

Loretto

Centennial Discourses

1812 ——— 1912



WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
MOST REVEREND JOHN J. GLENNON, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF ST. LOUIS

ST. LOUIS, MO., 1912
PUBLISHED BY B. HERDER
17 SOUTH BROADWAY

FREIBURG (BADEN)
GERMANY

LONDON. W. C.
68, GREAT RUSSELL STR

IMPRIMATUR

Sti. Ludovici, die Nov. 4, 1912

✠ *Joannes J. Glennon,*
Archiepiscopus,
Sti. Ludovici.

Copyright, 1913,
by
Joseph Gummersbach

INTRODUCTION

The following pages tell us how Loretto celebrated her centennial days; they tell us of the Order's beginnings in prayer and sacrifice, amid many trials and difficulties, and how, in spite of these and perhaps because of these it waxed strong and potent. But, how could it be otherwise, for their commencement being at the foot of the Cross, they had the abundant treasures of the open Heart of our Blessed Lord to draw from. They had His last words as a heritage. And with them, the Blessed Mother Mary, who was, henceforth, to be their mother. Hence in their journey onward there should necessarily be the Resurrection in the foreground.

And we, after these one hundred years, have seen their Calvary passed, except in their prayers, and their resurrection assured in the order of the works that they have accomplished, and the good they have done. We have seen arise, a cloud of witnesses to Catholic truth, to sound morals, and to sane, dignified and ennobled womanhood. We have seen the black-robed teachers come and go, plant their standards through all the valley of

the Father of waters, and westward to where the white light rests on the hills. And wherever their walk has been, and wherever their standard has been set, there have been found the pearls of their scattering — the pupils, namely, whom they taught, and whose virtues like pearls of great price, they wear to the memory of their Sister-teachers.

We need the Loretto Sisters; we need them to maintain in their teaching and to create in their pupils, that type of character which binds religious faith and beauty to sane and intelligent living. We need the hardy virtues, so to bloom and brighten, in our modern days, with all the brightness and freshness that the grasses and the flowers of their native Kentucky gave to the world of one hundred years ago.

The worst "Modernism" of the time is that of the "Modern" woman. Other modernists deny or dispute certain doctrinal or dogmatic truths; they would take from Revelation its divine origin, and from the Sacred Scriptures their inspiration; but the "Modern" woman goes much farther. She would revolutionize society; she would emancipate herself from all law — even the law of sex. She would leave wifehood, motherhood and home behind her to be free and to be a full fledged citizen of an impossible state; to be a leader in a dehumanized community.

It is to combat these, that we need Catholic

American Sisters to teach their Catholic sisters that Catholic virtues still may grow — still must bloom, here, in America; that graciousness, gentleness, faith, and devotion are, and will remain a woman's chiefest ornaments — that in them lies her best and fittest education; that she gains but little when she tries to do what men can do better; and that she loses much when she forgets or minimizes her duties to her home and children; and that she loses all, when she is lured away to the camp of social revolution, where all humanity, as we know it ceases, and where all sanctities and sanctions fail.

Yes, it is a great work the Loretines have before them; but with the memories, the prayers, and the experience of a hundred years, with the good wishes and sympathies of their many friends, with the benediction of the Holy Church, they must not fail — they must succeed.

JOHN J. GLENNON,

Archbishop of St. Louis.

This page in the original text is blank.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	iii
THE LORETTO CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION	I
FOUNDATION DAY	II
Right Rev. Denis O'Donaghue, D.D., Bishop of Louisville, at Loretto, Kentucky, April 25, 1912.	
LORETTO'S FOUNDER — BETHLEHEM ACADEMY	21
Rev. Celestine Brey, A.M., S.T.B., at Bethlehem Academy, Kentucky, April 25, 1912.	
LORETTO AND ITS HISTORY	38
Very Rev. M. S. Ryan, C.M., D.D., at St. Louis, Missouri, April 25, 1912.	
CENTENNIAL ORATION	50
Very Rev. James T. Walsh, LL.D., at Kansas City, Missouri, April 25, 1912.	
FATHER NERINCKX	57
Rev. Henry Shepherd Spalding, S.J., at Loretto, Kentucky, May 22, 1912.	
FATHER BADIN	78
Rev. John Cavanaugh, C.S.C., at Loretto, Ken- tucky, May 22, 1912.	
COMMENCEMENT DAY	99
The Hon. Edward J. McDermott, Lieutenant- Governor of Kentucky, at Loretto Acad- emy, June 5, 1912.	
LORETTO A GIFT OF PROVIDENCE	108
Rev. Philip Birk, C.P., Alumnae Day at Loretto Academy, Kentucky, June 13, 1912.	

