), M. de Renty went from Father Eudes, whom he consoled, to his adversaries, with whom he argued in the most peaceful fashion. The superior of the Oratory of Caen loudly complained of the manner in which the Baron was supporting the deserter. De Renty replied (on September 3, 1646) in a dignified letter, which has often been rightly quoted as the last word in this controversy:

' Reverend Father, I have learned from the gentleman who brought a letter from me to M. de Blérancourt that you were astonished at my writing on behalf of Father Eudes. I esteem you too much, and honour your Congregation too highly, to wish to delay sending you an explanation of my conduct. When I first heard mention of a Congregation that might enter into competition with your own, I did

not at all care for the idea; but now that I see how some priests have come together who, in union with, or even without, Father Eudes desire to serve the Church, in a seminary, according to the desires of the Council of Trent, I should like to help on this work in every diocese in the world, if I could do so; and, moreover, even if your houses were quadrupled, there would still be only too much work to be done, without any one of them interfering with, or taking the place of, the other. Would to God that all men might, from time to time, preach or prophesy! The great thing is that Jesus Christ be preached.

' I have observed the great abilities of Father Eudes in the employments in which I have seen him engaged, and the great fruits which his companions have been able to gather; it is quite true that this has led me to esteem them, but it has in no way lessened my esteem for other worthy servants of the same divine Master.... What chiefly astonished me was your remark that all the knowledge that Father Eudes has was obtained from you, and that he now goes to disseminate it elsewhere. Pray forgive me if I dare mention my own view, which I owe to the most worthy Father de Condren, namely, that it would be a great grace bestowed on the Congregation if it were able to supply a number of good labourers to the Church, and furnish members from its ranks who could usefully

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carry out ecclesiastical functions. I am well aware that many of you do so, without separating yourselves from the Congregation; but as there is complete liberty in the Oratory, there is no sin in leaving it, nor cause for blaming one who has had, perhaps, good grounds for doing so. I have said, "perhaps," because God has greater jurisdiction over men's hearts than we have. . . .'

The priests of the seminary in Caen, for their part, held out an olive-branch to the Oratory. Whilst fully maintaining their right to independence, they offered, for the sake of peace, to renounce, in favour of the Oratory, some of the liberal endowments which they had received, the reception of which had annoyed the Oratory. But this attempt at reconciliation proved fruitless. However, the energy of the apostle and the many and various forms of assistance that had been afforded him by his lay friends, were not allowed to rust. Baron de Renty himself made preparations for a mission at Nogent-le-Rotrou. This was immediately followed by a mission at Fouqueville, in the diocese of Evreux. Here the proximity of Rouen and Gaillon, where the Archbishop usually resided, induced Father Eudes to approach the Metropolitan of Normandy, Mgr de Harlay, whose kindness he had already experienced when giving a mission at Saint-Ouen, in 1642. He presented an extremely able petition to the Archbishop in which he recalled, in such a manner as to justify, without attacking or wounding others, his own action in withdrawing from the Oratory. He gave a clear explanation of the points of difference between his own work and that of his colleagues in the seminary-colleges. Finally, he placed himself entirely at the disposal of the prelate, begging him 'to be kind enough to confirm this

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provincial institute, and to give his consent for them to carry out spiritual exercises in winter, and preach missions in summer, so that, in the course of a year, they may acquire both a theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as constantly render help in parishes, subject to the authority of the parish priests; and. . . they protest that they never desire to establish seminaries apart from (His Grace's consent) or recognise any other superiors than their Lordships the Bishops, and also to carry out all that may be commanded them, and to do nothing save what it may please their Lordships to ordain.'

The petition was graciously received. This was a signal success, because the Metropolitan's approbation gave the seminary of Caen the right to admit ecclesiastics from all the dioceses of

Normandy. (1647)

Scarcely had the Saint received this satisfaction than a new source of anxiety arose. The episcopal see of Bayeux, which was vacant through the death of Mgr d'Angennes, was conferred on Mgr Molé, who was Mazarin's selection because the Cardinal was anxious to win the support of President Molé, the prelate's father. This appointment was not much calculated to reassure Father Eudes; he therefore hastened to Paris to pay his respects to the new bishop. The latter had probably only heard of Father Eudes from his enemies, and hence the Saint met with a cold reception. But, as usual, he abandoned diplomatic in favour of apostolic labours. Father Eudes left Paris for La Ferté-&Vidame, to preach a nine weeks' mission. It must have been very laborious, for he fell ill just then and thought that he was about to die. However, he quickly recovered. Baron de Renty then begged him to go and preach the Gospel once more in Burgundy, and the Saint had, indeed, made a vow

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to go there at once in case he should recover. Accordingly, he set out, despite the rigours of the season, and reached Autun on the feast of S. Andrew, 1647. He completed the journey of seventy- five leagues-the distance between Autun and La Ferté-Vidame-in a fortnight.

At this epoch, the dominant evil of this particular district was a grave laxity of morals. Under the pretext of masquerades and festivals in honour of ' Mother Folly,' the youth of the district abandoned themselves to excesses which have been described by contemporaries in language that conveys some idea of the extent of these disorders. However, we may believe that underneath these excesses of a vigorous race, lovers of wine and good cheer, there lay concealed a fund of faith and generosity which was quite prepared to respond to appeals such as those made by Father Eudes. He had plenty of assistance, for he was accompanied by twenty priests. He had also, not to let it go without saying, the Baron de Renty, who was everywhere, visiting the poor, the sick, and those in prison. We have an account of this mission drawn up by the chief citizens and magistrates of Autun. Never had they seen such fruits produced by a mission as were produced by this. There were not only triumphant processions, manifestations of public repentance, restitutions and reconciliations, to which the missionaries were accustomed, but the people, in order to honour the apostle who had worked so powerfully on their souls, repaired the hospice for travellers, and decided to erect a new one. At the end of the mission, ten thousand livres had been collected for the new building. Finally, the Saint, in order still more solidly to insure the future religious welfare of the thoroughly converted populace, brought about two

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conversions which, his most recent historian tells us, were far more difficult to effect than the conversion of private individuals. The first was the conversion of the Monks of the Abbey of Saint-Martin, who had never accepted the reform of their Order, and the second, since we have to admit the fact, was the conversion of the bishop, a mighty nobleman who had hitherto shown very little interest in the rules of ecclesiastical discipline. Father Eudes effected a complete transformation.

On the following 15th of February (1648), when the mission was concluded at Autun, its leader departed for Beaune. He arrived there in the height of the Carnival, which is as much as to say that he had to fight a similar battle there, and once more he was victorious. But here again the result was not effected without arousing the anger of those who were leading disorderly lives. One of these men struck Father Eudes, and when the pious priest turned the other cheek as he had formerly done when a child, the ruffian repeated the outrage. Shortly afterwards, another missionary was the object of a similar attack, and bore it with like meekness. He succeeded moreover in calming the anger of the people who were enraged at the outrage, but, on this occasion, the attack was followed by

a salutary repentance. The constancy of those whom Father Eudes converted, and the good dispositions of those whose zeal he had so gently aroused, could only be strengthened by such incidents. At the end of the mission, which concluded only after Easter, two confraternities were established, one of the Blessed Sacrament, and the other of the Heart of Mary. A still more authentic assurance of the success of the mission was its effect on the clergy, and of this we have proof in the following document which the

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Bishop of Autun, Mgr de la Madeleine de Ragny, sent to the Pope: ' We have witnessed the admirable works of grace and virtue which the Lord has wrought through him and his associates, by their conversion of a multitude of sinners, and by their discharge of many other duties of the Christian religion, and especially so in regard to a large number of parish priests and clergy. He has, in truth, received from God a special grace whereby he has induced, by his words and example, many priests and clerics to stir up the grace within them.'

The diocese, then, had received much from him, but it had also given him a great deal. It had supplied him with a most valuable recruit in the person of M. de Montaigu, a Canon, who had long sought to join a community in which he might lead a more austere life, and who was now inspired to offer himself to the Saint. Subsequently, he proved to be one of the most respected superiors of the Congregation. Moreover, it was in Autun that Father Eudes found an opportunity to converse at length with the celebrated Sister Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament, to whose prayers the long-expected birth of Louis XIV was attributed. A few months previously, M. Olier had made a pilgrimage to see her, and Baron de Renty declared that it was to her he owed the greater part of his devotion. Father Eudes learned from this nun to love and propagate devotion to the Child Jesus in particular, for the more heresy dried up men's souls, the more a chosen band of Catholics endeavoured to penetrate their hearts with the love of God made man, and popularise every manifestation of the mystery of the Incarnation.

Baron de Renty, who followed our Saint everywhere—even when he was not asked—brought him almost

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immediately to the village of Citry in the Soissonnais where he was lord of the manor; and it was from here that the Baron wrote to M. Olier (on June 10, 1648): ' Father Eudes' labours here are blessed beyond belief.' The Saint at once proceeded to La Fère, to which he had been summoned by the Princess de Condé, Charlotte Marguerite, daughter of the Constable, Henry de Montmorency, and mother of the 'great Condé,' Madame de Longueville, and the Prince de Conti.

Whilst he was preaching these missions, Father Manoury was making a second journey to Rome. He went there on foot, with a pack on his back, staff in hand. We shall not go into the details of all the audiences which his letters of introduction secured for him. He received a plentiful supply of pretty speeches, but could not obtain anything for the establishment of Our Lady of Charity. He did not even obtain a formal recognition of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. The Oratorians had renewed their opposition, basing their objections on the usual grounds, that Father Eudes had left them and, apart from and in opposition to them, had adopted a rôle, out of sheer jealousy and ambition, that properly belonged to them. . . . To these reiterated accusations it was quite easy to reply that nobody was hindering the Oratory from establishing seminaries if it so desired. It would seem that Father Manoury energetically refuted the objections with which he was confronted. If his efforts were not entirely successful, as far as his main object was concerned, still they were not without results. A decree issued by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, on March 23, 1648, rendered the existence

of the seminary in Caen secure, and declared that it was in conformity with the decrees of the Council

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of Trent. This enabled the founder to establish other seminaries. By another decree, Father Eudes was constituted Superior General of the Mission of Normandy, with very wide powers.

Time, however, was passing. The deaths of some of the persons involved in the dispute and the arrival of others on the scene had produced some modifications, and also led to a change of combatants. The energetic and charitable de Renty, who was so well fitted to bring together the clergy and the nobility, was on the point of death. He died on April 24, 1649. Never before had he so ardently associated himself with the work of his friend; never had he worked so hard to secure its continuance by free associations, similar to those which modern Catholics are labouring so hard to multiply. 'I most humbly beg you to believe,' he wrote to the Saint, 'that, if you think I might be useful, at the close of this mission, in forming a little group of gentlemen who belong to various confraternities in this city, as I am accustomed to do in small cities and large towns, I will do all in my power to be there.' Shortly afterwards, he asked Father Eudes to go to Dreux, saying: 'We shall do all that we possibly can to serve and obey you there, both by visiting the sick, looking after the poor and holding meetings of groups of persons whom the word of God may have touched and gained. My wife and two others will be of the party, in imitation of S. Magdalen, S. Joanna, and S. Susanna, of whom it is said, in 8. Luke, that they followed Our Lord and his disciples, and contributed from their means to the preaching of the Kingdom of God. We shall strive to act very quietly, my dear Father, and not let anyone know what we are doing. We shall take simple lodgings in some secluded spot. Consider, my

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dearest Father, if you still desire to be our father, whether, in the autumn of this year, you might be able to break the bread of eternal life to those who ask this favour from you with the deepest respect.'

Now, that is what the 'Cabal of the devout' was really like; for there can be no doubt that the Baron de Renty, who was its 'soul,' did all in his power to link it up with those 'little societies in cities and towns,' and in this letter he reveals the dark plots by which he succeeded. No one will be surprised at the value Father Eudes attached to such collaboration, or that Father de Saint-Jure elicited the following remark from our Saint: 'M. de Renty was our sole aid and refuge in our designs for promoting the service of God, the salvation of souls, the relief of the poor and all kinds of misery. We constantly corresponded with him on these subjects, and especially about the establishment of our hospitals and a house for penitent women, and the repression of the insolence of certain heretics who showed their contempt for the Blessed Sacrament only too openly.' Such, in fact, was their programme, and the last few words-it is quite easy to see-do not refer, in any way, to attacks on men's consciences. It is merely a question of legitimate defence. Only those who consider that a self-styled reforming minority had a right to dictate to the majority of the nation can affect to be surprised at the remark. The noble Baron de Renty, this musketeer of the Church, or, as one would be tempted to call him, this precursor of the young soldiers of the twentieth century, if he were not, in truth, something far greater, died at the age of thirty-eight. S. John Eudes, when recommending him with all his heart to the priests of his young Congregation, asked them to pray 'that God may give us a share in his virtues, that is to say,

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in his great love for the Divine Majesty, in his charity for the poor and one's neighbour, in his zeal for the salvation of souls, and in his humility, modesty, and affability, which proceeded from divine grace.' He concluded by saying: 'Pray God to unite us with his soul in glory, for it is the mark of holy

souls to procure the spiritual advancement of their friends in the sight of God.'

That, as one of Father Eudes's heirs has remarked, is a noble funeral oration. The historian has something further to add. After the death of such a friend, the founder was unable, as he admitted himself, to discover 'anyone to whom he could now have recourse on behalf of divine affairs.' The truly great and noble days of the monarchy, and its fruitful union with a free and select group of men, had passed away. Men were more and more compelled to submit in all things to the Sovereign, and his absolute power.

Madame de Renty, however, once the first agony of her grief was past, intended to continue her husband's undertakings in so far as she possibly could. The Baron de Renty had certainly other reforms before his mind, because he wrote during his last illness to Father Eudes: 'The enemy must be sought out where he is strongest.' Who was the enemy? A monastery of Benedictines who were then living like the laxest, not to say the most vicious, of seculars. The Saint gave them a mission, of which the expenses were defrayed by the widowed Baroness. He obtained the conversion of the monks, and induced them to accept a new rule of life which they followed.

Have we lost sight, in the course of all these varied events, of the establishment of seminaries, and of the

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Congregation which was to secure their perpetuity? No-no more than the founder himself had forgotten them whilst engaged in the works we have just described. The Congregation and seminary on the one hand, and the missions on the other, were to advance side by side. The Oratory kept up its attack, and the new Bishop of Bayeux, Mgr Molé, arrived in a most hostile state of mind. The founder kept his eye and hand on all his enterprises, but his favourite work was, undoubtedly, the seminaries, as one can quite well understand. Missions are intended to deal with things as they are, and his humility would not suffer him to imagine that, provided himself was in charge, all would be well. The seminary meant the future, and an unceasing supply of labourers in the vineyard. Hence, whatever the glory of those great congregations and missionary festivals, which reminded him of the journeyings of the Apostles and the preaching of Jesus Christ himself, Father Eudes would have preferred to abandon them rather than injure the depth and solidity of the studies of his young disciples. H&Hérain reports the following significant words, addressed by the Saint to a superior: 'This is a maxim you should follow: the interests of the seminaries are to be preferred to anything that can be done outside them; if, then, you believe that Father Yon is needed in the house, induce him to stop preaching.'

Mgr Molé, after seeking for some grounds of complaint in the fact that the Parliament of Normandy had registered the letters patent of 1642 (that was done on March 23, 1650) refused to hear the Saint's explanations, or to read his statements; he would not even allow Father Eudes access to those whom he had entrusted with powers to condemn the Saint, to deprive him of all his functions in the diocese of Bayeux, and

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even to close his 'Mission' Chapel (November 1650). But the dioceses of Lisieux and Coutances were still ruled by friendly prelates. Accordingly, the servant of God hastened-this was, in a sense, his usual reply to persecution-to give, in the second of those dioceses, four consecutive missions. He received a recompense which he regarded as the most precious of all. The Bishop of Coutances, Mgr Auvry, authorised him, in 1650, to establish a seminary in his episcopal city.(10) Almost at the same moment the Bishop of Bayeux was closing the seminary chapel in Caen, an act against which

Father Eudes, whilst yielding to force, protested with dignity and courage, proclaiming that he would appeal against the decision ' at a fitting place and time.'

We may, perhaps, here slightly anticipate the course of events, and re-read a letter in which the founder supplies us with a finer outline of the spirit of his Congregation than we can find in all its rules and constitutions. One of his confreres had recommended to the Saint a young man who wished to join the Congregation, and this was the Master's reply:

' You will take care to form him according to the spirit of Our Lord, which is a spirit of detachment, renunciation of self and of all things, a spirit of abandonment to the divine will, manifested to us by the rules of the Gospel and the regulations of our own Congregation, which are only an expression of the Gospel maxims; a spirit of the pure love of God that inclines us to do nothing save only to please him; and a spirit of cordial and fraternal charity towards our neighbour. . . . *For we should have a Catholic, that is to say, a universal spirit, a spirit that embraces, honours, and loves all that is of God, for God's sake, and we should hate or despise nothing but sin and ourselves; a spirit of prayer*

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and piety, so that we may perform all our actions in the spirit, that is to say, in the dispositions which Our Lord has made his own. . . . Study those dispositions as well as you can aided by the grace of God, and impart them to others by your example. . . . Above all, implore God to give you the spirit of meekness, and watch over yourself particularly in this respect so as to make yourself loved, and win hearts, in which you may afterwards implant whatever God may grant you towards that end.'

After Father Eudes had laid the foundation of a house destined to propagate this noble teaching in the friendly diocese of Coutances, he received another and no less valuable testimony. He was summoned by M. Olier, who requested him to preach a mission in the parish of Saint-Sulpice. It was a long time, as we have seen, since M. Olier had first recognised a true companion-in-arms in Father John Eudes. His biographer, M. Faillon, has preserved for us the following significant remark of the great Sulpician. Desiring to honour Mary Rousseau, who had inspired him on so many occasions, he could find nothing better to say of her than: ' Father Eudes, that great preacher and rarity of our age, looked upon himself as happy because he had frequently consulted her.' M. Olier, therefore, begged this chosen soul to come and evangelise his parish. The missionary responded to the appeal, accompanied by a dozen priests who lodged with him in the presbytery of Saint-Sulpice during the whole course of the mission. An inundation of the Seine prevented the pious band from reaching the city for some days. M. Olier was compelled to open the mission himself, and this is how he began: ' I should need the light of that great servant of God (whose place I am now taking) to speak to you worthily

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of Jesus Christ, our true Light. This apostolic man has an extraordinary gift for converting hearts, and we are confident that in such a favourable time as this, for the jubilee is being observed during this season of Lent, God will grant us his grace and mercy by the agency of his preacher.'

