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by

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Delivered at Foreign Mission Session, Second American Catholic Missionary Congress, October 19-22, 1913.

LEO XIII said, "In the duties which join us to God and to the Church, the greatest thing to be noticed is that in the Propagation of Christian truth each one of us should labor as far as lies in his power."—Enc. Sapientiae Christianae. Yesterday we heard the same principle expressed in the letter of Pius X, and in order to show more forcibly his love for the Missions he has sent as his own personal representative, His Excellency, the Apostolic delegate to our country, Archbishop Bonzano, whose experience of many years in the Chinese Missions makes him doubly welcome in our midst.

The Foreign Mission Field is a large one, and even a short survey of the Apostolate among the pagan and heathen

is quite beyond the limitations of the writer. In an excellent booklet sent to the Hierarchy and clergy of the country, the National President of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Right Reverend Monsignor Joseph Freri, has treated the conditions that face our missionaries in the Orient, and explained what the Society has done for Missions from its establishment in 1822 up to the present. Moreover, we are fortunate in counting among our guests at this Congress, The Right Reverend Denis J. Dougherty, D.D., of the Philippines, Reverend Joseph Koesters, D.D., S. V. D., of China, and the Reverend L. J. Van den Bergh, who was ten years in Africa. They will tell us what they know from years of actual experience, while the information of the writer is gleaned merely from the letters of the missionaries.

We feel, however, that it may be of interest to hear what Boston is doing in aid of the cause of Foreign Missions, through the medium of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

The aim of the Society is to assist by prayers and alms Catholic Missionaries who are engaged in preaching the Gospel in heathen and non-Catholic countries. To become a member one must recite daily for the missions, one Our Father and one Hail Mary, with the invocation, St. Francis Xavier, Pray for Us, and contribute to the Society five cents a month or sixty cents a year. The usual method of gathering the contributions of the faithful is to form the associates into bands of ten. A promoter collects the dues from one or more bands, and circulates among them the Annals of the Society, a bi-monthly magazine containing letters and stories on the Missions. The offerings are given by the promoters to the Parochial Director or sent directly to the Diocesan Office, if there be no branch of the Society in the parish. In addition to this Ordinary

membership there is a Special membership, \$6.00 a year, and Perpetual membership, \$40.00 paid once. Deceased persons may be enrolled in any of the three classes of membership. Besides receiving many indulgences, members share in the prayers and sacrifices of about 65,000 missionaries, and receive a memento in over 15,000 Masses each year. Special privileges are granted to Ecclesiastical benefactors.

From the organization of the Society it will be readily seen how important is the part of the priest. The parochial idea is first and foremost. All communication between the Diocesan office and the 10,000 promoters who are collecting dues from 100,000 members in the diocese is carried on through the local or Parochial Director who is appointed by the Pastor. The returns are made to him at the monthly meeting, which usually takes place on the evening of the First Friday of each month, and he in turn remits to the Diocesan Office.

If success has attended the work in Boston, it is due entirely to the sympathy of His Eminence the Cardinal, to the generosity and co-operation of the priests. Boston is not a rich Diocese; we have few wealthy Catholics in our midst. But since the pastors are willing to share what they and their poor people can give, with others who need it more, love for the missions has flourished. The pulpits of the various churches are always at the disposal of the priest who establishes the branches, and when the returns decrease, as is natural, a courteous invitation for a second visit of the Diocesan Director is extended.

The returns from the Branches are often increased by Perpetual memberships—\$40. A great many priests have thus enrolled themselves and they encourage the faithful to do likewise. One priest during the present year has been responsible for the enrollment of 15 members of his

parish. We have over 2200 Perpetual members on our books. The receipts during the year 1912 for all kinds of membership in the Society were but a little short of \$50,000.

But there is another source of revenue, and it is keeping pace with the returns from the Branches. In the official Diocesan Organ, The Pilot, there is a section devoted to Mission News. Touching appeals from poor missionaries are constantly received at the Diocesan Office. Upon the recommendation of the various Bishops, we print those which are most pressing, and last year responses amounted to about \$40,000. Here again the priests have taken the lead. Not only have they responded to these petitions, but they have shared their surplus Mass intentions with the needy missionaries. We have never appealed for Mass stipends directly to the faithful, but have received many transfers of Masses to be disposed of in foreign fields. Last year the Boston office remitted \$15,000 in this manner. Numerous missionaries are supported by Mass offerings.

New parishes as well as the old and well-established centres have encouraged the work. The building of a church or school is not an obstacle. One Sunday afternoon, after preaching at the Masses in one of the churches, the Director was invited to examine a large and imposing school in the process of erection. Having finished our tour of inspection, the good pastor said, pointing to the building, "Why do we put money into brick and stone? Why do we build churches and schools? To help spiritually those whom God has placed under our charge. Now if this may be accomplished also in another way (and I believe it is by assisting the missions,) we are but diverting the offerings which we might possibly get for home needs, into another and equally beneficial channel. God will bless us and our people if we do our share in such a noble work. Besides, it makes them more generous in giving to the parish."

This latter sentiment has been re-echoed by a hundred other pastors, and the best proof that they mean it is had in the annual returns from their parishes.

No parish seems to be too small to contribute. We have in mind one pastor who, as soon as he was appointed, extended an invitation to the Director. He had neither church nor house, but lived with a neighboring pastor. The kind invitation was renewed twice, finally accepted and a Branch was started. This generous, Catholic spirit is soon communicated to the laity, and we repeat, if the Foreign Mission idea is deeply rooted in the Catholics of the Boston Archdiocese, it is because the priests have taken the lead, and their unselfish, enthusiastic interest has permeated the homes and the individuals of each parish.