	PAGE
LORETTO'S GLORIOUS CENTURY	126
Rev. J. B. O'Connor, O.P., at Loretto, Kentucky, June 26, 1912.	
LITTLE LORETTO — HOLY GROUND	147
Rev. Mark Moeslein, C.P., at St. Charles Church, Kentucky, June 30, 1912.	

THE LORETTO CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

The Centenary of Loretto harks back to the days when the conditions of life in Kentucky were rude and difficult, when the building of homes in untamed forests was but begun, and little attention was given to education beyond the cultivation of ingenious prowess and industry that might extort from undeveloped resources the things necessary for comfortable living. The solitary missionary, heroically sacrificing his life to God, passed to and fro ministering to the scattered Catholics, striving to keep alive among them the faith of their fathers. Under such conditions Loretto sprang into existence as if spontaneous from virgin soil, a new creation, a gift direct from the hand of Divine Providence, to the sturdy settlers toiling in the van of civilization. Christian training and instruction, Christian education, is the most essential requisite for the establishment and maintenance of Christian homes and Christian civilization. To supply this requisite where it was sadly needed, Divine Providence established Loretto.

Beginning by imparting the rudiments to the children, the Sisters of Loretto from the first have labored faithfully and zealously to promote the upbuilding of Catholic schools and have contributed to the advances made in education through every decade of a century. Their growth as an organization and their proficiency as teachers have developed apace with and contributed to the progress of religion and education throughout the country. The log cabin school of the pioneer has given place to schools and academies equipped with all modern appointments, but the spirit of sacrifice that animated the Founders of Loretto has sustained those who perpetuated the Society and its work and is still as generously cherished as ever.

The Loretto Centennial Celebration was therefore due as a tribute of gratitude and thanksgiving. It unfolded a brilliant panorama beautifully adorned and enriched with flowers and fruits, the products and outgrowth of the events of 1812 that mark the beginning of Loretto, a truly inspiring retrospect awakening sentiments of esteem and higher appreciation of the excellence of Loretto's achievements. Each festal day had its distinctive features of reminiscence and manifestations of joy, blending the fragrance of Catholic charity and worship, and depicting Loretto in its proper setting in the history of the Church in Kentucky.

On the twenty-fifth of April, 1812, Father Nerinckx gave the religious veil to Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart, and Ann Havern. That event was devoutly and religiously commemorated on Foundation Day, the twenty-fifth of April, 1912, in every house of the Society. The Holy Father graciously imparted his Apostolic Blessing to every Sister of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross. Unnumbered bishops and priests offered their Masses that day in thanksgiving and in many ways contributed to the splendor of the Celebration. In many places large congregations assembled at solemn, or pontifical Mass to blend their prayers and thanksgivings with their felicitations.

At the Mother House the Right Reverend Denis O'Donaghue, Bishop of Louisville, attended by his Vicar General and Secretary, celebrated Mass and gave the Loretto habit to six privileged postulants, just twice the number that received it from the hands of Father Nerinckx that day one hundred years ago; and nine happy novices pronounced their first vows. At a later hour pontifical Mass was celebrated by the Most Reverend Joseph Weber, C. R., at which the Bishop of Louisville assisted on his throne and after the Gospel preached a very edifying sermon most appropriate for the occasion. In the afternoon a beautiful devotional procession to the Tombs of the Founders, in which the Arch-

bishop, Bishop and Clergy participated with the whole community, was followed by Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The presence of Archbishop Weber was due to the kindness of the Fathers of the Congregation of the Resurrection, who for forty years have conducted St. Mary's College at the place called by Father Nerinckx, Mount Mary, where he proposed to found a Brotherhood, and which Loretto gave in exchange for the present site of the Mother House. In 1907 His Grace resigned his See of Lemberg in Austria to become a member of the Congregation of the Resurrection and is now Novice Master at the Provincial House of the Order at Berlin, Canada. His participation in the solemnities added another note of Catholicity to the celebration of Foundation Day.