Olier's expectations were not deceived. The mission of the Eudist Fathers, given in the beginning of 1651, produced great fruits in this soil, which had been so well prepared. On their return home, they had not to wait for long to receive the reward of their valour. In the first place, the Bishop of Lisieux offered to entrust their master with both a seminary and a college (1653). The Saint ardently desired the first of these foundations, but the second had no place in his plans; nevertheless, he accepted the college, and at once applied himself to make the best use of the gift,

whilst assuring himself that in the future he would not accept any similar proposal. He was no doubt afraid lest he might follow the example of the Oratory, and allow the efforts of his disciples to be diverted towards an object lower than that which so greatly preoccupied his attention.

In the meantime, Mgr Molé had died (April 6, 1652). His successor, Mgr Servien, began by showing similar dispositions to those of his predecessor. However ' he was obsessed by the thought of Father Eudes, and tormented by a desire to arrive at the truth. So one fine day, at the end of a mission, in which the Saint had been as successful as usual, the bishop had his carriage taken out, drove off to Caen, and gave the founder eloquent marks of his esteem and affection, together with very wide powers (1656).(11)

In the following year (1657), Father Eudes devoted more and more attention to his great work. Mgr

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Servien, whose prejudices had been overcome, now definitely entrusted him with the direction of his seminary. To continue the series of his successes it now behoved our Saint to conquer the diocese of Rouen, which was at that time ruled by the famous prelate, who subsequently became Archbishop of Paris, and in that See, justified d'Aguesseau's double-edged verdict: ' He was more prone to give good advice than to edify by the holiness of his life.' Although Mgr de Harlay de Champvallon deserved Bossuet's castigations and Madame de Sévigné's railleries, he was a good administrator, and capable of appreciating virtue in others. He never allowed himself to be disturbed by the same old oft-repeated attacks that were launched against Father Eudes by over- zealous friends of the Oratory and jansenist sectarians. (12) In August 1658, the Archbishop gave the Saint official letters for the establishment of a seminary in Rouen, and even took care to see that they were verified by the Parliament of Normandy. It was an important position and hence, despite the remonstrances of the priests of the seminary in Lisieux, it was to M. Manchon, one of the professors of that house, who was also one of the Saint's earliest and dearest friends, that Father Eudes entrusted the new establishment.

The Congregation was now in charge of four seminaries-Caen, Coutances, Lisieux, and Rouen. No matter which of these establishments he had to deal with, he always gave the same advice: 'You should remember,' he wrote to his priests in Caen, ' that God has given you the grace to call you for three things: first, to give you the means of arriving at the perfection and sanctity conformable to the ecclesiastical state; second, to labour for the salvation of souls, by missions and other functions of the priesthood, which is the work

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of the Apostles, the work of Our Lord himself, and which is so great and divine that it would seem there can be no other greater or more divine; and yet, in truth, there is one that does surpass this work, and this is to labour for the salvation and sanctification of ecclesiastics, which is to save the saviours, direct the directors, teach the doctors, feed the shepherds, enlighten those who are the light of the world, and sanctify those who are the sanctification of the Church. Consider then, my dear brethren, what are our obligations, and what is the perfection that God demands of us. . . . Let us cultivate a great mistrust of ourselves; but, at the same time, let us have great confidence in him who has called us. . . .' And he recommended the priests of Lisieux, in the midst of his instructions on the good order and piety that should form the foundations of every seminary, to have a poor man to dine with them every week. To assure the proper execution of all his precepts he instituted, in each of his houses, a prefect of the ordinands, and also a sub-prefect who should be prepared to assist the former and take his place: he was also anxious that there should be a choirmaster who should teach the young priests Sacred Chant and the correct observance of the sacred ceremonies. In order that recollection

and study might not suffer from circumstances that had been sources of injury in the past, he was unwilling that the seminary should be regarded as a sort of inn where priests, coming to town on business, could take up their lodging. He also excluded from his seminaries priests who led evil or ill-regulated lives. The spirit of apostolic zeal, which he thus developed in souls, induced some young priests, on one occasion, to offer themselves for the foreign missions. Their Superior was a circumspect and methodical man, whose mind was concentrated on

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his immediate task, and who believed that the formation of the clergy surpassed all other works. Hence he was not very favourable to the project of supplying individuals for objects so remote, however great and noble they might seem. But here, as in the case of the College in Lisieux, he had no wish to be obstinate. He permitted the three priests to depart, with the sole recommendation to remember the Congregation of Jesus and Mary wherever they might go. The young enthusiasts only too completely justified the hesitation of their Superior. They all three died before they could even begin the work for which they had proposed themselves.

Just at the moment at which we have now arrived, the Saint gave another proof of his wisdom, for he had no desire that people should leave their own sphere, and imprudently change their vocation.

At this time, the small confraternities which, as we have said, were established by Baron de Renty in various cities, were known as Hermitages. The Hermitage at Caen was founded in 1644 or 1645. Was it a branch of the Society of the Blessed Sacrament? Very likely; all the more so as the adaptable framework of the Society lent itself to a great variety of enterprises, each with different characteristics and objects, and these, despite their affiliation, were bound to act more or less independently in their respective localities. The members of the Caen Hermitage carried out the corporal works of mercy abroad, and gave themselves up to all the practices and exercises of the contemplative life at home. De Bernières de Louvigny acted as their Superior and, under his rule, the members were most edifying. (13) After his death, many of them manifested a most indiscreet zeal. They began to think about fresh undertakings, and proceeded to fight

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Jansenism, and anything that resembled it, with a zeal not according to knowledge. They made demonstrations in the streets of Caen, that were not of a nature to attract the sympathy of intelligent men and women. The enemies of Father Eudes now endeavoured to compromise him, by attributing some of the responsibility for these silly proceedings to our Saint, who hastened to dissociate himself from them. ' There is a printed document, which is being circulated in secret, stating that I was the spiritual director of the Hermitage; others have said that the persons who have behaved so foolishly in the streets of Caen were members of our Congregation. The source of such folly is vanity, which, once it has taken possession of a person's mind, rarely, and with great difficulty, abandons it. Sister Mary frequently told M. de Bernières that he was placing on the road to hell just as many souls as he was placing on the road of passive prayer (because it is for God to do that).' This letter was written on November 7, 1661.

He cannot have been surprised at being calumniated by his enemies; but, according to himself, he had, at this particular time, to undergo harder trials. ' In the years 1661 and 1662,' he writes in his *Memorial*, ' God gave me the grace of enduring many great afflictions, partly from the slanders and calumnies of worldly people, and partly from persons who were very dear to me, and who caused me, for many months, the heaviest and most sensible sorrows I have ever endured in the whole course of my life.' Happily, he had a remedy always at hand-action.

It was in the course of these years that he was again summoned to Paris, to preach his famous missions at Saint Germain-des-Prés and the Quinze-Vingts, which aroused just as much enthusiasm in the inhabitants of

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Paris as those in Normandy and Brittany had ever produced.

Hitherto, he had evangelised the provinces and, in particular, country people. He was now addressing the Capital and the Court. He spoke directly to the Queen, who sat beneath his pulpit, and publicly gave her the most courageous advice. In a moment we shall have to describe the admirable firmness with which he acted. We shall, just now, content ourselves with remarking that, in Paris, he met again the former Bishop of Coutances, Mgr Auvry, who had resigned his See, and who had formerly shown him so many marks of affection. He also met S. Vincent de Paul, who had never ceased to support our Saint, and who wrote, on June 18, 1660, to one of his priests in Poland: 'Some priests from Normandy, under the leadership of Father Eudes, have arrived in Paris to give a mission which has been wonderfully blessed. The open space at the Quinze-Vingts is very large, but it was too small to hold the number of people who went to the sermons. . . . We have reason to praise God for the zeal which he excites in many persons for the advancement of his glory and the salvation of souls.' Father Manchon, indeed, says in a letter, that more than three thousand people were forced to go away because they were unable to gain admittance to the Church of Saint Germain-des-Prés. The preacher availed himself of his stay in Paris to take an opportunity of going to the fountain-head of great and noble memories. He bound himself, as he had long desired, by the 'golden chain' of prayer, to Frances de Lorraine, the Abbess of Montmartre.

.We trust we may be forgiven for not following his missions in detail; we should find him once more at Etainville, Meaux, Grandville (where he almost died),

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Châlons (to which town priests came from the Sorbonne, and placed themselves at his disposal), Evreux, and Coutances. We should see him spending his free time in the publication of certain devotional works such as his *Special Offices*, and the highly prized book called *The Good Confessor*, and also by a pilgrimage to Clairvaux, where he spent fifteen days meditating before the relics of S. Bernard, placing that great Saint's cowl on his head with delight, and imploring him to preserve him from pride.

But in the midst of all these wanderings, labours, trials, and successes, he had found time to effect one of his most important foundations, that of Our Lady of Refuge. We must now retrace our steps, since, in such a crowded existence, many of his enterprises had to be undertaken simultaneously. If we wish to form a true idea of their importance, we shall have to pick them out one by one from the tangled skein of work and persecution in which they were carried out. Nor should we forget that he never failed to bestow a share, and an efficacious share, of his own untiring devotion on each of his enterprises in particular.(14)

NOTES

1. The text of this libel is given by Martine, 1, 142.
2. The letter was discovered in the Propaganda Archives.
3. He had just given a highly laudatory account of the Saint's missions.

4. Father Manchon accompanied him. He left the seminary in charge of Father Manoury, whom he was soon to send to Rome.

5. This authentication was necessary in order that the foundations, which had been effected in the course of the last three years, might be saved from invalidity. Certain gifts and grants had been made only on condition that these formalities should be successfully carried out. The time allotted for them was now drawing to a close.

6. See Boulay (11, 151), who corrects Martine on a matter of detail.

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7. How many decrees remain useless, until men of action come upon the scene, and unless the necessary freedom be allowed them

8. Faillon, Op. Cit., 11, 242.

9. There was nothing contrary to this suggestion in the proposals submitted by Father Eudes. All he asked for was unification, *which he* did not propose to effect himself.

10. See Martine (op. cit., 1, 322) for this 'Letter of Institution.'

11. The seminary chapel had been opened since May 1653, in accordance with a decree of the official of Bayeux, *which was* issued at the suggestion of the Abbé de Sainte-Croix, who was bishop-elect of Bayeux, and a brother of Mgr Molé's. The Abbé resigned the bishopric, and never took possession of his see.

12. He had, moreover, on more than one occasion condemned Jansenist books and propositions.

13. It would seem as if Father Martine did not devote a careful study to Father Costil's Annals at this point.

14. S. John Eudes himself was able to establish two more seminaries, one at Evreux, in 1667, at the request of Mgr de Maupas, and the other at Rennes, in 1670. After his death, his children established many others in that, when the French Revolution broke out. they were in charge of eighteen institutions for the training of the clergy. The Congregation was mined by the tempest of the Revolution, and only restored in 1826. The seminaries were then reorganised, with the result that, after various unsuccessful attempts had been made to resume the work of its Founder, the Congregation had to content itself with the education of youth, and with the preaching of missions and retreats. Nevertheless, in the course of the last half-century, it has succeeded in returning to its original, primary end, and that in countries where there had *hitherto been* no seminaries. If a revolution has forced the Congregation to abandon its seminaries in Mexico, and war its seminary in San Domingo, the Eudist Fathers are still in charge of a dozen seminaries in Colombia and Venezuela. Its seminary at Halifax (Canada) is one of the finest in North America, and its colleges at Church Point and Bathurst are real nurseries for ecclesiastical vocations.

CHAPTER VII**THE FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER OF OUR
LADY OF CHARITY**

OUT 1635 or 1636, when Father Eudes was still an Oratorian, he had preached, as we have seen, in Caen and throughout Normandy, and had made many conversions; he had even reclaimed a number of women who had been leading disorderly lives. Amongst them were several who, taking his advice, sought a refuge with a fine type of Christian woman, named Madeline Lamy. Many good works-as we have so frequently seen in our own times-have very modest beginnings. Little by little, persons who have joined such undertakings increase in numbers, and their leaders and representatives become increasingly conscious of their insufficiency. They seek for new helpers, discover, and group them together, for they feel the necessity not only of a temporary meeting place and a common plan for their united efforts, but also of the certainty of perpetuity. Such persons are in no way disturbed at finding that the same idea has occurred to others, at different times, and in widely separated places. Some of these attempts have merely vegetated or rendered services within a very narrow area; others have gone astray, because they attempted tasks that were too easy, and so failed to preserve the spirit-of their institute. Others, again, have completely disappeared, either from lack of material resources or

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failure to keep their governing bodies properly recruited; but these two last causes of weakness are indicative of a deeper, namely, the over-narrow limitation of the framework within which such societies function. It is to remedy these inconveniences that communities no less widespread and universal than the miseries and needs which they seek to redress, in a word, Catholic communities, have always endeavoured to respond. Such, indeed, has been the origin of almost all, and the greater number of the noblest works and most powerful Congregations in the Church have had no other development.

Now one day, when Father Eudes, who was already famous, was taking a stroll with de Bernières&, M. and Madame de Camilly, and some other friends, they chanced to pass in front of Madeleine Lamy's door. She saw them and spoke to them as follows: ' Where are you going? To visit the churches, no doubt, and to feed there on the images of Saints; then you will think yourselves very pious. That's not where the quarry lies. Better try and establish a house for those poor girls who are being lost for want of assistance and advice! '

The little group at first began to laugh, but soon realised that what they had just heard was well calculated to touch their hearts. They improvised a plan on the spot. De Bernières& undertook to pay the rent of a far larger house than Madeleine Lamy's; de Camilly promised forty bushels of wheat, others clubbed together to provide linen and furniture, and Madame de Camilly offered to act as Matron of the establishment. But all these acts of charity did not put an end to the difficulties of the situation. They even gave rise to others, because a preliminary success entails obligations, and whoever performs one charitable deed is soon

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called on to do many more. Once the foundations have been laid, the building must be erected, and much study, planning, and organisation are necessary for its preservation. This last task was reserved for Father Eudes; and it was in this way that what was destined to be known as the Order of Our Lady of Charity came into existence. At the present day, it numbers nearly twelve thousand

members who devote themselves to the service of almost one hundred thousand persons throughout the world.

The Saint's first care was, naturally, to go and consult with his bishop, Mgr d'Angennes, to whom he spoke of his plans and resources. The most valuable of these was the assistance of a young convert Huguenot lady, Margaret Morin, who undertook the government of the new house. Nuns of the contemplative orders did not stint aid and encouragement to those other devout and unselfish women, who did not, at first, form a cloistered community. The Carmelite nuns of Caen, of whom Father Eudes was the spiritual director, gave what they could, an ardent statue of the Blessed Virgin which had long been venerated, and to which more than one miraculous favour was attributed. It was religiously preserved during the French Revolution and stands in the Choir, at the present moment, over the stall of the Superioress in the Community Chapel at Caen.

On December 8, 1641, Father Eudes said the first mass in the Chapel; and, on that day, Margaret Morin put on a black dress, shaped like a cassock, and a simple, folded kerchief, a double cornette, a band, and a long, black piece of crape to serve as a veil

her companions dressed themselves in the same fashion. This first success emboldened the Saint. Some months later, he addressed an appeal to the Ladies of

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Mercy in Rouen, which showed how much he had this work of redemption at heart. He praised these devout women for the good example which they gave, by their charity, in relieving corporal miseries, in hospital infirmaries, and prisons, but reminded them that there were still more lamentable moral miseries. 'Do not,' he said, 'grudge a little time, a little care, a little material assistance in order to put an end to sinful conduct to destroy which the Son of God shed his blood. . . . There is not one of you who has not a special devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin, the Mother of all purity; now, you must know that you can do nothing more pleasing to her than to help to sustain this poor little house which is dedicated to her under the title of Our Lady of Refuge, because it is a refuge for that chastity which she loves so much, and which is abominably persecuted in the age in which we live.'

This letter-which was not without result-seems to have been written in July 1642. In November of that year, Louis XIII signed letters patent authorising the foundation at Caen. It is specified in the document that girls or women who desire to reform their scandalous lives may 'retire there voluntarily, and be as free to leave as they are free to enter,' and that those who go there to devote themselves to the salvation of those strayed souls should make their profession as 'religious, according to the rule of S. Augustine.'

However, it is easy enough to provide a set of rules for women, but not so easy for them to acquire at once a spirit of union, peace, and understanding. Margaret Morin was devout and disinterested; she had the best intentions in the world; but she does not seem to have been altogether wanting in what casuists and theologians call 'a mind of her own.' Very soon disagreements arose between herself and one of her assistants,

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Mlle. de Saint-André, who joined the community in 1643. These quarrels became more and more bitter, and finally ended in the departure of the latter. Margaret Morin also had difficulties with Father Eudes, because she wanted the nuns to follow the Ursuline rule 'whilst he was in favour of the Visitation, as it represented the more modern and milder spirit of S. Francis de Sales.

In short, Margaret Morin, who subsequently established a work for orphan children of both sexes, left the community in 1644. Furthermore, her departure hastened the withdrawal of some young ladies who had been upset by these discords. In this almost empty house, apart from the penitents, only two were now left, Mlle. de Taillefer, a woman with a great future, and a niece of Father Eudes, Mary Herson, who was then about twelve years old, and was afterwards known as Mother Mary of the Nativity.

This trial was all the more painful because, as might have been expected, outsiders were not sparing in their criticisms and the most contradictory kinds of advice. Many said that this attempt at reforming penitents was illusory, dangerous to the purity of the Sisters, and should be abandoned. They declared that the nuns should be replaced by 'new Catholics,' or Protestants, who had been more or less forcibly converted. Mary des Vallées was amongst those who offered the most energetic opposition to such a change, and who prayed most fervently that Father Eudes would persevere in his attempt.