How many examples of this have passed before our eyes in the last two years! Every day's mail and almost every visit to the Diocesan Office brings new instances of this true Christian charity. We have known good souls to deny themselves new clothes, vacations and delicacies at table to spread the faith among the pagan and heathen. Some give weekly, others monthly a small percentage of their wages. In many of the shops and stores and factories there are clubs, each with its distinctive name, whose members are banded together in this sacred cause; and the results should be measured, not by the twenty-five or fifty dollars donated, but by the moral influence that each member has on the other. It is truly wonderful how much nobility and generosity there is in hearts beating in humble bosoms, when they become interested in the mission cause. We have learned of a domestic who saved every penny she could earn to buy text-books for a poor student in a Foreign Mission Seminary; of a coachman who gave up smoking that he might be able to send to the missions what he would spend on

tobacco; of a student, poor himself, who tutored others and sent the money thus earned to a missionary; again of a little old lady, who took her coffee all the year round without sugar or cream, that with the few dollars thus saved a heathen child might be ransomed; and last, of a seamstress, who saved every scrap of material she could, and begged scraps from others, and with these made dresses for little heathen children—often sitting up late at night to do this work. And so examples might be given one after another—all showing the same noble generosity and heroic self-denial.

Charity, like the course of birds through the air and the path of fishes in the water, is often covered up. We recall five young men who visit the Office from time to time with offerings of from \$50.00 to \$200. No name is given. A pleasant, "How do you do?" A good wish for the success of the work and a respectful "Good-day," is the only identity they leave behind them.

Gentlemen—if the Director had entered upon the duties of his office without a spark of love for the work, if his heart had been as cold as stone and absolutely indifferent to the good of the cause, he could not help being converted. He would have to become sympathetic and even enthusiastic; because on the one hand he has the letters of the modern apostles who, in answer to the command of Christ, "Go, teach all nations," have gone the whole way, and, on the other, the simple, genuine faith of thousands whose hearts are yearning with a desire to do good for the redeemed but unenlightened millions in the Orient. The missionaries are indeed other Christs. Like St. Paul, they have faced every manner of danger and hardship and discouragement, even death itself, that others might obtain spiritual life. We have actually learned of priests and sisters who were on the verge of starvation, and the Philip-

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[OVER]

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Rev. Edmund Dunn, Kuching.

pine Bishop present here to-day can tell us of the cases that have come to his knowledge in our own distant possessions. But it is not to keep the wolf away from the door that we collect and disburse moneys throughout the mission world. It is because Jesus Christ, Who was sent down upon earth by His Eternal Father to instruct and save all men, placed this burden upon His successors, the Apostles, and through them upon us, that we are interested in the mission cause and feel it a privilege to give the best that is within us to make it known and loved. It is only necessary to tell Catholics about the missions to obtain this sympathy and support. Once they know what is needed, they will respond most generously and God will bless them because it is His work.

There are some who are unable to become promoters, but interest themselves in a Special Charity towards the missions. Many of the clergy and of the laity have provided for the education of native priests. of whom there are 15,000 in India and 700 in China; others build chapels and schools (one good friend of the Cause has memorials of this kind in China, India, Africa, Oceania and the Philippine Islands). But the most popular special offerings have been Sacred Vessels. During a period of twelve months we forwarded 131 chalices to all parts of the Mission Field. Vestments, too, are received from thoughtful Pastors; and we cannot supply the Mission Clubs of twenty-five and thirty members. who are busily engaged at their weekly meetings repairing them or making sacred linens for the poor priests in the most remote districts.

The pulpits of the churches have been thrown open not only to the Diocesan Director, but to the Missionaries who have come themselves to present their needs to our good Catholics. Two years ago the Right Reverend Maurice Foley, D.D., a native son of Boston, set out to the

Philippines with \$20,000 collected in our churches; and the Diocese gave him, in the person of the Reverend John E. Killion of Brookline, a most genial and capable Secretary. Later, the Reverend Frederick J. Murphy from China collected \$6,000, which was forwarded to his Bishop through the Diocesan Office. During the early part of this year another Philippine Missionary, the Reverend Philip M. Finigan of the Society of Jesus, spoke in some of the parishes and received about \$5,000 in response to his appeals. The Home Missions, too, have experienced the practical sympathy of the various pastors and of their people. For many months the Reverend John E. Burke and his assistant, the Reverend D. J. Bustin, have appealed in behalf of the Colored Missions of the South, and up to date they report the handsome sum of \$11,000. All of these offerings aggregate a total of \$42,000 collected in a little over two years by personal appeals from clerics who are engaged in Home and Foreign Missions.

God has indeed blessed the work in Boston. It was the first Diocese in the United States to place the Society for the Propagation of the Faith on a permanent basis, by permitting a Diocesan priest to devote his entire time to the work, (for the past five years there have been two priests thus engaged as well as a corps of secretaries) and from the initial sum of \$1,400 collected in 1898, the contributions steadily increased until in 1904, \$27,000 was credited to the Diocesan Office for that year. This sum was doubled three years later, *i.e.*, (\$53,000 for year of 1907), and last year's report (1912) shows a total of \$123,000. Since the permanent establishment of this Mission Society in Boston, covering a period of 15 years, over \$800,000 has been collected in aid of the cause. And this is the way that Boston has tried to do her share in working for Home and Foreign Missions.