The fervent sentiments expressed on the occasion by the Right Reverend Bishop of Louisville, reëchoed in the eloquent discourses delivered at other houses of the Society where Foundation Day was elaborately celebrated. At Bethlehem Academy, Kentucky, the Rev. Celestine Brey, A. M., S. T. B., vividly sketched the life of Loretto's Founder, and the history of Bethlehem Academy, Loretto's eldest surviving branch establishment. The polished orations of Very Rev. M. S. Ryan, C. M., D. D., at St. Louis, and of Very Rev. James T. Walsh, LL.D., at

Kansas City, voiced the sentiments with which Loretto's many devoted friends everywhere joined with the Sisters in joyful thanksgiving on Foundation Day.

It was a happy thought that prompted the observance of a festal day, the twenty-second of May, in memory of Loretto's venerated Founder, and linked with his name that of his longtime friend and associate, the Proto-Priest, the Rev. Stephen Theodore Badin. The site of the Mother House is redolent of their memory. There they first met in 1805. There they lived together for seven years. There they planned the foundation of the first American Religious Order; there they bowed in mutual disappointment when they saw their plans frustrated by the flames that consumed the house they had erected for a convent. There they encouraged each other and waited and prayed together with unwavering trust in Providence. There they welcomed the coming of Bishop Flaget, and gave him a home. And there Loretto venerates their relics.

The Right Reverend Edmund Obrecht, Abbot of Gethsemani, celebrated the Solemn Mass that day. The fact is reminiscent. The first colony of Trappists that came to Kentucky were greatly befriended by Father Nerinckx and Father Badin. And the site of the great Cistercian Abbey of Gethsemani was obtained by the Trap-

pists in 1848, from the Sisters of Loretto, who had conducted a school there for thirty years. At the Mass the Rev. Henry Shepherd Spalding, S. J., delivered an admirable panegyric on Father Nerinckx. The services rendered their earliest members by Father Nerinckx have ever been gratefully remembered by the Jesuits of the Missouri Province and acknowledged by innumerable friendly tokens promoting the interests of the Sisters of Loretto. Very appropriate, therefore, was the selection of a descendant of a pioneer Kentucky family to represent them when Loretto paid centennial tribute to the memory of her Founder, and Father Spalding's panegyric was in full accord with the spirit of the occasion. In like manner the fathers of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, who venerate Father Badin among the Founders of Notre Dame University, were represented by the eloquent Rev. John Cavanaugh, C. S. C., who voiced the praises of the venerable Proto-Priest, proclaiming how his apostolic achievements have written on history's indelible page his claim to be honored by generations who never saw him. To complete the reminiscence, the Rev. M. F. Dineen, S. S., D. D., of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, briefly bespoke the devotion of the Sulpicians to Loretto and its traditions, recalling the facts that Father Badin, their first alumnus ordained at St.

Mary's Seminary, here gave a home to the two illustrious Sulpicians, Bishop Flaget and Father David, with whom he came to America in 1792, and that here for the first time after that memorable voyage they met again in 1811. Mindful of these ties that linked them with the beginnings of the Church of Kentucky, the Sulpicians rejoiced to manifest their esteem and admiration for the revered guardians of this hallowed spot by participating in Loretto's Centennial Jubilee. Thus hallowed memories filled the day.

The programme of the Commencement Exercises harmonized with the Centennial Celebrations, and the school girls were elate with joy at being privileged to participate in the Centennial festivities. The eloquent address of the Honorable Edward J. McDermott, Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky, lauded the excellence of convent schools, and congratulated the young ladies upon the superior advantages they enjoy at Loretto Academy.

Alumnæ Day brought echoes from the Commencements of many years past, and the "Old Girls" rejoiced together in the glory of their loved Alma Mater. On this occasion the Rev. Dean, Joseph A. Hogarty, of Lebanon, Ky., celebrated the Solemn Mass, and the Rev. Philip Birk, C. P., in an impressive discourse reviewed the trials and triumphs of the Sisters of Loretto

and the services which under the protection of Divine Providence they have rendered to the cause of Christian education.