He persevered so effectively that, overcoming all opposition, and not satisfied with borrowing from the Visitation nuns the spirit of their founder and foundress, he also asked them to lend him some experienced Sisters. He wished to graft them on, as it were, to the young tree. The Visitation, ever generous, welcomed his

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request, and on August 16, 1644, supplied him with three Sisters, one of whom, Mother Patin, was to act as Superioress. This was, most likely, the occasion on which the new institute changed its name from that of Our Lady of Refuge to that of Our Lady of Charity. It was also at this time that the costume which had been adopted by Margaret Morin was altered by Father Eudes. He replaced the black habit by a white one, such as the nuns now wear, and added a silver heart on which the figure of the Blessed Virgin, bearing the Infant Jesus, is engraved in high relief. (1) He decided, moreover, that to the three customary vows of religious orders a fourth should be added, by which the nuns were to bind themselves exclusively to the conversion of women who had led disorderly lives. Finally, he regulated the religious exercises, mitigated some of the observances, and began to draw up a draft of the customs of the community, which were to be gradually revised and corrected. It was a sort of second inauguration or rebirth of his Institute.

In December 1646 the Saint succeeded, thanks to fresh efforts, and after he had encountered many difficulties, in obtaining the authorisation of the Mayor and Sheriffs of the city of Caen for his house of Our Lady of Charity. This, in turn, enabled Mgr d'Angennes to authorise an important donation that had been made by the President of the Parliament of Rouen, M. de Langerie, and his wife. But Father Eudes wanted something more—the approbation of the Holy See. Father Manoury, whom he had sent to Rome to look after the interests of his two great foundations, was also devoting his attention to this new one, but here, as in the case of the others, he met with nothing but hopes.

Hopes! The master had them in abundance, and

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they sprang from his faith, his clear-cut conviction of the necessity of the work, the inspirations of Mary des Vallées, and, lastly, the devotedness of a small group of friends. But trials kept pouring in, wave after wave. Mgr d'Angennes died and was, as we have seen, replaced by Mgr Molé, who was systematically hostile to all the Saint's plans. Before the end of 1647, the Visitation nuns, who had to elect a new Superioress, chose Mother Patin, who was, in consequence, recalled to her own monastery. All these obstacles, which were increased by three successive changes of dwelling, and

still more by the long and repeated absences necessitated by the Saint's missions, brought about a troublesome state of disorder. The new Superioress was lacking in prudence and experience and had to be replaced. The Visitation nuns, who had accompanied Mother Patin on her arrival, thought it wiser to leave after she had gone. They were afraid lest the displeasure of the new bishop might be extended to their own community. They certainly acted with the greatest possible charity, and helped Sister de Taillefer and the postulant, who had remained faithful, to establish themselves in a new house in 1649; but, in the end, they returned to their own convent.

Mlle. de Taillefer, seeing her hopes so repeatedly disappointed, was, naturally enough, grieved and disturbed. Father Eudes tried to encourage her by his letters. But, situated as he was at a distance, he could only temporise. 'As for you, my dear daughter, I implore you, in the name of God, to do nothing but what I have already told you; after I have seen and spoken to you, you may do as you please. Be patient for a little while longer; do not go out to meet temptation, and rest assured that, in a few days, you will be as joyful and glad as you are now unhappy. . . .'

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Difficulties of all sorts (*foris pugnae, intus timores*) continued to arise, until, by a remarkable change of front, Mgr Molé decided to grant the community letters of institution on February 8, 1651. Three days later Father Eudes, who was just then in Paris, wrote the following triumphant letter to his spiritual children.

'My dearest daughters, here is a great piece of news I have for you. But first, kneel down to receive it, not as coming from me, but rather from our most loving Jesus and his most holy Mother. At length, after many years of patience and expectation, on Wednesday last, the eighth day of February, the feast of the most sacred Heart of the Blessed Virgin, the letters for your foundation were signed by His Lordship of Bayeux, and the contract of foundation was also signed by him and M. and Madame de Langerie. So you are now really daughters of the Queen of Heaven, and bound, in a special manner, to honour and love her most amiable heart, to celebrate its feast with special devotion, and to have only one heart with her and with one another. . . . Fear no more. . . .' And then, after all these outpourings of thankfulness, came suggestions for prayers, thanksgivings, and a *Te Deum*....

The young novice, Mary de Taillefer, no longer hesitated. On February 12, 1645, she had taken the habit, and the name in religion of Sister Mary of the Assumption, and she now asked to make her profession as soon as possible. The founder, who formerly had to sustain her courage, now wished to make an appeal of another nature to her patience. Unable to leave Paris, owing to the great mission at Saint-Sulpice, he begged her to wait for her profession until she should have some other Sisters, and he also foretold that the delay would not be long. A fresh success arrived in the nick of time to help on the good work. Mother Patin,

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who had finished her period of office in the Visitation monastery, was invited to resume the same functions at Our Lady of Charity. She hesitated. The new Superioress of the Visitation hesitated even still more. A very curious letter of Mother Patin's enables us to see how the difficulties were surmounted.(2) After her departure from Our Lady of Charity she experienced a constant succession of grave illnesses, a state of extraordinary sadness and scrupulosity, and was finally beset by temptations that were aggravated by melancholia. Whether she was in or out of office, nothing could cure her or lessen her sufferings, until in the end she believed that she saw S. Francis de Sales, who promised her health and peace 'not for your own sake, but so as to enable you to assist Our Lady of Charity.' Calm and joy at once returned to her. However, the Superioress, to whom she had not

breathed a word, persisted in her opposition; but, on seeing her fall gravely ill some months afterwards, she made a vow to allow Mother Patin to return to Our Lady of Charity, in case she should recover. The letter ends as follows:

' Finally, observe how divine Providence brought me to this house. Was it not just that I should make amends for my failings? For, when I was elected Superioress at the Visitation, some of its best subjects withdrew. . . . On one occasion, when I had gone to the Visitation convent to make some changes amongst the Sisters, I went, as my devotion prompted me, to salute a statue of the Blessed Virgin-it is in high relief and is fairly large. The Blessed Virgin holds the Infant Jesus on her left arm and a nosegay of flowers in her right. When I cast my eyes on her, she began to look at me angrily, and, holding out her right arm, said to me: " You are injuring my house by taking its

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best subjects away from it." I was so much surprised that I thought of nothing else but the reproach I had received. May our good God forgive me; I beg him to do so with all my heart, and to grant me the grace to act rightly, for I do not think his goodness wishes me to remain any longer in this miserable world!"

Mother Patin, then, was cured, and returned to her adopted community, which she ruled until she died seventeen years later. It was under her regime that Mary de Taillefer made her profession, and Mary Herson, the Saint's niece, took the habit. At the beginning of this period, Father Eudes, who was anxious that the scarcely healed scar of the old wound in the bishop's mind should not be irritated, appeared as seldom as possible. He did not wish to be present even at the profession of those two nuns who were, nevertheless, so dear to him for more than one reason. However, he did not forget to send them *eight* different pieces of advice, for no one could be more definite when it came to enumerating points. Nor did he cease to keep a watchful eye on the convent. We have seen that, after Mgr Molé's death, his successor, Mgr Servien, was, in the beginning, no better disposed towards our Saint: he even relieved him of his office of Superior of the convent. The nuns respectfully protested, but all in vain; the bishop paid no heed to their remonstrance.(3) This measure, however, did not mean that the Saint was forbidden to enter the convent, or cease from carrying out his spiritual duties in regard to the nuns. As far as temporal affairs, which are usually so difficult in the early days of a Congregation, were concerned, M. de Bernières was at hand. Father Eudes successfully carried out a new installation, which took place on May 25, 1657. The house selected was on the actual site of the present convent. In the

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following year, the long-delayed formalities were carried through, thanks to the efforts of M. de Camilly. Councillor of the Parliament of Rouen.

In the following year, there were fresh reasons for spiritual consolation. In the community there were no less than five professions and twelve receptions of novices, of whom one was a Madame du Bois-David. Father Eudes, who was a friend of the lady's family, had been her spiritual guide whilst she was still in the world. She had a certain social standing (her husband was a Captain in the French Guards) and she brought up her six children in a most Christian manner. After she had lost her husband he seems to have played a rôle in her regard analogous to that played by S. Francis de Sales with S. Jane Frances de Chantal. After Madame du Bois-David had lost some of her children, she made up her mind to become a nun. At first she hesitated between the Carmelite and other religious Orders; but one day she thought she heard a mysterious voice saying to her: ' Take the road to the stable of Bethlehem and the Infant Jesus.' She understood this to mean that she should join a new, simple, and poor community. Braving her friends' astonishment and criticisms (of which there was

no lack), she sought admittance in Our Lady of Charity, bringing with her the youngest of her daughters. She died in 1660 after having sustained and edified the community for many years.

No matter whether things were going well or ill, the nuns wrote to their Father, who, in the midst of his missionary labours, sent them back his usual good and prudent advice. He did not ask from the Sisters anything complicated or far-fetched: he simply requested watchfulness in correcting personal failings, humility, obedience, and a cordial and tender charity

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towards all. In a Case where any of the Sisters, even the Superioress herself, observed that she was feeling depressed or worried, he told her to cease from acts of mortification or greatly moderate them. The simple and joyous fulfilment of their daily duties, as prescribed by the rule and accepted as part of their vocation, was to take precedence of all other exercises of piety.

The Order then was developing, in spite of difficulties, and both the founder and the nuns more and more turned their eyes to Rome, whence they hoped for that consecration which alone could give them a definite assurance of permanence. The relations that existed between the Saint and Mother Patin, as revealed in their correspondence, and these relations should neither be exaggerated nor concealed, must now be set before the reader as they actually were.

He had entrusted the negotiations at Rome to a Flemish priest, the Abbé Boniface, who knew Italian and had a number of friends and acquaintances in the Eternal City. The Abbé arrived in Rome in May 1661. He was active and energetic, perhaps too much so, and sent reports to the Saint of all he was doing, of all the objections he was meeting, and he did not forget to mention all the expenses he was incurring. Mother Patin, it seems, was very much inclined to think that, as the negotiations in progress concerned the Congregation of Jesus and Mary every whit as much as her own, therefore the expenses should be divided.(4) The founder removed this delusion by assuring her-not without truth-that if two ends were pursued at one and the same time, both would certainly fail. Accordingly, he advanced fairly large sums from his own modest means and also invited the Mother, on her side, to provide some of the expenses. He wished to be assured of repayment, as he did not think he was

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entitled to mix up their accounts, or expend on one work money which he had undoubtedly received for another. Hence there were some little recriminations between this typical Norman man and woman. The nun was annoyed that an ecclesiastic, whose sole occupation was a mission of piety, should need so much money. On this point Eudist historians are inclined to think that the agent rather took advantage of his principal's confidence, and that Mother Patin, with feminine cautiousness, had formed a shrewder estimate of the state of affairs and saw the situation more clearly.(5) The Saint, on the other hand-we have the original letters-brings forward every possible argument in favour of the Abbé, above all, the rate of exchange. He states, or rather transmits, every detail -the price of wood, candles, laundry, etc. in Rome, and, finally, what it will cost the said M. Boniface 'to keep things moving as he is now doing.' Again, he points out what the Abbé will have to pay for secretarial work, and, above all, his expenses in making presents to various people, 'without which nothing is accomplished in that country.' Hence, there must be no delay; for, in that case, all that has hitherto been expended would be lost 'and the whole edifice would collapse.'

'Now, my dear Mother,' he writes at the end of one letter, 'the saints have never spared money when it was needed for God's affairs. You yourself were able to procure enough money to acquire the Old Bank House, for which you had a liking, although it was not absolutely necessary; and now do you wish to stint money for an object which will be the very foundation stone of your

community, and without which it cannot subsist? In the name of God, my dearest Mother, lay aside your mistrust and ill-founded

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suspicions, as something unworthy of such a saint as Mother Patin, and do not listen to your dearest friends, of whom you tell me, with the result that you do not believe a word of what is said to you by one who has more esteem and affection for yourself, and more zeal for the welfare of your house, than anyone in the world.'

Now what were the difficulties? The one ostensibly alleged was the fourth vow, namely, that of consecrating themselves to the work of reclaiming girls who had led evil lives. Yet, if this vow were suppressed, there was no justification for the new Congregation. Members of the higher ecclesiastical circles in Rome persistently objected that it was very hard to believe that young nuns placed in such surroundings could preserve their purity; they might even be in danger of losing their own. 'And in order that you may see that no one has hitherto overcome this objection,' wrote Father Eudes, 'you must know that the Sisters of Refuge at Nancy, who have houses at Avignon, Dijon, and Rouen, have not yet succeeded in obtaining bulls from our holy Father the Pope, in spite of all their efforts; and yet, their affair is not as difficult as ours, firstly because their community consists of penitent Sisters, who are not, as virtuous young women might be, in any danger from the penitents, and secondly, because they have been received and approved, at Avignon, by the Papal Legate.'

The reader will observe the interest of this incident from the point of new Catholic undertakings. The Church aims at moderating and guiding the zeal of her children at least as much as stimulating it. It is the saints who always form the vanguard-ever ready as they are to listen to her voice when it warns or recalls. What was the point under discussion in this instance? It was whether sinners should be entrusted to the care

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of women who had themselves been sinners, or whether the task of guiding and consoling these victims of vice should now be undertaken by women who were virtue itself: whether the purity of devout young girls should abase itself humbly, tenderly, and heroically in the presence of women from whom the proud Pharisee turns aside contemptuously. The Abbé Boniface, if we are to believe his own testimony, wore himself out in his explanations to the Roman authorities that if the work seemed odd and peculiar in Italy, it had already taken root in France, and had justified itself by its results. Was so much eloquence really needed in the land of S. Catharine of Siena? (6) However, in point of fact, the enterprise was certainly novel, and therefore it was well to test it, and teach it patience, as so many others had been taught . . . especially at the moment it had come into existence, just when a conflict threatened to break out between Louis XIV and the Papal Monarchy. But the nuns in Caen thought that they had practised sufficient patience. Mother Patin was prepared to make just one more sacrifice, but only on condition that, this time, success was assured. Such a condition could scarcely be regarded as serious, and the Saint frankly told her so. 'Is it possible that Mother Patin, who is so virtuous and reasonable, should make such a proposal?' In short, no more money was sent to the Abbé Boniface, and as, according to Father Eudes, one could not live in Rome without money, the Abbé returned, without having obtained anything (September 1662).(7)

He had obtained nothing ... and yet none of them was discouraged. Neither the prayers of the Sisters nor the efforts of Father Eudes ceased for a moment. They had to be prepared for every opportunity, and the best of all opportunities was the restoration of

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friendly political relations between the two Courts. It happened just then that the Abbot of Val-Richer, of the Order of Citeaux, and a friend of Father Eudes, was setting out for Rome, accompanied by the Abbé de Rancé. They were proceeding there to defend the interests of La Trappe, and they also promised to look after the cause of Our Lady of Charity. After their arrival in Rome they succeeded in obtaining the help of Cardinal de Retz; and at length all the barriers fell as if by magic. just as previously complication after complication had arisen, so now both Pope and Cardinals were anxious to simplify everything. The bulls of erection for the Order were granted on January 16, 1666.

The bishop, Mgr de Nesmond, was entrusted with the task of delivering them in person. He fixed the date of the ceremony for Ascension Thursday of that year, and, on this occasion, Father Eudes occupied the place of honour. At the end of the Mass, which was said by the Prelate, the Saint ascended the pulpit and preached on a text from S. Mark: 'They will impose hands on the sick and the sick shall be healed.'

As the history of the Order of Our Lady of Charity only enters this book in so far as our hero had a share in it, we shall regretfully pass over many touching incidents.(8) However, we must not omit to mention that the Saint and Mother Patin made no delay in coming to an agreement, by mutual concessions, in the matter of their complicated financial accounts, which, in the case of many of their compatriots, would undoubtedly have led to a lawsuit. (9) They both preferred to set about drawing up a Directory and Ceremonial. In October 1688, Mother Patin, closely

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following Mother Mary de Taillefer, died before this work was accomplished. Father Eudes resumed it, and soon associated his own niece, Mary Herson, in his labours. She was succeeded by Mother Mary of the Infant Jesus, the daughter of Mother du Bois-David.

The Saint borrowed extensively from the works of S. Francis de Sales when drawing up the Constitutions of the new Order. Nevertheless, he introduced a number of penitential exercises, and, consequently, insisted that novices should give proof of a fairly robust physical constitution. He thought, no doubt, that the sight of penances freely accepted, in reparation for the sins of the 'penitents' and the salvation of their souls, was well calculated to move their hearts. But if the Sisters should act like priests and take on themselves the sins of others, they should also give an example of that meekness and generosity which S. Francis de Sales and, after him, the Visitation Order had recently made so popular. The severity which we adopt towards ourselves and sin, for which we render ourselves, in a manner, responsible, and in which we share, should never be shown by dealing harshly with others. Such is the teaching of the saints. Such was that of the founder of the Order of Our Lady of Charity, as he reminds Mother Mary of the Nativity in a letter written very probably in 1674.

' Enclosed, my dearest and well-beloved daughter, are two books which I am sending you and which have been of great service to me. I beg you to study them most carefully, especially in all that they teach concerning meekness; because a hard, harsh, dry, bitter, haughty, and dominating character is only good for spoiling everything, ruining the childlike affection, tenderness, and confidence which should be present in the hearts of those we rule, and is apt only to instil

fear, terror, contempt, aversion, and hate; in a word, it is only good for destroying a community and putting the head of a Superioress on the block. I do not think, my dearest sister, that you behave in such a way, and no one has said so to me; but as I have learned by experience that the office of Superior ruins many who hold it by giving them such a hard, harsh, dry, and narrow spirit, I am always afraid. Study, therefore, I beseech you, to rule your daughters with all possible graciousness, kindness, cordiality, and tenderness. It is the spirit of Our Lord and of his most holy Mother; often ask them to grant you and me these graces, and ask one of your Sisters to tell you of your failings in this regard.'

Faithful echoes of these reflections may be found in some recently published spiritual instructions by which the author fosters the spirit of Our Lady of Charity-for there never has been any need to renew or reform it.(10) To have, in a way, defined and formulated this spirit from the very beginning is not the least glory of our Saint. But let us try and take a bird's-eye view-we can do so, thanks to himself of the ideal which he set before his nuns. We shall find it set forth in one of his longest letters, which must be read once a month to the nuns of Our Lady of Charity, just as Jesuits are bound to hear S. Ignatius' famous letter on obedience. It is worthy of equal honour and, above all, it is worthy of inaugurating such an undertaking and of guaranteeing its success.

The Father first recalls all the obligations the Sisters are under to Our Blessed Lady and all the honour they should pay her, especially on the eve of her feasts. He then goes on to speak of their vocation, of the duties it entails, and of the greatness and beauty with which it should clothe them in the sight of God

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Ah! my dearest Sisters, how holy is your vocation! how advantageous your state in life! Ah! how great is the goodness of God in your regard in thus calling you to a truly apostolic religious order. Ah! how great would be your ingratitude if you failed to recognise your unutterable obligation to the divine mercy on this account!

'But remember that, as this employment is marvellously displeasing to the evil spirit, he will not fail to tempt you in regard to your vocation. He will bring before your minds the trials and difficulties you must endure; but do not forget, my dearest Sisters, that there is no state in life exempt from labour and sufferings, and that, if you do not suffer with Jesus, you shall not reign with him. Hence there is nothing you should so much fear as to be without a cross. Cast your eyes on a crucifix and see what he has suffered to save souls. Is it reasonable that you should be associated with him in that great work for which he came into the world, which is to save sinners, and which cost him so dearly, and that you should go scot-free? Alas! alas! where would you be, if the fear he had of suffering, which was so violent as to make him sweat blood, had hindered him from labouring for your salvation? Consider also the sea of sorrows, tears, and anguish through which the Blessed Virgin had to pass in order to co-operate with her Son in the redemption of souls. . . .

' Place before your eyes those holy women who leave their country, cross the seas, and go to Canada, where they are daily in the midst of a thousand dangers to win souls to God. . . . I knew a person of your sex, a weak, timid, fragile girl like you, who besought God for many years, and with incredible ardour, that she might suffer for a time some share

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in the frightful pains of hell, so that she might preserve some souls from it for all eternity, and God, on that account, caused her to suffer torments so incredible that no tongue or pen can express them, and she suffered these tortures for more than forty years. After that, my dearest Sisters, should we not die of shame at the sight of our own weaknesses and miserable cowardice? . . . Do you want another Gospel written for you, do you wish God to send you another Messiah—a Messiah of honey and roses? Do you wish to go to Paradise by another road than that which the Mother of God and all the Saints have trod, or do you really wish to go there all by yourselves and leave your poor Sisters on the road to hell, because you are so delicate that you are afraid to take the trouble of stretching out a hand to pluck them back?

'Perhaps you may say that they are walking along a very dirty, muddy road, and that you are afraid of soiling yourselves when you strive to withdraw them from it. The Devil is clever enough to tempt you in this way, which is all the more dangerous because it seems beautiful and true; but I tell you, my dearest Daughters, it is impossible that Our Lord should let those fall who, for love of him, help others to rise. *Purity, when allied with true charity, can never be sullied, any more than rays of sunlight can be soiled by mud. Cast aside, then, such vain fears, and trust in him who has called you to this divine employment; if you mistrust yourselves and rest on him, he will never withdraw and allow you to fall. . . .*

' Lastly, my dearest Daughters, if you wish to increase the joy and glory of your worthy Princess, be faithful to her Son in your vocation; close your ears to the whisperings of the serpent; be not children of Eve, who listened and allowed herself to be seduced, but be children of Mary, who conquered and crushed the

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serpent beneath her feet. I implore you with all my heart to crush him beneath yours, and to render yourselves worthy of being true daughters of his Sacred Heart, inflamed with zeal and love for the salvation of sinful souls who have cost God the precious blood of his Son Jesus. In the sacred love of the most amiable Heart of the Son and of the Mother, I am and ever will be, my dearest Sisters, your . . .'

Such was his own powerful summing up of his doctrine. Everything is contained in it; his teaching on the Heart of Mary and the Heart of Jesus, and the profound impression made on him by the martyrdom of Mary des Vallées. He was, no doubt, happy to associate the tenderness and delicacy of women with the grandeur of the satisfaction made to God by the priesthood, as taught him by Father de Bérulle in his youth, and it was this same doctrine which he so valiantly carried into practice amidst the labours of his riper years.(11)

NOTES

1. Mary des Vallées asked the advice of the Blessed Virgin who, besides indicating the symbolism, settled the form and principal details.

2. The letter was addressed some years later, to a Superioress of her own Order. It is given in full in Ory's *Les Origines de Notre-Dame-de-Charité*, Abbeville, 1895, p. 52.

3. Mother Patin showed a little more resignation than the other nuns; the fact has been noted ... and diversely commented on.

4. In the beginning, Abbé Boniface had also been entrusted with the affairs of the Congregation

of Jesus and Mary. Father Eudes, confronted with certain difficulties, subsequently told him to look after the interests of Our Lady of Charity alone. The Abbé did not do so, as we shall see in the next chapter.

5. The portraits left to us of Mother Patin reveal much kindness, but also, perhaps, what is sometimes called 'a mild type of mischievousness.'

6. Above all, was it necessary to point out what seems self evident, namely, that penitent women would be much safer, much

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less rigorously dealt with, etc, etc. . . . by those who had never sinned grievously?

7. If he had obtained nothing, still his attempts had not been altogether in vain; they prepared the way for further negotiations and removed much prejudice.

8. Such as marked the conclusion of the borrowing from the Visitation, and the natural emancipation of the young community, which was henceforth quite capable of finding mature nuns within its own ranks who were capable of ruling.

9. If the Saint preserved much, in his natural disposition, of the practical skill and prudence of his race, he had not preserved its fondness for going to law, for he wrote to Father Manoury, on July 29, 1655: 'Lawsuits should be avoided like the plague; we should prefer to have less, nay, lose everything rather than go to law.' Nevertheless, there is a slight reservation in what follows, which has the appearance of a slight and careless afterthought: Except one enters on a lawsuit incidentally, and not as the principal party, and in due time one is perfectly sure of success.'

10. The reference is to Blessed Mother Mary of S. Euphrasia Pelletier's Entretiens.

11. S. John Eudes had the joy, in his own lifetime, of seeing the Order of Our Lady of Charity develop by the foundation of convents at Rennes, Hennebont, Montbareil, and Guingamp. After his death. Hennebont was replaced by Varies, and then, between 1714 and 1720, came foundations at Tours, La Rochelle, and Paris. All these communities were fervent and faithful to sound doctrine when the Revolution broke out. At the present day the Order possesses sixteen convents in France, but, in the course of the nineteenth century. foundations were made in Italy, Austria, Ireland, England, Spain. and America, so that Our Lady of Charity and Refuge now counts more than forty-six monasteries which, in the midst of very different countries, still preserves, with devotion to its holy founder. the spirit, virtues, and all the traditions of its earliest members. In the nineteenth century, a branch of extraordinary vitality, the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Angers, sprang from this trunk, the sap of which had not grown old. Mother Mary of S. Euphrasia Pelletier left Tours in 1829 to found a convent at Angers. After an absence from it, which was quite in accordance with the rule, she returned there in 1835 with full powers, and revealed rare talents as an organiser. Guided by Providence, she conceived the idea of establishing in the Order a Superior-Generalship which she believed would be a powerful instrument of centralisation and organisation. Her plan was approved by the bishop, Mgr de Montaut, and also received the Sovereign Pontiff's full consent. At the present moment, the Good Shepherd Order has twenty-nine provinces which include two hundred and eighty convents and nine thousand nuns.

CHAPTER VIII

HIS TEACHING AND DEVOTIONAL WRITINGS AGAINST THE JANSENISTS-THE SACRED

HEARTS

ANOTHER of our Saint's titles to glory, one which he laboured all his life to acquire, and which he never lost sight of amidst his multifarious labours, was that devotion towards the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary which he was the first to formulate and organise. We deferred an examination of this subject to the stage at which we have now arrived because, in addition to the impossibility of explaining everything at the same time, we had another excellent reason. One of his worthiest successors in the office of General of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary-Father Le Doré-reminds us of the fact that if, from 1641 onwards, Father Eudes's devotion to the Sacred Hearts had never ceased to grow, nevertheless, it was only about the year 1670 or 1672 that it reached its complete expansion.

The preparation for, and accomplishment of, this expansion were due to a variety of causes. His own inner devotion and personal reflections on the mysteries of the person of Jesus Christ do not supply a sufficient explanation. In the glorious dawn of the Oratory, the lessons of Cardinal de Bérulle, *which* formed the subject of his meditations, could only have supplied an active ferment to elements already existing. His own additions to the work of his earliest teacher

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may, perhaps-as we shall consider in a moment-be just an application of the following remark of a modern theologian: «Adoration becomes fixed, and is finally determined not by the contemplation of the mysteries of Jesus Christ alone, but by that of his divine person.» (1)

It would seem as if this remark, taken in its fullest extent, embraces both the programme of Cardinal de Bérulle (contemplation of the mysteries of Christ) and of Father Eudes (contemplation of his divine Person). We are all aware, however, that the greater number of the dogmas of the Church remain in an implicit condition, until heresy demands, along with the condemnation of a definite and dangerous error, a fuller and more explicit manifestation of the truth. The same holds true of devotions: they are successively called into existence by that very spirit of hostility and spiritual aridity which renders such devotions necessary. We cannot dispense ourselves, therefore, from speaking of the Saint's fight against the sect that was most hostile to this devotion, namely, the Jansenists.

There is no need here for yet another disquisition on jansenism. Everyone knows to-day how the Protestantism of Luther and Calvin, which professed to emancipate man, actually taught the slavery of the human will, which is, according to them, incapable of resisting either grace, whenever grace acts, or natural concupiscence, whenever grace is withdrawn. Jansenism, in spite of all its efforts to conceal the truth from itself, was only a form of Calvinism which desired at any price to remain within the Catholic Church . . . even at the price of self-contradiction. In its eyes, Jesus Christ had not died for all men: it implanted the most revolting doctrine within the most merciful of all religions; and we know how its crucifixes, by a symbol that is only too eloquent, drew up the outstretchod

arms of the Saviour alongside his head in a harsh attitude of condemnation. The persistent and surprising popularity of Jansenism in such a warm-hearted country as France is due to a variety of causes, from which we may select: (i) the personal virtues of some of its members; (2) the skill with which they manipulated certain passages from the writings of S. Paul and S. Augustine which they left incomplete; and (3), in the temporal order, the contemporary mental attitude by which the rights of sovereign and absolute authority were exaggerated, and which inclined men to see, in the Eternal Master, an absolutely arbitrary power. We may also add that, in the moral order, jansenists were looked on as rigid and unbending, a disposition of mind which is always most loudly praised by those who are least so. Finally, they created an illusion in the minds of many Catholics, precisely because they maintained that they *were* good Catholics, better Catholics, in fact, than the rest. Moreover, by subtle distinctions between fact and right, they contended that the Papal condemnations did not touch them. However, there is no need to prolong this discussion. To sum up the situation we shall borrow, from one of the most upright and distinguished minds of Father Eudes's era, a judgement which takes us right back to the heart of the matter. Here is Madame de Motteville's view of the whole affair, as revealed in her delightful *Memoirs*: 'Whenever men speak of God and the hidden mysteries of our religion, I always feel amazed at their hardihood, and I am charmed at not being obliged to know more than the *Our Father*, the *Creed*, and the Commandments of God. In regard to the matter of which I am now speaking, I know that it is enough to believe that we have not anything that we have not received, that I can do nothing good without the grace

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of God, and that he has given me free will. Apart from that, there is nothing but disputes.' And in another place 'A good or bad use may be made of everything but what seems perfectly true to me, and what even women and unlettered persons can readily see, is that the Jansenists seem to value highly, and uphold, the teachings of Jansenius, which have been condemned by Rome, and are consequently attacked by the Jesuits, not without cause; and notoriously do the jansenists who seem to submit, but only in word, to the condemnation of the five propositions, passionately and methodically defend the book that contains them, but also, in point of fact, they teach the public, by their writings, a system of morality in which the practice of perfect Christian virtue is eloquently expounded.' (2)

It is superfluous to add which side was taken by our hero in the dispute that then rent the bosom of Christian society. The Oratory, taken as a whole, was never clearly or violently Jansenist: it is most unjust, for example, to accuse Malebranche of Jansenism; but there is no doubt that several of its members, almost immediately after the deaths of Fathers de Bérulle and de Condren, developed, along Jansenistic lines, what those two great men had taught about the corruption of human nature, its weakness, and the power of divine goodness operating gratuitously in our souls.

As far as form at least is concerned, Father Eudes himself seems occasionally to feel the effect of an atmosphere in which men were infinitely more afraid to diminish the power of the Creator than to annihilate the creature. This fact, however, did not in any way hamper the efforts of those who promoted the Saint's canonisation because, underneath his austere language and his expositions of human misery, they quite easily discovered tones of love and pity; and, indeed, his

contemporaries had long ago assigned the Saint his proper rank.

He was no less convinced than were S. Vincent de Paul and M. Olier, no less anxious to see an end put to subtle disputations and theological quibblings, and no less desirous of opposing them by the

best of all defences—the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and the practice of all that sustains Christian hope. Whatever may be said of these great men, their attitude was, for most of the time, a defensive and sorrowing one; they were far more ready for peace and reconciliation than their bitter and violent adversaries. M. Olier spoke the truth when he said of the latter: (3) 'Because we preach that Jesus Christ died for all, they are scandalised.'

When the sect had developed and its scarcely concealed opposition to Catholic teaching had brought trouble and confusion on the faithful, M. Olier (4) no doubt protested eloquently and with rising indignation against the harsh follies of its doctrines. Up to this, Father Eudes had chiefly avoided these teachers of novel doctrines. But when confronted with them, or called on by lawful authority, he was quite prepared to speak out boldly. We can see this in the following passage from the works of Arnauld, (5) with its slightly ridiculous touch of exaggeration, in which he is speaking of the General Assembly of the Clergy of France in 1660 and 1661, and the dispute about the formula: 'The General Assembly opened at Pontoise, under the presidency of Mgr de Harlay. The first months passed by quietly enough. Neither the formula, nor any other point in dispute was mentioned. But this calm did not long continue. Father Eudes, brother of the historian MÉZERAY, began to disturb it by his bloodthirsty declarations against the alleged Jansenists.

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This madman, holding the Blessed Sacrament in his hands, raged against the latter with the utmost fury, in the presence of the Queen, in the Church of the Abbey of Saint Germain, in Paris, on the 2nd of September.' As a matter of fact, Father Eudes urged his disciples to remain calm, as we may see from the following noble letter to M. Manchoir, the Superior of Rouen: 'I know no better secret than to walk along our own broad highway without interfering in any of these questions, observing the Commandments of God and of his Church, and the rules of our profession, exhorting all men, in private conversations and in sermons, to do the same, and avoiding, as far as possible, the discussion of controverted questions of the day, those regarding both faith and morals, and especially in our sermons. I also beseech you, my dearest brother: (i) to shun, as far as you can, the society of all those who hold false doctrines, for that would make us suspect, and do us much harm; (2) always to show the greatest possible friendship and charity to the Reverend Jesuit Fathers, and all other religious bodies.'

Did the charitable reserve help to cast a suspicion of lukewarmness on the Saint and his disciples? It is quite certain that he was forced to defend the seminary at Rouen from the suspicions of a certain councillor of the Parliament in that city who wished to have the Eudist Fathers dismissed. 'It is true,' he remarked to the latter, 'that it would be far better not to have any seminary than to see it ruled by jansenists; but, thanks be to God, there is no poison amongst us.' And he added: 'My dear sir, Jansenism is a most pernicious heresy, because it ruins faith; but schism and divisions amongst God's servants are no less dangerous, in so far as they annihilate charity, which is a still more

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excellent virtue than faith.' These are not the words of a fanatic or a lover of persecution.

He was not, then, either vindictive or mad. He simply resembled the men of his own time, all of whom believed that the law of the Church and the law of the State should be regarded as one and the same thing. He thought that it was the King's duty to see that God or Christ should not be insulted, just as men up to the twentieth century believed that the civil power should see that the national flag, the symbol of a country's unity and dignity, should not be insulted. Frenchmen in those days were not accustomed to draw any distinction between persons who attacked either of those codes of law; and

indeed they were not far from regarding both such classes of persons as what we to-day would call anarchists. There is no need to prove-the fact is sufficiently well known- that, in this respect, Calvinists and Lutherans went far beyond Catholics: they gave more than abundant proof of it in Geneva, England, and Germany. Facing those who had preserved Christian truth stood those who maintained that they had re-established or reformed it, and who arrogated to themselves the fullest right to impose it. Men forgot-this was the first sandbank-that, according to 8. Augustine's great maxim, recently recalled by Leo XIII, no man can, in his own despite, be forced to believe. They also forgot, and this was the second sandbank, that the civil power, once it had been summoned to defend the laws of religion and make the latter respected, claimed, as a consequence, the right to judge it. In the eyes of the State the second of those missions was a complement of the first. No doubt it did not, at least in France, claim to judge the laws of religion in themselves and in their essence, but it certainly did claim to decide whether there was

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any element in them harmful or dangerous to its own authority. Hence the prolonged opposition of the French Government to the promulgation of the decrees of the Council of Trent. If it chose to reject the Council, it rejected it, or, what came practically to the same thing, it ignored, and compelled the people to ignore, it. Hence the frequent conflicts, in which the Jansenists-we shall soon see an instance-were not afraid to appeal from the Pope to the King, if they thought that that would be of any advantage to their party. Finally, given the universal opinion on the essential unity of the two powers, it was inevitable that, as we have already remarked when dealing with the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, the leaders of the Catholic party should request the King to carry out the whole mission with which, with the consent of all his people, he had been entrusted. That is how Bossuet acted, and Father Eudes also, in different circumstances. What angered heretics was not the appeal to the royal power, but an appeal against, and not in favour of, themselves. (6)

But such an appeal to the King's authority was only an episode in the lives of our saints. In point of fact, the real battle was what Cardinal de Bérulle has so well described as the battle of 'mind with mind.' And the saints waged this warfare by their apostolic labours, sermons, and instructions, and finally, by the tenacity with which they endeavoured to propagate the devotion which, in their eyes, was best fitted to repair the evils that had been caused by heresy.

We have now arrived at one of the most original features of our Saint's mission. His devotion to the Sacred Heart, the writings he has left us on this subject, and the great work which he accomplished by

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spreading it, constitute, in reality, a protest against the harsh severity of the new ideas. If, as Father le Doré has shown, there was a gradual development, this was, doubtless, due to the fact that he was urged on to carry out his mission by the Jansenist campaign, and, also, because he was now drawing from Catholic dogmas the legitimate conclusions that flowed from the interpretations or commentaries of Peter de Bérulle.