It was a day of unalloyed delight when the representatives of various Sisterhoods came to Loretto to rejoice with the spiritual daughters of Father Nerinckx. Devoted to the same holy cause, prompted by the same exalted motives, familiar with similar trials, they could share in largest measure the sentiments aroused by the thought of a century of religious service in promoting the cause of Christian education. That thought carried them back to the lowly beginnings, not only of the Sisters of Loretto, but also of the two other communities that may justly be called natives proper of Kentucky; namely, the Sisters of Nazareth, now also resplendent in Centennial glory, and the first foundation of the Sisters of St. Dominic in the United States, only ten years younger. These three Sisterhoods are a triple crown to the faith, piety, and self-sacrificing devotion of the first generation of Catholics in Kentucky which furnished their first members; and the bonds of personal friendship and Christian charity that so closely united their saintly Founders, Fathers Nerinckx, David and Wilson, are links that mutually bind them in sincerest Christian sympathy. On this glad day of Loretto's thanksgiving members of each of these Sisterhoods blended their voices in joy-

ful *Te Deums*, in which Sisters of Mercy and daughters of St. Ursula joined harmoniously.

The High Mass that day was celebrated according to the Dominican rite by the Very Reverend C. C. McGonagle, Prior of St. Rose Convent; another tribute to historic events. In 1806 the Dominican Fathers founded their first establishment in the United States, St. Rose Convent, only nine miles from Loretto. Neighbors for a century it was supremely appropriate and the good Fathers rejoiced to grace Loretto's festal solemnities with their own sacred rite. The Reverend J. B. O'Connor, O. P., eloquently reviewed the services rendered to religion in every period of the Church's history by the intellectual activities of consecrated virgins, congratulating those who perpetuate the work which the devoted Sisters of Loretto were privileged to be the first to begin in Kentucky.

A devotional pilgrimage to the Church of St. Charles and to the spot where Loretto was founded concluded the Centennial Solemnities. The Reverend Mother General and the Sisters felt that they stood on holy ground as they surveyed the scene hallowed by the memories of "Little Loretto." Their fervor and devotion found expression in the beautiful hymn, "Hail to the Queen," which had so often reëchoed there a century ago. In the stately edifice that has replaced the lowly log church of the pioneers,

built by Father Nerinckx, in which the first Sisters of Loretto received the veil, the pilgrims assisted at Mass celebrated by the pastor, the Reverend J. J. Pike. It was a high festival day for the parish that will be long remembered. At the Mass the Reverend Mark Moeslein, C. P., spoke pathetically of the origin of Loretto at that place, and of the faith and practical piety of the ancestors of the large congregation that filled the church.

More than ephemeral interest attaches to these discourses delivered by gifted speakers, and their historic value will increase as the years go by. They are clustered here in a volume for preservation as a precious souvenir of the Celebration. That they may serve to make Loretto better known and to nourish the spirit of devotion that has ever characterized the Sisters of Loretto is the hope that prompts their publication.

EDWIN DRURY.

LORETTO CENTENNIAL DISCOURSES

FOUNDATION DAY

THE RIGHT REV. DENIS O'DOHAGHUE, D. D.,
BISHOP OF LOUISVILLE, AT LORETTO,
KENTUCKY, APRIL, 25, 1912.

I wish I were able to say all that is in my heart appropriate for the occasion that brings us here to-day. It is indeed an epoch in the history of Loretto well worthy of commemoration. It is a day that has been looked forward to by the Community as the completion of the first century of its existence; and the exercises of this morning are held properly to mark the closing of that long term. We are all glad to be here on this occasion to celebrate this remarkable birthday. We are at your home, on the very ground made sacred by the presence and footsteps of your illustrious and sainted founder. These circumstances naturally lead us back one hundred years, and suggest a consideration or rather a study of the remarkable man who conceived the idea of establishing this community, marked out the ground and laid the corner stone on which it has been built. Institutions and enterprises destined to become great, usually begin in an

humble way; and Loretto is no exception to this rule. Those who stood near the cradle of its birth could hardly have a forecast of its future greatness, and likely gave no thought to what one hundred years would bring. It is easy for us now to examine the roadway and count the milestones in the Society's history. It has had its joys and sorrows, its hours of hope and fear, but an unfaltering trust in Divine Providence was the star that pointed the way. We see the harvest ripe, the ears of wheat bending in fullness, and we recognize the prophetic eye of the founder who surely must have seen this day in prayerful vision.

What was the cause that brought forth this Society? Surely there must have been a reason for its coming into existence, an occasion that made its beginning. The life of the founder is too well known to be repeated here. Though long ago passed to his reward, his memory will never fade in the land of his labors. Unconsciously he erected to himself a monument whose summit reaches beyond the clouds. Father Nerinckx is dead, but his heart watches, and in spirit he is with us this day. The story of Loretto's beginning is simple and pathetic. A few faithful and devoted women stood at the cradle of its birth in the wilderness. Their convent home was built of unhewn logs, and its floor, mother earth. In that distant day there was nothing to

suggest the foundation of a religious community, and there was none to offer a word of encouragement except their devoted spiritual guide. But he was prepared for the work. He suffered persecution for the cause of religion in his native land and Providence guided his step to a new field of labor. But what was here to encourage him in the founding of a religious community such as he had seen in his native land? Only one of those who stood before him on the day of the first profession to receive the religious habit, had received religious training in a community school. They had no experience in this line, but they had what was better, solid virtue and an earnest desire to do the will of God.

In studying this part of Father Nerinckx's life we can see that he came prepared for the work he was about to undertake, not the establishment of a religious community, but the conversion of the people outside the fold, and the preservation of the faith among such as had received this precious gift. And what was this preparation? It was the persecution he suffered from the enemies of religion in his native country. If Divine Providence had permitted that he should live the quiet life of a parish priest, surrounded by all that is cheering and encouraging, he would likely never have thought of quitting his home to seek a new field of labor in a strange and distant land. But persecution

settled the question. He could not compromise his conscience by taking the oath prescribed by a godless government, so he quit his home, his kindred and the friends of his youth, to serve God and save souls in the land of his adoption. This state was then nearly a wilderness. The Catholics were few and scattered, yet trying as best they could to keep alive the faith of their fathers, but they were of necessity drifting with the tide. We become like the people among whom we live. This is a kind of natural tendency, and it is not easily resisted. Just what kind of religious practices the scattered Catholics had has not been recorded. They were without a shepherd or guide until the good Father Badin came who worked with a zeal that may be compared with what we read of in the apostolic times. He had no one to help him, no one to cheer him, passing from place to place through woods and thickets to break the Bread of Life to famishing souls. He had seen what the Church was in his native France, its greatness, its splendor, its power, and he gave up everything to lay the foundations of religion in a new land. We live one hundred years from that distant day. Now the Church flourishes, and salvation is near to those who are well disposed. We cannot appreciate the work of these *twin missionaries* except we compare their times with the present day. We find them living

in solitary cabins, traveling long distances on horseback; the altar a table, and the vestments for Mass carried in a saddle bag. The railway had not arrived; the automobile was unknown, and the roadway was an Indian trail.

Notwithstanding hardships that we can now hardly appreciate, these two apostolic priests, and I can never think of them except together, worked with unfaltering zeal in the cause they were engaged. They pushed on incessantly amidst cheerless surroundings. Both of them realized the necessity of a community of sisters to instruct and train the children to the practice of virtue, but it was reserved for Father Nerinckx to bring these aspirations to a successful fulfillment. Having seen Sisterhoods in his own country, and knowing that the grace of God would pour down on this virgin soil here as it did in other lands, he put his trust in Divine Providence, and the Society of Loretto was founded, one hundred years ago to-day. Under the nurturing care of the Founder the precious plant grew and expanded; rules for a religious life were drawn up; a religious habit was adopted, and to-day we see the result of this humble beginning — the great Community which we have assembled here to honor.

But the work of the good Father Nerinckx was not confined to the work of establishing this community. In company with Father Badin, he

traversed the entire state wherever Catholics could be found, built churches, established missions, visited the sick and buried the dead. Traveling through the diocese, I hear of these two pioneer missionaries everywhere, so much so that one would be led to think that they were with us yesterday, though we know they have long rested in hallowed clay. But while absent in body, they are with us in spirit, and they surely rejoice, looking down from Heaven, to see this joyful day.