One of the claims made by the heretics of the sixteenth century was that they did away with all intermediaries between God and man. There was to be no more worship of the Saints, or of the Blessed Virgin. Christ, indeed, still remains to justify us, but he does so by himself alone, and, moreover, when he wishes to justify us, he does so whether we desire it or no. But such a Christ remains inaccessible. I use the word 'inaccessible' advisedly, because the Jansenists, who had no particular fondness for festivals or 'devotions,' had suggested a special feast in honour of the 'inaccessibility' of our Saviour. (7) Jesus Christ, inaccessible, consequently devotion itself inaccessible! It was against

such an idea that S. Teresa had protested and S. Francis de Sales reacted. We have also heard the eloquent language of Cardinal de Bérulle. Now, Father Eudes is one of those who worked, with the greatest energy and perseverance, along the lines laid down by those two great saints.

As the Incarnation of the Son of God with a view to the Redemption of the human race is the great central dogma of the Christian religion, are we not bound to conclude that the Son of God should be adored, not only in eternity, but on his coming into the world, in his holy and divine humanity, in the body with which he clothed himself in order to be like unto us, and in which he willed to suffer for our sakes?

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Is it not reasonable, and also equitable and salutary -as the Church teaches-to propose, for our adoration, the human and divine natures that are so intimately united? If Jesus Christ is adorable, he is so in his whole being, as it pleased him to manifest it to us. At an early stage in her history, the Church set before Christians the worship of the Child Jesus. Was this not to thank him for his voluntary self-abasement? Was it not to remind us that, as an infant, he symbolised the simplicity of soul which he demands from us? Was it not to recognise the fact that this frail organism, in whose development his humanity grew and waxed strong, merits a share of the worship due to his entire being? It most certainly was, and we may add that devotion to the Child Jesus was practised for all those motives taken together. Why did S. Catherine of Siena so lovingly adore the Saviour's precious blood? Why did the Church consecrate this form of devotion and make it universal? Was it not for the same reasons? And should we not say that the man who despises such devotions despises the Incarnation itself?

No doubt there is a certain convention which may be easily grasped, and which lays down for us what objects of devotion we should choose. Men will take no pleasure in considering, in the God-Man, those elements which man, as man, ignores in himself, and, with still greater reason, those elements which man regards as participating least in the higher life of the soul. The Church has not allowed complete freedom in these matters, but has, from time to time, repressed certain puerilities. Was the call for, and the inauguration of, devotion to the Sacred Heart a childish innovation? The Jansenists maintained against Father Eudes that such was the case, and they maintained it still more

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violently against S. Margaret Mary. Neither the body of the faithful nor the supreme authority of the Church agreed with them, and devotion to the Sacred Heart has become, as we all know, one of the most popular, widespread, and authentic forms of contemporary piety. To-day we are all familiar with devotion to the Sacred Heart, and its form has been definitely determined. But this was not the case in the epoch with which we are concerned, and many propositions and statements, which have since passed into current use, were then regarded as most temerarious. Were they new? Those who are learned in these matters and who have sought for the origin of this devotion in tradition, and especially in the statements of saints of widely different ages and places, have shown that here 'as elsewhere, there is nothing absolutely new. What was new was the reasoned organisation of an ancient belief. At the period at which we have now arrived, great geniuses in the Church did not fear to speak of the Heart of Jesus; but they did so, we may say, with a respectful obscurity, or with a feeling that theology was not yet prepared to supply definite enlightenment. 'Lose yourself a thousand times a day,' wrote M. Olier, (8) 'in his loving Heart, to which you feel yourself so powerfully attracted. You will there enter into the enjoyment of all that he is, and even into the mutual communications and correspondences that take place between him and his Father. The Heart of the Son of God is the chosen place; it is the precious stone in the cabinet of Jesus; the treasure of God himself, into which he pours all his gifts and communicates all his graces.... It is in this Sacred Heart and in this adorable

interior that all the mysteries are primarily operated, and it is in those saints, to whom God has given this special devotion, that his most intimate

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communications take place, and all his divine mysteries are most perfectly expressed.'

Bossuet, subsequently, in his *Reflections on the Agony of Jesus Christ*, (9) states that the agony of the Man-God had been, as it were the final withdrawal of his life to its ultimate refuge, that is to say, to his Heart. It was there that, before the total and definitive separation, the whole Passion and all 'its fruits were present to his eyes, the eyes of his heart.' This was the source from which flowed 'the drops, streams, torrents, and floods of grace and mercy' on the souls of the faithful. Hence the supreme prayer of the Christian, who desires that his own agony may be associated with that of Jesus Christ, should be: 'O Divine Mary, open to us thy maternal bosom, receive us into thy all-powerful protection; place us within the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, thy Son.' These, undoubtedly, are noble outpourings of Christian piety, but still they are rather religious transports than definite doctrine and they do not, of themselves, constitute an organised devotion.

Now, in the writings of Father Eudes, (10) and especially in the work entitled: *The Admirable Heart of the Most Holy Mother of God*, the principle of this organisation is admirably formulated. 'The corporeal Heart of the Man-God,' he writes, 'as well as all the other members of his body, is deified by its hypostatic union with the person of the Eternal Word. . . . The Eternal Word is in that royal Heart, uniting it to himself in the most intimate union that can be imagined, that is to say, the hypostatic union which renders this Heart adorable and with the same adoration that is due to God himself. . . . The Sacred Heart is hypostatically united with the person of the Word and is on fire with his infinite love for us.'

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Many controversies were raised at that time and they were frequently renewed, as to the degree in which this invocation of the Heart of Jesus is symbolic, as to whether it is merely symbolic and if, in reality, the faithful are only bound to adore the pure, utterly divine and, consequently, incomprehensible love of the Redeemer. Nothing can be added to the clarity of the Saint's teaching on this head. 'In the Sacred Heart we are to adore three hearts that are nevertheless only one by the closeness of their mutual union, namely: His heart of flesh, which is the noblest portion of his sacred body, his spiritual Heart, which is the highest part of his soul, and his divine Heart, which is the Heart of his Heart.' He thus anticipated the theologians of our own day, who, after two centuries of reflection and discussion, state, almost in the same terms as the Saint's, that the primary object of the devotion is, undoubtedly, the immense love of the Son of God; but, as human weakness requires some object as a reminder that it should rise from the visible to the invisible, no object more sensible, efficacious, and worthy can be found to excite the love of God in souls than the heart.

Are we too subtle when we seek to discover in these decisive explanations not only a noble theology, but a metaphysic and psychology which were, in certain respects, bound to appear original in the epoch in which the Saint wrote? This particular era, as Victor Cousin rightly pointed out, was influenced by two movements-Cartesianism and Jansenism. Now, S. John Eudes, who was so determined on not separating Christ's love for us from the beatings of his heart, also reacted, in the philosophical position which he adopted, against the excessive spiritualism, the divided spiritualism, of Descartes. This philosopher,

who considered that the soul, which he regarded as a pure substance, was in the body as a pilot is in a ship, suppressed the substantial union between body and soul, maintaining them in a state of separation which it is difficult to explain. Accordingly, in his analysis of the passions of the body and of the soul, he places each of them apart, regarding them as two groups of phenomena that undoubtedly correspond, either by the constant intervention of the Divine Cause, as Malebranche taught, or by a pre-established harmony, as Leibnitz expounded, but in neither case does one penetrate the other.

Cartesianism, therefore, tended to look upon the body as a purely mechanical instrument, a passive automaton, whose movements it analysed and reduced to the general laws that govern nature; it then went on to analyse the passions of the soul, and referred all of them to ideas, thus superposing a pure intellectualism on a pure mechanism. The whole system retained no trace of those rectifications of Plato's spiritualism which S. Augustine had been compelled to introduce, and the same is true of the doctrine which regards the soul as the temporary guest of the body, of which it is so independent that it could exchange it for another, or abandon it entirely. The implications of such a doctrine on the transmission of original sin and, above all, on the doctrine of the resurrection of the body led the Church to prefer Aristotle's theory on this point, and favour its development as taught by S. Thomas Aquinas. The doctrine of Father Eudes, then, was frankly opposed to the excesses which have since been vigorously attacked of the Cartesian metaphysic. He therefore did not confine his efforts to the development of a new branch of the somewhat withered tree of Scholasticism, but

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rather brought to life some of its deepest roots, and so contributed to its renovation. There is no need to analyse the psychology properly so called implicit in the teachings of our author, or to inquire if all the opinions he seems to hold as to the reciprocal reactions of intelligence and sensibility on each other are immune from philosophical criticism. No doubt it would be easy to show that man is primarily a creature of action, that action supposes will, and that will, in the life of the individual and particularly in the life of society, draws its value from love. But it will be more in accordance with our theme if we point out here that devotion so fortified implicitly contains the idea that love is the great motive power of the soul, as the heart (the *primum movens* and *ultimum modens*) is of the body. This meant that Catholic piety, faced with Calvinism and jansenism, was directed especially towards the path of love, and of all that follows therefrom, namely, charity, devotedness, confidence, mercy, and forgiveness.

The worship of Jesus Christ our mediator has always been sustained, in such devotional outpourings, by devotion shown to his Blessed Mother. As the soul of the faithful Christian delights to move on to the incomprehensible infinity of the Eternal God through the humanity of our Saviour, so does it love to proceed to the Saviour by an intermediary-his Mother. Such worship in no way lessens the honours due to the divinity; it rather helps to raise up human nature in the gradual ascent in which it is purified and strengthened as it moves forward to the contemplation of the supreme object of our adoration. Here the devout worshipper rejoices as he meditates on the saying of S. Augustine that the body of Our Lord, even when transfigured by the glory of the Resurrection,

is the body he received from the Virgin Mary. He loves to recall that there was a time in which Christ and the Virgin were, in a manner, one, or, at least, when both their Hearts were in intimate, incessant communication. He takes particular delight in repeating to himself that the special grace with which the Blessed Virgin was honoured has assured the spiritual continuity of this union.

We have now reached the most personal and original element in the devotion as taught by Father Eudes.

Should anyone fear, at this point, lest he encounter abstruse subtleties or devotional fantasies, let him read the following lines, written in 1648: 'Above all, we intend and desire, primarily and principally, to revere and honour the faculty and capacity of loving, both natural and supernatural, which resides in this Mother of love, and which she wholly employed in loving God and her neighbour, or, to speak more truly, all the love and all the charity of the Mother of the Saviour in our regard.' (11)

Lastly, to those who may ask themselves whether devotion to the Blessed Virgin is not here usurping the place of a higher worship, it will be sufficient to quote the following passage in which the Saint shows us that to honour Mary is to honour him who is the principle of her life.

'Is not the heart the principle of life? Now, what is the Son of God in his divine Mother, in whom he has always been and will be eternally, if not the spirit of her spirit, the soul of her soul, the heart of her heart and the sole principle of all the movements, actions, and functions of her most holy life? Do you not hear S. Paul assuring you that it is not he who lives but Jesus Christ who lives in him? . . . Now, who can doubt that Jesus is living in his precious Mother, that he is

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the life of her life, the heart of her heart, in an incomparably more excellent way? You see, then, that the Son of God is the heart and life of his divine Mother, in the most perfect manner that can be imagined. For if, according to the language of the Holy Spirit, this admirable Saviour should so live in all his servants that his life is manifestly revealed even in their bodies, who can imagine how, and with what abundance and perfection, he communicates his divine life to her from whom he himself received a life humanly divine and divinely human? He is living in her soul, in her heart, and in all the faculties of her soul and body. He is thus the principle of life in his most holy Mother. And we can thus say that she has a heart that is all divine.' (12)

The long, arduous, and laborious life of our Saint, his successes and trials only serve to perfect and render more explicit his great, fundamental ideas.

It was probably in 1641, that he composed the Proper of an office, in nine lessons, in honour of the Holy Heart of Mary. In 1643, he established the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, which he dedicated to the Sacred Hearts, or, as he said, to the *Sacred Heart* of Jesus and Mary, an expression which, though no longer usual, has the merit of throwing light on the perfect conformity of spirit and affection that reigned between the Heart of Mary and that of her Son. Finally, it was about this time he laid the foundations of the Order of Our Lady of Charity, which he also consecrated to the Heart of Mary. From the very beginning, he gave orders to have two prayers, the *Benedictum sit* and the *Ave Cor*, which are addressed conjointly to the Sacred Hearts, recited in his Congregation, and he propagated these prayers with all his might. Seven months after the foundation o

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the Congregation he wrote to Father Manoury recommending him to celebrate two feasts every year in honour of the two Hearts, and it has been proved that, from 1646 onwards, the feast of the Heart of Mary was solemnised by his children.

Nevertheless, it was only on February 8, 1648, that the Saint succeeded in having a public feast of the Holy Heart of Mary solemnly celebrated for the first time, in Autun, at the close of the

great mission he had just given in that city. The office and mass which he composed were approved by the bishop, Mgr de Ragny. As S. John Eudes did not separate the Heart of Mary from the Heart of Jesus, several passages of the office are directly addressed to the Heart of Jesus, and the feast was common to both; this state of things lasted until 1670.

In the interval, the Saint devoted all his efforts to the propagation of the new devotion. In 1648, he published his book on *Devotion to the most holy Heart of Mary*; during the mission in Beaune, he established *The Confraternity of the Heart of Mary*, which was intended to honour her heart in union with the Heart of Jesus. Thanks to the Saint and the followers of the new devotion, these Confraternities spread in all directions, to such an extent indeed that, in 1666, Pope Alexander granted indulgences to the Confraternity which had been established in Morlaix. This Confraternity was open to all the faithful. As the Saint had met devout souls living in the world who desired to live a more perfect life, he organised for their sake the *Society of the Admirable Heart*, devoted to the cult of the Sacred Hearts. This society was established after the Confraternity, of which, at first, it was only a more perfect form, and was certainly in existence in 1659. In many respects it resembles a

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Third Order and is still usually called the Third Order of the Sacred Heart, or the Eudist Third Order.

However ' he was not yet satisfied with all that he had accomplished. He succeeded in obtaining approbation for the new devotion, and bishop after bishop gave it his approval; first, Mgr de Hardivilliers, Archbishop of Bourges, then Mgr James du Perron, of Evreux, in 1648, Mgr Claude Auvry of Coutances, and Mgr Léonor de Matignon, in 1649. In 1652, he dedicated the chapel of the seminary, which he had just established at Coutances, to the Holy Heart of Mary. In the following year, the celebrated Catherine de Bar, in religion Sister Mechtilde of the Blessed Sacrament, solemnised the feast in her monastery in the Rue du Bac, and she was soon followed by all the houses of the Benedictine nuns of the Blessed Sacrament, by other communities of Benedictine nuns, such as those of the Holy Trinity of Caen and Montmartre, as well as many other communities of Franciscan, Visitation, Carmelite, and Ursuline nuns. . . . Fresh episcopal approbations were now added to those already given; in 1659, that of Mgr Servien, Bishop of Bayeux; in 1660, that of seven professors of the Faculty of Paris; and in 1661, that of Mgr de Harlay, Archbishop of Rouen. Father Eudes even had the joy of seeing the bishops of Autun, Soissons, Lisieux, Evreux, and Coutances, exhorting their flocks to celebrate the new feast in accordance with the Office and Mass which he had composed.

These successes exasperated the Jansenists. In 1650, the Saint replied to their attacks in a *Discourse on Devotion to the Holy Heart of Mary*, inserted in a new edition of his book, published at Autun. They refused to abandon the fight and, in the defamatory libels which they wrote and spread in all directions,

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they even went so far as to say, in 1674, that it was not the heart of the Blessed Virgin but that of Mary des Vallées which her admirer proposed for the worship of the faithful. These abominable ideas were circulated in songs only fit to be sung in the lowest taverns. Nevertheless, the devotion kept spreading more and more, and, in 1668, the Saint had the joy of seeing it approved by Cardinal de Vendôme, Pope Clement IX's legatus a latere. The time was drawing nigh when he was to cease from uniting the worship of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary in one feast and was about to establish a special feast in honour of the Divine Heart of Jesus. In 1670, he composed an Office and Mass for a new feast of the Sacred Heart (during his walks through the streets of Paris, in which he was then making a prolonged stay) and he submitted them for the approbation of the bishops and theologians.

The first approbation of which we have the date is that given by Mgr de Vieuville, Archbishop

of Rennes. As a crowning mark of his approval of the mission preached by the Saint in his Cathedral city, during the winter of 1669-1670, the Archbishop had entrusted the foundation of his seminary to the Eudist Fathers, and given them permission to celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart, every year, on August 31st. To the capital of Brittany, therefore, belongs the honour of having celebrated the feast of the Sacred Heart for the first time, in 1670.

The Saint was not content with this solitary approbation; he sought for others which were granted him, on July 27, 1670, by Doctors Legoux, de Blanges, and de Trousseville; on the 27th of the same month, by Mgr de Loménie de Brienne, Bishop of Coutances; on the following October 8th, by Mgr de Maupas de Tour, Bishop of Evreux, on February 3, 1671, by Mgr de

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Harlay, Archbishop of Rouen, on March 16th of the same year by Mgr de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, and on the following September 14th by Mgr de Matignon, Bishop of Lisieux. The Church teaching had spoken for the first time of the Sacred Heart, and given its approval to the new devotion. Emboldened by these approbations, S. John Eudes was now at liberty to take a further step, and create a form of public devotion in the Church which could not be hindered from expanding in the future. On July 29, 1672, he commanded the six houses of his Congregation to celebrate the solemnity of the Divine Heart of Jesus, as its patronal feast, on October 20th. The letter which he then wrote is of the utmost value for the history of his ideas and, it is not going too far to say, for the history of the Church. After the Saint has gradually yielded to his innermost feelings, he goes on to reflect on the motive which was the driving power that brought him through so many obstacles; he perceives its end more clearly than ever, and blesses Providence for having accepted him as the instrument of its designs.

' My dearest Brethren,' he writes, ' although we have hitherto celebrated one, special and particular feast of the adorable Heart of Jesus, nevertheless we had no intention of separating two things which God has so closely joined together, namely, the most august Heart of the Son of God and that of his blessed Mother. On the contrary, our design ever since the beginning of our Congregation has been to regard and honour those two hearts as one, in unity of spirit, feeling, will, and affection. .

. .

'But it has been the will of divine Providence, which guides all things with marvellous wisdom, to introduce the feast of the Heart of Mary before the feast of the Heart of the Son of God, in order to prepare

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a way in the hearts of the faithful for the veneration of this adorable Heart, and to dispose them to obtain from Heaven the grace of this second feast by the great devotion they have shown in celebrating the first. For, although the latter has been attacked, in the first place by the spirit of the world, which never fails to oppose whatsoever proceeds from the spirit of God, nevertheless, once it was made manifest to those who profess to honour, in a special manner, the Mother of God, they looked on this feast with joy and embraced it with love; and, to-day, it is solemnised throughout all France, and in many religious Orders and Congregations, with such a multitude of blessings, that we have reason to hope that one day it will be celebrated throughout the whole universe.

' It is this ardent devotion of the true children of the Heart of the mother of love which has constrained her to obtain from her well-beloved Son the most signal favour he has rendered his Church by granting her the feast of his royal Heart, which will be a new source of an infinity of blessings for those who dispose themselves to celebrate this feast worthily. Now, will not all Christians do so? For what more worthy, holy, and excellent solemnity can there be than this, which

is the principle of all that is great, holy, and venerable in all solemnities? What heart more adorable, more admirable and more amiable than the Heart of the God-Man who is called Jesus? Of what honour is not this Heart worthy which has always rendered, and will eternally render, to God more glory and love at every moment than all the hearts of men and angels could render him for all eternity! How zealous should we not be in honouring this august Heart which is the source of our salvation . . . and which was broken and crushed with grief for us upon the Cross, as the

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Son of God and his most holy Mother declared to S. Bridget!

'If the novelty of this devotion n be alleged as an objection, I reply that novelty in matters of faith is most pernicious, but that it is excellent in matters of devotion. Otherwise, we should be forced to condemn all those feasts which are now celebrated in the Church, and which were novel when they were first celebrated.

Such an appeal as this, which is at once complete, luminous, and, one may add, prophetic, was bound to find an echo in men's minds and hearts outside the bounds of his own Congregation; and, in point of fact, his propaganda in favour of the new feast was just as successful, and was spread by the same means as had already attracted so many souls to devotion towards the Blessed Virgin. Amongst religious communities pride of place should be given to the Visitation Order, which thus anticipated the glorious future that was so soon to be opened up to it by S. Margaret Mary; for it was in 1674 and 1675, only a few years before the death of Father Eudes, that S. Margaret Mary received her great revelations. The Abbesses of Montmartre came next, and we were recently reminded of this fact, when relics of S. John Eudes were added to those of the martyrs in the altar-stone of the chapel dedicated to the Holy Heart of Mary in the national basilica. In 1674, six bulls granting indulgences to the Confraternities of the Holy Heart of Mary established in the Chapels of the Congregation's seminaries, arrived from Rome. Although the Holy See gave such encouragement to the new devotion, it did so after a careful consideration of the complaints and accusations made by the Jansenists, who denounced this 'useless and superstitious devotion, those little books crammed

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with dreams, false and unapproved revelations, and with propositions contrary to theology and the customs and faith of the Church.'

It is true that these same scrupulous individuals, who put themselves forward in Rome as defenders of the interests of the Church, were equally zealous in Paris, in defending the civil power, and in bringing about opposition between Church and State. We may read in a pamphlet preserved in the National Library in Paris: 'It is to be desired that Father Eudes should not have manifested so much zeal for the interests of Rome. . . . He should not pay court to Rome in order to obtain bulls of establishment for his Congregation to the prejudice of the interests of his King, his country, and the Gallican Church, but all such persons are extremely inclined to persuade those who will listen to them to accept a doctrine most flattering to the Court of Rome, however pernicious it may be to the interests of the Kingdom.'

Father Eudes did not pay 'court' to anyone save to God and the Blessed Virgin. His writings, at this period, show that he was devoted, above everything else, as he had been from the beginning, to the restoration of sacerdotal life. In the *Apostolic Preacher*, he teaches priests how they should preach the word of God; in the *Memorial of the Ecclesiastical Life*, he shows himself specially preoccupied with the task of strengthening vocations, the rendering permanent of reforms that had already been secured, and the spiritual help and guidance of all those who had responded to appeals

similar to his own. In these books he lays down the most minute prescriptions, because he was firmly resolved to leave no action in the lives of his disciples and no moment of their day unaffected by that spirit of holiness which he so ardently desired for them. He

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begins, first of all, by retracing in Splendid fashion the ideal, for whose sake he demanded so many precautions against human weakness. He did so because he was again exalting the dignity of the priest, and the necessity of that sacrifice which should be offered by the priest in his own person. He wrote with a sublimity equal to that which he admired in the works of Cardinal de Bérulle and M. Olier.(13) His anxiety for the new devotion, of which he had constituted himself the unflinching apostle, had also another end in view. It is evident that here he is aiming more directly at the souls of all the faithful; he is no longer merely inculcating submission, but energetic action, no longer merely stirring up their faith but also their love. Such were the occupations of his closing days. He laboured at the completion of a book entitled *The Admirable Heart of the most holy Mother of God*. In this work he studied the foundations of the devotion which he had propagated; he sought them first in a system of metaphysics, analogous to that contained in the *Grandeurs de Jésus*, and then in the Sacred Scriptures, in theology, in the writings of S. Thomas Aquinas, and the Fathers of the Church. Link by link he joined up the chain of tradition and invoked all the authorities whom he could legitimately summon. He then went on to analyse the perfections and acts of loving kindness of him whom he proposed, from his own chosen standpoint, to the devotion of the faithful. Once again, in the twelfth and last book, he pointed out the road that leads from the Mother to the Son. But that, however, is only the final phase, and the one which opened out a prospect before Catholic piety which was now prepared to make further advances. For, taking S. John Eudes's work as a whole, is it not devotion to the Holy Heart

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of Mary to which he has really raised a monument that bears his signature, and is worthy, by itself, to perpetuate his fame?(14)

NOTES

1. Thomas, quoted by Father Le Doré.
2. Memoires, L 325, Ch. IV, 103.
3. See Lettres, Lecoffre, 11, 143.
4. Certain letters, hitherto unpublished, will shortly supply fresh proofs of this statement.
5. Lausanne edition, Vol. XXI, p. 28.

6. We should never grow tired of insisting on this fact, namely, that what the Reformation reproached the Church for, was not that the Church refused, but that it had made too many concessions to reason, free will, science, and art. The German Universities conducted a campaign against Scholasticism, not because the latter had debased, but because it had exalted, man's intelligence, and surrendered too much to the pagan or secular mind. It was not only in Geneva, but also in the little Huguenot republic of Nimes (towards the end of the sixteenth century) that the Consistory condemned men for cutting their own hair, or their wives' hair, for not working on 'Roman holidays,' for playing bowls on Sundays, or skittles, cards, and billiards on any day whatever, etc. etc. (See J. Boulenger, A Protestant Republic in *Nîmes in the Days of the Edict of*

Nantes.)

7. See Father Le Doré, *Les Sacrés Coeurs*, 1st part, P. 257, and his references to this subject.

8. Letters, 11, 598. This particular letter is addressed to a lady.

9. As Father Ingold has excellently noted in his interesting work on Bossuet and jansenism, Paris, Picard.

10. See the quotation in Father Le Doré's book, Part II, p. 58.

11. Devotion to the Most Holy Heart of Mary. The Saint's complete works. Vol- VIII, P. 431.

12. From *The Admirable Heart*, etc., Bk. 1, ch. iv, p. ion (Works, Vol. VL)

13. 'You are of blood royal and divine,' he says, addressing priests, 'your names are entered in his own genealogy, you are his brothers and members . . . and your priesthood is one with his.' And this community in the priesthood should be carried to the utmost limits. 'We are bound, as priests, to imitate the Sovereign Priest. to take upon ourselves the sins of others, to look upon them m our own, and to bear the ensuing humiliations and penances as if they were for our own sins.'

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14. It is well worth noting how the Church, in the course of the processes of beatification and canonisation of S. John Eudes, has persisted in bringing into relief the part which he played in the institution of the liturgical worship of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The decree dealing with his heroic practice of the virtues refers to him as ' the author of this worship.' The brief of beatification develops the same idea, in the following significant manner: ' What places the finishing touch to the services rendered by John to the Church is that, burning himself with m extraordinary love for the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, he was the first to think, not without divine inspiration, of rendering them liturgical worship. He should then be regarded as the *Father* of this gracious form of religious devotion for, from the institution of his Congregation of priests, he took care to have the solemn feast of these Sacred Hearts celebrated by his sons; (he should be regarded) as the Doctor, because he composed proper offices and masses in their honour; and, finally, as the Apostle, because he did all in his power to spread this salutary devotion.' The decree approving of the two miracles, proposed for his canonisation, makes use of exactly the same expressions as those of the decree, of the virtues. The decree de Tuto, by which the Pope declares that they may safely proceed to his canonisation, recalls that ' John Eudes was the first of all to institute and propagate the liturgical worship of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.' Lastly, in a most remarkable summing up, the Bull of Canonisation recounts the Saint's attempts to establish and spread the cult so dew to him. For the sake of completeness, we may add that the two offices with their octaves and the two masses composed by S. John Eudes, in honour of the Sacred Hearts, have been approved by the Congregation of Rites, and are in use in the Saint's spiritual families.

CHAPTER IX

HIS RELATIONS WITH 'THE GREAT' ANNE
OF AUSTRIA AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, LOUIS
XIV-FINAL STRUGGLES-DEATH-POST
HUMOUS GLORY

Some of the incidents in the battle waged by our Saint have enabled us to see the effort that was made, at one time, to prove that he was an enemy of the interests ... not merely of the Kingdom, but also of the King. The time has now come for us to relate how, in the last years of his life, he came to be gravely embroiled with Louis XIV. It would be very difficult, at this point, to appreciate, as one is bound to do in a historical study, the differences that exist between men and epochs, if, before giving a sketch of this incident, we did not retrace our steps a little. It will be a very valuable opportunity for us to note the transformations that conducted our hero like all his contemporaries from one era to another. From Richelieu to Anne of Austria, either ruling by herself or with Mazarin, and from Anne of Austria to her son, still young but already conscious of the fact that he was a 'Great King,' we shall find, like interesting landmarks on the way, more than one intervention, and also more than one defeat of our hero's.

We shall not recall again how the great reformers of the Church of France, S. Vincent de Paul and 188

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M. Olier, to name but these two, after working in concert with Richelieu and Louis XIII, were far from maintaining good relations with Mazarin. Let us speak frankly: they were opposed to him; why? Partly because they agreed in the causes of complaint brought against him by various sections of the Fronde, but much more so because they saw in him a very adroit politician, no doubt, but one who sacrificed far too much, by his political manoeuvres, what they had most at heart—the reform of the secular clergy by means of the bishops. M. Olier was not afraid to suggest to Anne of Austria that she should get rid of her minister. Father Eudes was not so explicit; but, on September 2, 1648, when riots broke out in Paris and men feared that they were on the brink of a revolution similar to that which had just occurred in England, he wrote to the Queen to say that, in his eyes, the sole cause of the miseries of the Kingdom were the ravages caused by impiety.

'We are wearing ourselves out on our missions,' he wrote, 'by dint of crying out against the numberless disorders now existing in France. . . . But if Your Majesty were willing to employ the power entrusted to you by God, you and you alone could do more for the establishment of the reign of Jesus Christ than all the missionaries and preachers taken together. . . .'

One may think that the great missionary is here very humble, or imagine that he is about to appeal to the secular arm to have his work rendered more easy. But he proceeds to point out the means the Queen has at her disposal, and this is the first:

'I shall only mention the most powerful of all, and that is to give good bishops to France; and by this means the Church of France will alter its appearance and resume its former splendour. This, Madame, is

Your Majesty's weightiest obligation and the greatest service that can be rendered to God and his Church; and it is of such importance that it is certainly worthy of being taken in hand by Your Majesty yourself, because Your Majesty will be the first of whom the Sovereign judge will demand an account, an account that will be all the more terrible inasmuch as it is a question of the salvation of an infinite number of souls whom he has committed to Your Majesty's care. For I hear the Holy Spirit crying out by the lips of S. Paul, that whosoever does not safeguard the salvation of those who depend on him is worse than an infidel, so that, at the hour of death, he shall be condemned by God as an apostate, and shall be punished more severely than pagans and infidels.

' If Your Majesty renders this service to Jesus Christ and his Church, you will load it with spiritual and temporal blessings. But should Your Majesty neglect to do so, I declare to you, in the name, and on the part, of the great and living God, that all the sins that may be committed in France, through neglect of taking care to provide the Church with good pastors, will be attributed to Your Majesty, as if Your Majesty yourself had committed them, and that Your Majesty will bear their punishment and condemnation, and that all the souls who may be lost on this account, and all the drops of blood shed by Jesus Christ for their salvation, will cry to Heaven for vengeance against Your Majesty, at the hour of death. In conclusion, Madame, I can, in all truth, honestly protest to Your Majesty, that in all this I am quite disinterested, and have no other end in view than that of the glory of my Master and the salvation of souls. He who knows the depths of the heart knows that I speak truth. In him, and in his most holy Mother, I will always,

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Madame, with all possible respect, be Your Majesty's most humble, most obedient and most faithful subject and servant.'

Is not this, it may be said, undue interference by the Church, and one of its ministers, with the rights of the State? No-it is a warning uttered by a Catholic priest endowed with authority to a woman who protested that she was a Catholic, and consequently might be legitimately reminded of the duties of her state in life. Nevertheless, disorder increased, and the Kingdom was soon a prey, not only to the political disturbances of the Fronde, but to that wretched state of famine and misery which had at least the good result of producing the miracles of charity wrought by S. Vincent de Paul. Father Eudes, at this time, addressed a memorial to the Queen Regent, which is still preserved in the archives of the Eudist Fathers. Without entering into political considerations, he pointed out the abuses which it is the duty of the Monarch to bring to an end. He pointed them out, and asked for their removal, in the language of the day, and in accordance with the customs and laws of the ancient monarchy. He begged her not to allow the feasts of the Church to be profaned by the holding of fairs and the usual licentious behaviour that accompanied them, or that, at least, the days on which fairs were held should be altered. He also requested that holy places should be respected by tax-gatherers, bailiffs, and sergeants, who were accustomed to proceed to the churches in order to make arrests there. The better to put an end to objectionable literature and excessive luxury and vanity, he begged the Queen Regent to be the first to give good example by remaining away from comedies and balls. Finally, he recommended her to

make peace with foreign enemies so that she might devote all her authority to the extirpation of heresies. No doubt, he was not over-indulgent to the promoters of these heresies, and yet he had a heart overflowing with pity, but he reserved it for others. He was not content with the statement we have just read regarding the seizures and arrests that were carried out in churches: 'We frequently

see,' he wrote, 'poor people in prison for having sold a little salt, in order to gain a livelihood. They have been condemned to pay heavy fines, and since they are not able to do so, they rot there in gaol. They are forced to ask as a favour that, instead of paying a fine, they should be flogged by the public executioner, and this I can attest myself because I have been asked at times to obtain this favour for some individuals. And all because the interests of the King are in question! But how much more is the glory of the Sovereign Monarch of all concerned in the above-mentioned disorders!'

But the nomination of good bishops preoccupied him most of all. Hence, in 1653, when the See of Bayeux was vacant, seeing that he had witnessed only too many scandals, he was not afraid to write the following courageous letter:

' . . . I should regard myself as most gravely culpable if I did not follow the advice which several great servants of God have given me, and point out to Your Majesty that, from time immemorial, no episcopal visitation has been carried out in the diocese of Bayeux; that this negligence has been the cause of greater disorders and profanations than would have been caused by the passage of armies hostile to the Christian name, and that this voluntary resignation of such a valuable benefice seems to be a warning to Your Majesty that God, who looks after the least hair

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of our heads, does not bring such an extraordinary event to pass, in these miserable days of corruption (when men scruple not to renounce the benefice of eternity in order to acquire or preserve one far less great than the bishopric of Bayeux), save with the design of giving Your Majesty an opportunity of rendering justice to the blood of his Son. . . . These considerations, Madame, demand a saint as bishop of this diocese from Your Majesty. You are obliged by the Council of Trent, under pain of mortal sin, to nominate to benefices to which the cure of souls is attached, not only those whom Your Majesty may deem worthy, that is to say saints, but also the most worthy, that is to say the greatest saints. With still greater reason, Madame, are you bound to do so in the case of a diocese in such a state of desolation as the one to which I refer.'

Anne of Austria was undoubtedly a pious, well meaning woman; because, far from being hurt by such remonstrances, we have the best authority for saying that she gave much good example by her assiduity in attending, and listening to, the Saint's sermons whenever he preached in Paris, or in the vicinity of the royal palaces. That, said she, was how men should preach, and it did far more good than 'flowers' of pulpit oratory. In 1660, he gave his celebrated mission in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. She did not fail to be present, nor did he on his part fail to address his usual recommendations to her directly from the pulpit. He exhorted her to labour for the extirpation of heresies, the destruction of atheism, the repression of luxury, the checking of public immorality, and the improvement of the social conditions of the poor. For, adds the author of the Annals, 'he did not forget to speak of the blood-suckers, as he called them,

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those devourers of the people, with their haughty mansions and gilded pomp. He went on to paint a lively picture of the miseries of her people. He represented the cruelty of those who collected the tax on salt, smashing the pitchers of poor women who live by the seaside, and go to the shore to extract some grains of salt from the sea-water.' These exhortations did not prevent the Queen Mother from taking part in the devotional exercises that followed, nor in the acclamations of the people when the missionary reminded them that they should cry out not only 'Long live the King,' but also 'Long live Jesus Christ.' There is a well-known story that the Marquis d'Urfé went to ask the Queen if it were true that she had given orders to have Father Eudes arrested, and that she replied:

1; 1 request you to go to Father Eudes at once, and tell him from me that such a wicked idea never even occurred to me, and that, on the contrary, I shall always preserve a high idea of his virtue.'

In the following year (1661) he preached to the nuns of the Blessed Sacrament. On February 8, Anne of Austria went to Benediction and to hear the sermon. A few days previously an outbreak of fire had destroyed one whole gallery in the Louvre. The Saint himself relates, in a letter to the priests of the seminary of Caen, how he had seen the Queen coming in, towards the end of one of his sermons, and how he had paused to tell her all that he had at heart on the subject of servile work on Sundays, and on the lavish display of luxury in the sight of men and women who were weighed down with misery, and 'that certain becoming entertainments were lawful for princes and kings, but that to spend whole days, whole weeks, whole months, whole years and the whole of one's life in them was certainly not the road to Paradise. . . '

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The courtiers affected astonishment and indignation, and wasted no time in seeing the Queen, but Father Eudes tells us that she immediately and ' peremptorily silenced them, saying " Father Eudes is quite right; he tells us great truths and it is for us to profit by them."

The years rolled on and, in 1671, when the war with Holland was about to begin, and Bossuet was publishing his *Exposition of Catholic Doctrine*, we find Father Eudes in Versailles, at the suggestion of Mgr de Harlay, who had become Archbishop of Paris. Louis XIV summoned him to preach a jubilee during Holy Week and Easter Week. The King welcomed him graciously and said: ' I am very pleased that His Grace the Archbishop has selected you for this mission: you will do much good, and convert many; you may not, perhaps, convert everybody, but you will do all that you can.' The Queen, we are told, looked after the Saint and his missionaries, even sometimes going to the kitchen to see what food was being prepared for them. Moreover, the royal pair followed the instructions with a piety which was not imitated by all the courtiers, whose behaviour was not always edifying. Hence the preacher's severity was directed to them. After complimenting the King for the example he had given, the Saint went on: 'But what astonishes me is that, whilst Your Majesty acquits yourself so perfectly of the duties of religion, and humbly pays the deepest homage and respect to God, I see a multitude of Your Majesty's subjects who do the contrary.'

At the close of the mission, the King gave the missionary two thousand livres for his works. This was the zenith of his favour.

It was the period, in fact, when the question arose of his being nominated coadjutor to the Bishop of

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Evreux. Letters are still preserved in which he refuses to consider such an honour, saying that the only benefice he ever aspired to was that of the Cross. On the other hand, he was sincerely afraid of being faced with the alternative of accepting or disobeying. At first, he was troubled, but subsequently he gave an amusing explanation of his tranquillity in a letter to Father Manoury:

' This piece of news,' he writes, ' has not caused me the slightest disturbance, both because I feel quite certain that, no matter what may be said, nothing will come of all these proposals, and because, if it did happen, it would assuredly be God who had so willed it. Tell His Lordship of Evreux plainly that I desire no Other benefice than that chosen by my Saviour Jesus Christ for himself: that is his Cross. Hitherto, I have had crosses of all kinds, and have not bent beneath the burden; but, as

for this new cross with which I am threatened, I have no fears at all. I know men, and am quite certain that this is the cross they will most willingly spare me.'

He was not mistaken: there were men and women at work not only to spare him this particular sort of cross, but also to procure him many others.

A veritable hurricane of attacks, libels, and calumnies, such as the servant of God had not yet experienced, was about to burst on him and continue for the remainder of his life.

Strong in the esteem and favour of his King, he had immediately resumed the negotiations at the Court of Rome, which had been entered on from time to time, for the purpose of having his Congregation approved. He selected one of the most capable of his subjects, Father de Bonnefond, to bring them to a successful conclusion. Father de Bonnefond arrived in Rome, in July 1673,

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and quickly realised the difficulty of his task; but, far from being discouraged, obstacles only served to stimulate his zeal. Whilst he was multiplying official visits, drawing up reports, and arranging for valuable assistance, the Saint's usual enemies, supported by some others, were working hard to bring all his plans to nought. By dint of peering and rummaging into every word and deed in the life of their adversary, the most cunning of them ended by discovering a document of such a nature as to compromise Father Eudes in the King's eyes, and bring ruin on all his undertakings.

The reader may remember Abbé Boniface's negotiations in Rome for the approbation of the Order of Our Lady of Charity. As the Abbé had also to deal, for some time, with matters affecting the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, and as he regarded success as a point of honour, it occurred to him to make a declaration in his petition that the Congregation asked for 'permission to make a vow, from which it could not be dispensed, always to follow and maintain the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, even in matters that might raise doubts.' Father Eudes would never have signed such an engagement; he had never even heard of this petition, to which a refusal had been despatched, on September 4, 1662. The petition went astray amongst the files of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and was discovered there by the Saint's enemies, in the autumn of 1673. They hastened to publish it, knowing the effect it would produce on Louis XIV. To render this effect more certain and decisive, they did not fail to proclaim, in all directions, that Father Eudes, laden as he was with honours and benefits, had betrayed the Crown and the rights of the Gallican Church. He had not long to wait before he felt the result of this manoeuvre.

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Father Eudes, called on to justify himself, first signed, on November 27, 1673, in the presence of witnesses, an authentic disavowal which the Lieutenant-General of Caen accepted and transmitted to the King. But the Saint was confronted with adversaries who refused to be disarmed, and the King soon demanded fresh proofs of his innocence. And whilst Father de Bonnefond, in Rome, explained the nature of the petition, and proved that there was no foundation for the attacks, the Abbé Boniface, on his side, declared, on two different occasions, that Father Eudes had nothing to do with a matter for which he himself claimed full responsibility. Father Eudes proceeded quietly to Paris to look for support, and seek further opportunities of exculpating himself, but, on the evening of April 14, 1674, he received a letter from Colbert ordering him to leave Paris without delay. He then wrote the following letter:

'MY LORD,

On yesterday evening I received an official letter, which was delivered to me as coming from you, ordering me to retire to the Seminary of Caen. I at once made arrangements to obey; I will presently leave Paris, and await, by the way, a coach which will be sent to me from Evreux, as I have not been able to book a seat in the public stage-coaches, and my age does not permit me to go on foot or on horseback. It seemed to me, My Lord, that I am under an obligation to let you know of my prompt obedience, and to state that I am, My Lord, with profound respect, your most humble and most obedient servant,

JOHN EUDES,

Priest.

Sunday morning, April 15, 1674.'

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Is there a touch of irony in this protestation of prompt obedience? We do not think so, when we remember the submission to the Divine Will which always animated our Saint. At the most, there is some slight analogy to that frame of mind referred to by Pascal and Malebranche which advises men not to enter on discussions-for they would be useless-with those whom they called 'the great, according to the flesh.'

However this may be, S. John Eudes remained at Caen, in disgrace and the butt of all the cowardly persecutions that were now being wreaked on him. He was strangely perturbed, because he had lost the friendship of his King, and made a fresh attempt to justify himself in the eyes of his Sovereign. He drew up a memoir in which he proved his innocence, and ended with the following words which, with a certain pride, ask for something quite different from mere forgiveness or pardon: 'I hope that God, who has given you such a just and upright heart, may render you the protector of innocence.'

Although the King received this memorandum from the hands of the Queen, who had undertaken to present it, he refused to be appeased. He replied, 'with a respect mingled with a certain severity'. 'I have the best intentions in the world in regard to Father Eudes. I believe him to be a good man; but that was a petition against my State. He must justify himself, and, afterwards, his affairs will be seen to.'

It was not easy for the man of God to justify himself when his enemies misinterpreted every step he took. Not satisfied with having turned the King against him, and compromised the result of his negotiations with Rome, they also tried to ruin him in the eyes of all decent people. A determined enemy and avowed Jansenist, M. Dufour (the Abbé d'Aulnay), whose

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opposition the Saint had to surmount when the seminary was being founded in Rouen, was the soul of this conspiracy. He succeeded in suborning a young secretary of the Saint's, who was a native of Aulnay, and by his means procured a copy of Father Eudes' writings on Mary des Vallées. Hence the notorious libel: *A letter to a doctor of the Sorbonne*, which gave the example, and set the tone, for a multitude of others, which were veritable farragos of silly statements, falsehoods, and interpolations, but which, scattered in profusion, soon circulated throughout the whole of France. 'Our most amiable Crucified,' wrote the Saint in his *Memorial* for the year 1674, 'has honoured me

with many great crosses, and has permitted the publication of defamatory libels against me throughout nearly the whole of France, filled with atrocious abuse and calumnies, accusing me of a great number of heresies, from which, thanks be to God, I am far removed.'

The effect of these accusations was soon evident.

His reputation,' says an historian, ' however solid it may have been, was not proof against the malignity of these black calumnies; and even good folk themselves, not knowing what to think of all these charges, felt their confidence shaken and, suspending their judgements, awaited further enlightenment; his enemies were triumphant and flattered themselves that *they had completely extinguished him.*'

S. John Eudes, faced with this torrent of abuse and its resulting mistrust, remained silent. His great grief was that he had been betrayed by one of his own sons. ' What has affected me most,' he wrote to M. de Bonnefond, 'is that it was one of my own children, who lived here, and who never received anything from me but every possible mark of friendship, who has been my bitterest persecutor.' However, he had nothing but

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feelings of forgiveness for all his enemies: ' I beseech Our Lord to pardon them for all the evil they have done me. . . . Would to God that they do no more evil, except to myself! ' And, in spite of everything, he was full of confidence: ' We should offend the infinite power and goodness of our most adorable Father and most amiable Mother, if, after so many proofs of their incomparable charity, we were wanting in confidence in their regard. They are raising up many powerful helpers to defend and support us. I trust that this persecution is a final effort of the rage of hell against us.'

His trust was not deceived. One of his friends, the Vicar-General of Bayeux, M. de Launay-Hue, had powerfully and convincingly replied to all the attacks of M. Dufour, turning against the latter the accusation of heresy which he had brought against Father Eudes. This defence of the Saint was widely circulated. And at that very moment Providence came to the support of the persecuted priest.

In 1671, Mgr de Loménie de Brienne, Bishop of Coutances, had had to take measures against several jansenist professors of his seminary at Valognes. The adversaries of Father Eudes had not failed to render the Saint and the directors of the seminary of Coutances responsible for these proceedings. In the course of the years 1672 and 1673, the dispute became more and more envenomed, and supplied a pretext for hatching the conspiracy which gave rise to the campaign of slander and the Boniface affair. In 1674, the Bishop of Coutances adopted new and rigorous measures which roused the discontent of the jansenists to the highest pitch, so much so indeed that rumours of the affair even reached the Court. The King, annoyed by these disputes, referred the matter to the Assembly of the

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bishops of the Province, which was held at Meulan, in 1674 and the beginning of 1675. The action of the Bishop of Coutances was unanimously approved. At the same time, the *Letter to a Doctor of the Sorbonne* was referred to the prelates, as was also M. de Launay Hue's apology, and the whole matter was thoroughly gone into, with the result that the Saint was completely exonerated from the charges brought against him. His enemies themselves were obliged to confess the fact. However, as they would not even yet admit that they were beaten, Mgr de Nesmond, weary of their intrigues, asked the Saint to make a declaration which would reduce them to silence. Acquiescing in the wishes of his bishop, he

drew up a document, on June 25, 1675; his cause had now become the cause of the Bishop of Bayeux, and, henceforth, the jansenists and his other enemies were forced to moderate their language and were, ultimately, silenced.

During these trying years, S. John Eudes did not, in spite of all his trials, remain inactive. ' In the years 1674, 1675, and 1676,' he notes in his *Memorial*, 'we had several missions in the dioceses of Bayeux, Coutances, Lisieux, Evreux, and Rennes, on which God showered great blessings.' The last mission that he ever preached was at Saint Lô; it began in Advent 1675, lasted nine weeks, and was, so historians say a veritable triumph which formed a worthy crown to noble, apostolic career.

From this time onwards, his strength began notably to decline, and he only delivered occasional sermons. He devoted all his time to his literary works, and his Congregations on which he concentrated all his attention. Nevertheless, the thought of his disgrace and

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the consequences it might entail on his followers, after his death, was a trial that filled him with grief. Accordingly, he decided to make one more attempt and, on November 7, 1678, addressed a humble petition to Louis XIV, in which both his supernatural spirit and his confidence in God are brilliantly revealed. Whilst he prayed and did violence to Heaven, he also sought for the intervention of those friends whose fidelity had never failed him, such as Mgr Harlay de Champvallon, Archbishop of Paris, and Mgr Auvry. His petition was ultimately accepted, and he was received by the King in June, 1679.

This is what the Saint, as he tells us in one of his letters, heard from the lips of Louis XIV: ' I am very pleased to see you; I have heard about you. I feel quite certain that you are doing a great deal of good in my States; continue to work as you have been doing. I shall be very pleased to see you again, and will protect you on whatever occasions may arise.' But the servant of God had not much time to profit by these friendly dispositions. His forces were now failing, and he had begun to prepare for death. He had even expressed a wish that his successor should be elected, and, on June 27, 1680, the Assembly elected Father Blouet de Camilly Superior General. He was the very man the Saint himself had in mind. On July 25, he paid a visit, and spoke for the last time, to his daughters of Our Lady of Charity; he went back at once to the seminary and had to take to his bed, from which he never rose. ' Feeling his illness considerably increasing, he urgently asked for the last sacraments. How devoutly he received the Holy Viaticum 1 As soon as he beheld the priest, he requested the infirmarian to aid him to rise, and, despite the prayers of his children, knelt on the tiled floor. There, supported by two of

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his sons, he publicly begged pardon from Our Lord for all his innumerable sins; he recited a great number of beautiful acts of resignation and abandonment; he requested his confreres~ to forgive him for the annoyance he had caused them, and exhorted them to an exact observance of the rules; he then wished them thousands and thousands of blessings and received the Bread of Life.

'The thanksgiving resembled the preparation. The holy invalid, having been put back in bed, uttered hundreds and hundreds of acts more beautiful and moving than those that had preceded, so that all who were present burst into tears, and longed for such an end.

' He also received Extreme Unction with extraordinary devotion. When death approached, he adored and kissed the hand that smote him; he spoke of eternity and the blessed delights of Paradise to

his weeping and deeply affected children, with a great feeling of his own unworthiness, but yet with a firm hope that he would soon enjoy them; he exhorted his followers to peace, consoled them for his death, and recommended them to God and the Blessed Virgin.' Finally, he expired, his biographers tell us, 'like the phoenix on the funeral pyre of love, in transports of ardent charity, about three o'clock in the afternoon of August 19, 1680, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.'

Shortly before his death, Madame de Camilly expressed a wish to see him once more. 'Let her come up,' he said, 'she is my eldest daughter,' and, after giving her his blessing, he said: 'Ah! if the good God is merciful to me, and I have any power with him, I will not leave you long after me.' The devout woman died, as a matter of fact, three months later. There was no need for the people of Caen to see in this fact the fulfil

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ment of a prophecy, inspired by a special revelation, to induce them to regard the priest whom they had just lost as a Saint. All those who knew him had long paid him this homage from the bottom of their hearts. Miraculous cures soon began to be obtained by his intercession. Saints deserve a simple epitaph. It would seem as if the authors of the *History of Religious Orders* (Hellyot and Bullot) had selected a suitable one for our hero:

' Father Eudes died in Caen, where he was regretted by all. As soon as the news was known in the city, the concourse of people that went to gaze upon this faithful servant of God was so great that much difficulty was experienced in securing an opportunity to bury him. The eagerness of the multitude to pay him its last respects, the praises which he received, and which resounded on all sides, sufficiently showed that God honours in Heaven him who was previously honoured so greatly and by so many on earth.'

The mortal remains of the man of God were laid to rest in the chapel of the seminary of Caen, the foundations of which he had laid himself in 1664, and which was completed by his successor. They were religiously guarded by his sons, and piously revered by the faithful who went there to pray. In the course of the French Revolution, the seminary was turned into a town-hall; the chapel was utilised as a public meeting-room and library, and the venerable remains were solemnly transferred, in 1810, to a neighbouring church, Our Lady de la Gloriette. In 1884, a beautiful monument was raised in his honour, representing him on his knees before a statue of the Blessed Virgin bearing the Infant Jesus, who points to his own Heart and that of his

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Mother: it is a striking expression of the Saint's devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

This was only a stage in the journey towards the final glorification of John Eudes-his canonisation -towards which the first steps were taken in 1868. The 'cause' was introduced in the Court of Rome on February 7, 1874, and was carried on for forty-five years, ending, after a succession of rigorous examinations, in the decree of the heroic practice of the virtues, issued by Leo XIII, on January 6, 1903, and next by the recognition of Pius X, on May 3, 1908, of three miracles due to his intercession: that of Sister Augustine Chasse, of the convent of Our Lady of Charity of Rennes, cured of cancer of the stomach; that of Lucy Clairai, of the same convent, cured of general paralysis and ulcers, and that of young Louis Bourdon, a Eudist student, who had accidentally become blind, and whose sight was suddenly and miraculously restored. The ceremony of Beatification took place on April 25, 1909, in the presence of a dozen members of the Sacred College, members of the Congregation of Rites, more than thirty bishops, of whom twenty were French.

New favours, due to the intercession of the Blessed John, were obtained, and the cause of canonisation was therefore begun in 1911. Amongst the miracles attested, there were two selected for the careful inquiries insisted on by canon law, and after these had been examined by the Congregation of Rites, the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius XI, on February 8, 1925, solemnly declared that ' There was certainty in regard to the two miracles submitted; the first, namely, the instantaneous and perfect cure of Sister Joan Beatrice Londino, of the Congregation of Sisters of the Presentation of Tours, of diabetes and other renal complications, of nephritis, and abscesses; and

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the second, namely, the instantaneous and perfect cure of Bonaventure Romero, of traumatic peritonitis, and • grave lesion of the skull.' Finally, His Holiness, by

• decree dated March 19, 1925, declared that ' they might proceed in all security to the canonisation of Blessed John Eudes.'

This took place on May 31, 1925, at the same time as that of S. John Vianney, the Curé of Ars, in the midst of a huge assembly of people who had come to Rome, from every country in the world, for the Holy Year. The ceremony was carried out in the presence of delegates from all the religious Orders, members of the various Oriental rites, students from all the seminaries, institutes, and colleges of Rome, the clergy of the Eternal City, its canons, collegiate and basilican chapters. Two hundred children of the Saint's religious families were present, and fifty of his own collateral descendants; as also members of the Congregation of Rites, thirty cardinals, and more than two hundred archbishops and bishops, of whom three were Eudists—His Lordship Dr. Chiasson, Bishop of Chatham (Canada), His Lordship Dr. Garcia, Bishop of Santa Marta (Colombia), and His Lordship Dr. Leventoux, Vicar Apostolic of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence (Canada). The Holy Father, Pius XI, after the ritual petitions and prayers, seated in his chair, and acting as doctor and head of the Church, then pronounced the definitive sentence:

'In honour of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, the exaltation of the Catholic Faith and the spread of the Christian Religion, by the authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, after having deeply reflected and frequently implored the Divine assistance, on the advice of our Venerable Brethren the Cardinals, Patriarchs, and Bishops of

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the Holy Roman Church now in Rome, We decree and define that Blessed John Eudes and Blessed John Vianney are Saints; We inscribe them in the catalogue of the Saints, decreeing that their memory shall be celebrated every year with pious devotion throughout the Universal Church, on the date of their birth, which, in the case of John Mary Vianney, is August 4, and in that of John Eudes, August 19, with the title of confessors non-pontiffs.'

Immediately afterwards the Pope intoned the Te Deum, which was taken up with unspeakable delight by the assembled multitude, whilst the bells of Saint Peter's and all the churches of Rome spread the good news throughout the world. Then, amid unforgettable pomp, the Pope celebrated mass in honour of the two new saints, nor did he forget to sound their praises in the course of a homily which he delivered after the Gospel. In the evening, the Piazza of Saint Peter's and the basilica twinkled with thousands of fairy lights that made one think of the heavenly and eternal light, in the midst of which the saints of God live and move.

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S. JOHN EUDES has hitherto been known only to a small group of scholars. If we have succeeded in depicting him such as he was our readers will understand how much he deserves of France and the Church.

Notwithstanding the differences that arose between himself and the Oratory, after a union of twenty-six years, we may say without paradox that he was in reality the heir of the de Bérulle and de Condren, that it was he who, in the space of time between those great men and Malebranche, was the most valuable representative of the early traditions. The resolution which he—a man so humble, obedient, and self-sacrificing—took, and carried out, to leave the Oratory, only serves to reveal how clear and enlightened were his decisions, how energetic his character, and how firm and determined his will. Moreover, the series of his creations has long since banished the few shadows which, at first sight, might have led those who were too humanly prejudiced against him to form a harsh judgement on his departure from the Oratory. The whole of his life now stands before posterity. It is easy to judge what is revealed there: a passionate ardour in the service of God and the salvation of souls. The Catholic liturgy is well advised to repeat of each of her saints: 'No one is found like unto him.' If the saints are all of equal value, still they do not resemble one another. Grace takes hold of them, with their natural

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characteristics and in their own surroundings; and every attempt to depict them that aims at restoring them, in a fashion, to their own social circle, to their native country, and their own times, only serves to complete their portraits. Their features should not be concealed by the aureola of their heavenly rays; neither truth, nor the practical use of the study we should make of their lives and mission amongst us, would thereby have anything to gain.

Now, Father Eudes undoubtedly preserved the characteristics of the solid country folk from whom he sprang—the prudent, shrewd, somewhat stolid race that peopled Normandy. He put all these qualities at the service of the Catholic ideal, and instead of the human satisfactions which might be found in their exercise, and which he abandoned, he discovered an equivalent, which he increased and fortified, in the daring, though well-regulated, calculated, patient, organising fervour of his apostolic zeal. To this, from an early hour, he added that spirit of magnanimous and tender love, which he owed to the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and to his care to reserve for her 'the better part' in his doctrine and works.

He was no less gifted than his brother MÉZERAY, as far as literature and 'talent' are concerned. He was, in the first place, an excellent pupil of the Jesuits, with whom all his life he strove to remain on good terms, in which he succeeded, although he deliberately avoided entering upon any of the controversies of his day. Moreover, we have more than one useful witness to his merits as a writer. We shall not deal with the few letters which he wrote in an endeavour to play the part—if this familiar expression be allowed—of a 'Classical Consoler,' in which Christian fundamentals are slightly concealed by a style approximating to the

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consolations of Antiquity. But all the Offices which he composed, and all the Latin hymns and proses with which he has enriched them, show him to be a master of all the demands of rhythm, and endowed with all the resources of a Latinity which, by ingenious neologisms, he bent to the requirements of his theme. But, above all, we should recall his great treatises in which, before proceeding to the

various subdivisions of precepts and rules for exercises to be carried out during every hour of the day, he first abandons himself to lyrical transports of emotion when he considers the great mysteries of religion or the sublime duties of the priesthood. To establish and propagate new devotions as he did, without leaving a loophole for the malevolence of those who would have gladly discovered heretical, or, at least, temerarious doctrines in his writings, most assuredly demanded inspiration from on high. But did he not also need lucidity in the expression of his ideas, and precision in his language, to answer his adversaries? He certainly possessed these gifts. They did not injure far from it the vigorous sweep of his language and style, as the success of his preaching abundantly proved.

Of this preaching, which filled three-quarters of his career, we have, so to say, external evidence; and its tone will be found in those pages which, as his sons to-day have carefully shown us, are in reality detached fragments from sermons already written, or intended for delivery on some future occasion. This evidence, however indirect, provides us with sufficient material for a judgement. His own century did not give him a place amongst the great pulpit orators of whom literature is proud. Why? Because men, in every age, have this false idea, namely, that literature is that which is written expressly to be admired by

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lovers of a good style and by professional craftsmen. It is only after a long interval of time that they recover from such an illusion and discover, for instance, that the greatest orators are those who, according to Pascal's phrase, have smiled at eloquence, or, at least, at rhetoric. Bossuet's sermons were properly appreciated only two centuries later. It is said that, one day after he had heard Father Eudes preach, he remarked: 'That is how we should all preach.' If Bossuet did not really say so, he might very well have made the remark; because, if we reconstitute all that his contemporaries have told us, we may see that he was bound to find in his predecessor the best elements of religious eloquence: simplicity of means, clarity of exposition, the art of going straight to the hearts of his hearers to probe their wretchedness, and communicate to them heroic and impatient longings to return to the true source of salvation. It can all be summed up in a remark of Baron de Renty's. 'He speaks nakedly, holily and forcibly.'

The foundations which he left behind him have perpetuated his ideas. The Congregation of Jesus and Mary, persecuted and deprived of its possessions, defends itself with the tenacity of the Breton and the shrewdness of the Norman; driven out of France, it has propagated, in other countries, the spirit that gave it life, for such a spirit never dies. Its Third Order will, in one form or another, quietly replace more than one dispersed community. (1) The beautiful creation of Our Lady of Charity is still to be found in France. It is, perhaps, the most calumniated, because it deals with characters who are often difficult, and has arrayed against it the malice of the world; but, not to speak of the souls whom it saves, it renders, in spite of everything, an immense service to our own generation

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in that it lets it see how Catholic purity preserves its integrity in contact with, and at the service of, the worst and greatest form of wretchedness.

The Father who gave them birth would, no doubt, justify to the full what he said so beautifully on the death of his dear friend, Baron de Renty: 'Let us pray God to unite us to his soul in glory, for it is the mark of holy souls to procure the spiritual advancement of their friends in the sight of God.'

Are all those whom he loved indebted to him only for 'spiritual progress'? Alas, no! He evangelised that beautiful province of Normandy where he was born. Long afterwards the shining

traces of his apostolate might be discerned there, for, of the all priests who were martyred at the Carmelite monastery in Paris, and whose beatification is at hand, there were five from the diocese of Rouen, eight from that of Séez, eight from that of Bayeux, and fourteen from Coutances.(2) But if Normandy has its saints, how much still remains to be restored! Let us pray to him to send her new apostles. He himself led back to the right road men and women who were spiritually impoverished and violently excited by ignorance and superstition combined, but who were nevertheless full of energy. Future apostles will have a more difficult task, to awaken love of the ideal, courage, and self-control. Let our last word be to implore the holy missionary to raise up priests worthy of himself to carry on such a great and necessary work.

NOTES

1. It was chiefly spread in Normandy and Brittany, where it rendered immense assistance during the Revolution. It has given birth to several religious societies, ~amongst others, the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Paramé, and the Daughters of the Heart of Mary of Saint-Quai-Portrieux.

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2. There were three Eudists amongst those martyrs: Father Francis Louis Hébert, coadjutor of the Superior General, and, in the end, confessor to Louis XVI, whom he induced to carry out his duty when confronted with laws persecuting religion, and whom he advised in regard to the vow to the Sacred Heart, of which he was the recipient; Father Francis Lefranc, Superior of the Seminary of Coutances, and Father Peter Claude Potier, Superior of the Seminary of Rouen. To these should be added a dozen priests who resided in the Eudist house in Paris, particularly Charles Jerome Béraud du Peron, bursar and professor in the Seminaries of the Congregation.

APPENDIX I**THE BEATIFICATION AND CANONISATION OF
THE SERVANT OF GOD, JOHN EUDES**

In the February number of the periodical review: The Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Father Le Doré~ writes:

It was forty years ago, in the year 1868, that The Very Reverend Father Gaudaire, the Superior of our Congregation, commanded me to take up and carry on the Cause of the Beatification and Canonisation of our holy Founder, Father John Eudes.

Although Father Eudes was a native of Ri, in the diocese of Séez, the Cause was begun in the diocese of Bayeux. In point of fact, it was in the city of Caen, situated in this diocese, that our holy founder died; it was here that he spent most of his life, and established the first houses of his two Institutes. Hence it was in this city that the preliminary processes-first the episcopal and then the apostolic-were carried out, as to his reputation for sanctity, his virtues, the observance of the rules relative to non cultus and his written works. The processes relative to miracles were carried out in the dioceses of Rennes and Vannes, where the cures had taken place. All the documents, taken together, formed a large number of folio volumes, and were sent to Rome, where they were translated and printed. They were all submitted to minute examination and to learned and profound discussions by ecclesiastical lawyers, Promoters of the Faith, the Consultors and Eminent Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

On the first favourable report, dated February 7, 1874, the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IX, declared on the following January 26, that the Cause of the Servant of God, John

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Eudes, should be officially introduced in the Court of Rome. By that very fact, Father Eudes was henceforth entitled to bear the official title of Venerable.

Leo XIII went farther, and after many, long enquiries, he pronounced a solemn judgement, on January 6, 1903, by which he testified that the Venerable John Eudes had, during his life, practised the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, with the virtues annexed, in the heroic degree required of all those on whose behalf petition is made that the honour reserved to Saints may be paid.

Finally, On May 3, 1908, His Holiness Pope Pius X proclaimed in his turn the sanctity of our holy Founder, by recognising that, thanks to his power with God, several miracles had been wrought through his intercession.

Three special cases had been submitted to the Roman tribunal which recognised that all three presented obviously miraculous characteristics. The first was the instantaneous and perfect cure of cancer of the stomach which endangered the life of Sister Mary Augustine Chassé, a Sister (tourière~) of the Convent of Our Lady of Charity, of Saint Cyr, in Rennes; the next was a cure of multiple paralysis arising from an organic lesion of the spinal marrow, which was wrought in favour of a girl in one of the classes of the same convent; and the third was the cure of a blind young man, Louis Bourdon, who was then in the Juvenate of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary at Kerlois, near Hennebent, and who is to-day a Eudist priest and professor in the seminary of S. Domingo, in the

Antilles.

The verification of the miracles and the proof of the heroic degree of the virtues of the Venerable John Eudes enabled the Holy See to make a declaration, without fear of error, on the tides and qualities of Blessed which we had petitioned Rome to grant our holy Founder.

Hence, on November 24, 1908, the Most Eminent Cardinal and Consultors of the Sacred Congregation of Rites met in the Throne Room of the Vatican, under the

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presidency of His Holiness Pius X, to enquire into the question: May we, in safety, that is to say, in all security, proceed to the Beatification of the Venerable Servant of God, John Eudes?

The promoters of the Cause, Minetti, Martini, and Guidi besought the Sovereign Pontiff to decree that this was possible. They declared that it was the desire of all. It was the desire of Reverend Father Gabriel Mallet, the able and zealous Postulator of the Cause; it was the desire of the religious Congregations founded by the Venerable Eudes; it was the desire of all France, which was happy to have given birth to such an apostle. *Omnium nunc est in voto ut quantocius constituas tuto procedi posse ad solemnem Venerabilis Joannis Eudes Beatificationem. Hoc instanter expetit R. P. Gabriel Mallet causae solertissimus Postulator: hoc universi exoptant Eudiani sodates, hoc Gallia deprecatur, quae natales tanto apostolo praebuit.*

All the Cardinals present and each of the Consultors of the Sacred Congregation of Rites expressed a similar wish, and fully assented to the petition of the promoters.

Mgr Verde himself, the Promoter of the Faith, who was bound to maintain the strict observance of the rules drawn up by Canon law to guarantee the security of the decisions of the Sovereign Pontiff, was able to attest that all the prescriptions of the Church had been scrupulously observed, and that there was nothing to oppose their proceeding to the Beatification of the Venerable John Eudes.

Despite this unanimity of opinion, and in conformity with custom, the Sovereign Pontiff deferred it for some days, so that he might pray and reflect before pronouncing sentence.

This delay was prolonged until December 13, because the Pope's physicians decided that he should take some days' rest on account of the fatigue resulting from the celebrations of his Sacerdotal jubilee which had just terminated.

The ceremony took place in the Vatican, in the magnificent Consistorial Hall, in which the throne

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presented to Pius X by his former diocese of Venice is preserved: the ceremony was fixed for eleven o'clock in the morning, and the decree of Beatification was then promulgated.

It begins thus

APPENDIX 11**A NOTE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MONASTERIES OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF REFUGE IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND**

THE Order of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge was introduced into Ireland in the year 1853 by the Rev. John Smith, a holy and zealous Dublin Priest. At this Ordination he had promised his Archbishop that he would devote himself especially to the conversion of Magdalens—a promise he faithfully kept to the end of his life. In 1831, he was appointed Curate in the Church of SS. Michael and John, Lower Exchange Street, and here he remained till his death, in order that he might have more freedom to devote himself to his labour of love. He secured a house near the Church, and here he commenced with two poor penitents whom he placed in charge of a holy woman, Mary Anne M'Carthy. In a short time the house became too small, and he transferred his protégées to a house in Drumcondra which he called S. Mary's Asylum. It is now the Sacred Heart Home.

Wishing to consolidate his work, the idea of handing it over to a Religious Order presented itself to his mind. Divine Providence, which tends to its end so sweetly and orderly, soon came to his aid by furnishing him with what he desired; three young ladies presented themselves as candidates for the new foundation and they were eagerly accepted. They were Miss O'Callaghan, Miss Carroll, and Miss O'Hara. This first step being arranged to his satisfaction, the venerable Priest applied to his Grace the Archbishop for his sanction for the foundation, and for permission to bring his three postulants to the Convent

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of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge, Rue Saint Jacques, Paris, which he had visited, in 1839, in order to begin their Novitiate. His request was peremptorily refused. Great was the good priest's disappointment. However, the Archbishop could not prevent the three young ladies from becoming Nuns, so after many negotiations, they were finally received by the Mother Superior of Our Lady of Charity. On July 22, Feast of S. M. Magdalen, they started under the escort of their good Father, arrived in Paris the following day, and began their Novitiate on July 30, 1842. On the death of the venerable Archbishop, which took place in February 1852, Rev. Father Smith applied to his successor, the Most Rev. Paul Cullen, for the long-desired permission to found the Community of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge at S. Mary's Asylum. This was readily granted, and the good priest lost no time in announcing in person the good news to the Rev. Mother in Paris.

However, it was not until 1853 that the foundation was finally made, many difficulties having arisen during the intervening years. The Irish Sisters were not among those named for the Foundation, and this was a great disappointment to Father Smith. However, they were sent over shortly after and M. M. of the Five Wounds O'Callaghan and her two Sisters, M. S. Joseph and Sr. M. S. Magdalen were pillars of strength in the Community for long years. The Sisters, on arriving, found the house in Drumcondra much too small for the number already there, and now commenced a season of great suffering and hardship for the Foundress, Mother M. of the Sacred Heart Kelly, and her little band. Many times they were on the point of giving up and returning to France, but the thought of the poor souls whom they had come to seek and save, spurred them on and encouraged them to persevere. At the end of four years, in 1857, the house and grounds of High Park were secured, and the Sisters moved into their new property. Before leaving the old house in Drumcondra they were obliged to build at High Park, on

a small scale, an Asylum and Laundry for the penitents. In this way the foundation struggled into life, but amidst so many difficulties that for fifteen years the community could do nothing towards the enlargement of the Magdalen Asylum. Meantime, in 1863, Mother M. of the Sacred Heart Kelly had gone to her reward, worn out by the trials and sorrows of these first years, but her sacrifice had not been in vain, the grain of wheat buried in the ground died, and its death brought forth much fruit.

Who can doubt that High Park and its Institutes are the fruit of its Foundress's prayers and tears? On February 17, 1887, a colony left High Park to take up the management of a Magdalen Asylum in Gloucester Street, Dublin, known as S. Mary's Retreat. It had commenced and continued for a long time under the care of Seculars, but for some years had been under the care of the Sisters of Mercy. As they were unable to continue the charge they applied to the *Archbishop*, who authorised them to offer the good work to the Community. From the beginning Godblessed the enterprise and, with the help of generous benefactors, a beautiful Convent and *Church soon* replaced the tumble-down building which first sheltered Mother M. of S. Bartholomew McDonnell and her devoted band. In 1900, High Park sent out another colony at the earnest request of the Most Rev. Dr. Virtue, Bishop of Portsmouth. S. Michael's Convent, Waterlooville, is now in a flourishing condition, and doing good work for the salvation of poor souls. In 1925, their present beautiful *Church was* completed, and at present the Sisters have the joy of seeing a crowded congregation in place of the one Catholic who formerly heard Mass in the Convent Chapel. Attached to the Convent there is a Sodality of Children of Mary for externs and the Sisters also teach Catechism to the children of the village.

At the time of the expulsion of religious in France, some of our Community sought refuge in England. The Community of Caen-the cradle of the Order-in a moment of terror, negotiated with the Spanish Jesuits for

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the sale of their house in Mold, Flintshire. It was a massive stone building, the County Gaol, and great were the sufferings the nuns endured in it for some years. In 1909, they asked the Irish Community to take it over, which they did, but as they found it perfectly unsuitable for the work of the Order, the French nuns found a purchaser for the property, thus leaving their Irish Sisters free to seek another and more congenial sphere for their labours. His Grace the Most Reverend Dr. Whiteside, *Archbishop* of Liverpool, gladly received them into his Diocese- and, on June 25, 194, the little colony took possession of their new Convent, Redcliffe, Aughton Park, near Liverpool. Dr. Whiteside was unwearied in his kindness and encourage~ment to his new children, and, until his death was their staunch friend and supporter. This Convent shelters over fifty poor girls from the dangers of the world: as in all Monasteries of Our Lady of Charity, laundry work is their principal means of support.

Other houses of the Order in England are Bartestree in Herefordshire, founded in 1863 by the Monastery of Caen; Northfield, near Birmingham; Troy House, Monmouth; and Redcot, Bitterne, Southampton.

(Communicated.)