The establishment of religious communities of Sisters has been providential, and while they do not compose a part of the hierarchy of the Church, they have become almost a necessary factor in the advancement and preservation of religion under existing conditions in this country. The Episcopacy and the Priesthood are of divine institution, necessary for the continuance of Christ's work on earth; but the foundation of religious communities came in its day as a helper — almost a necessary aid — in the propagation of religious instruction among the people, and thereby a preservation of our holy faith; and while not of divine foundation, they have the highest approbation that ecclesiastical authority can bestow. At the head of each community stands an Exemplar of religious work, one who illustrated the Christian virtues in a heroic degree. The state of Kentucky has been highly

avored in this way. It has given to the Church two communities that are distinctively native, one the Community whose centenary we are celebrating to-day; the other Nazareth, which in a few months will complete the hundredth year of its foundation. There is no rivalry between these two institutions; their work is on the same lines — to promote the glory of God — and work for the salvation of souls.

For several years I have had occasion to visit churches in many places, and I have often stood and pondered, What would the clergy do in the direction and management of their congregations were they not aided by the religious communities of sisters? It seemed sometimes hard to determine who was the greater factor for good; but I recognized that there was no comparison on this line; what one did the other could not do, but working in harmony all things went well. Yes, the Sisters are a necessary factor in successful parochial work. They teach the Catholic school, and do it well, oftentimes undergoing what may be aptly called the martyrdom of the schoolroom. Take away the religious teachers from the school, and the work of the Church would suffer untold harm; the young mind of the child would lack the spiritual nutrition necessary for perseverance, and faith would soon suffer decay. For this reason we all give thanks to Divine Providence for calling into ex-

istence the religious communities in the fullness of time for the preservation of the faith and the advancement of religion. Our Savior says in the gospel of to-day: The harvest is great, but the laborers few. True at all times, but this was clearly the case in this state one hundred years ago. But times have changed. Providence has raised up laborers. Vocations to the priesthood and the community life have multiplied so that no deserving soul is without the means of salvation. Since its institution the priesthood has been necessary everywhere; in changed conditions the religious teacher became almost an equal factor in the preservation and propagation of holy faith. And the teaching Sister in the school is valuable not only as one who instructs the child, but as an example to all the people; an object lesson as to what religion and piety mean.

I congratulate the Community of Loretto on being able to celebrate this centenary on the very ground where their founder lived. His ashes sleep here and his heart watches here. The bell he used is still here, and this morning on my way to the chapel, I was glad to hear its tone again. He brought it from his native country, and it is probably the first bell that ever summoned the people to divine service in the state of Kentucky. This, my dear Sisters, is for you a day of memory, of recollection and of meditation — not of sadness but of joy — not of

pride, but of gratitude and thanks to God for what He has done for the preservation of this community. Loretto has not grown in a day to what we find it now. It took one hundred years. And what joys and sorrows are told in these annals! The community has had its trials and its dark days, but it moved on. Those who persevere are tried by Heaven, like gold in the fire, to test their courage and purity of intention. This is a day of joy for the whole Loretto Community, those who are here and for those who celebrate the day elsewhere. They who are absent are celebrating the day as we are here. We are doing as best we can to celebrate the day in a proper spirit and are meditating on the life of the illustrious founder, and the more we study it, the more we are impressed with its splendor and spiritual beauty.

With my own congratulations I wish to present those of the clergy who are with us for this centenary celebration, particularly the Most Rev. Archbishop Weber, C. R., who is celebrating the Mass of thanksgiving. No one is a stranger here to-day, whether he be from the diocese of Louisville or elsewhere. The Sister of Loretto and her habit will always point to the Home, the Mother House, and will spell the name of the illustrious Founder, Father Nerinckx. I pray that Heaven may prosper the community in the years to come, and that in the centuries that will

follow, what we do here to-day will be looked upon as the work of the pioneers, even as we now look on the work of Ann and Mary Rhodes, done in their day. We all this day wish the Community prosperity and success in the work they have been engaged in for one hundred years.

LORETTO'S FOUNDER —
BETHLEHEM ACADEMY

THE REV. CELESTINE BREY, A. M., S. T. B.

FOUNDATION DAY, APRIL 25, 1912, AT BETHLEHEM ACADEMY, KENTUCKY.

How few events that occurred one hundred years ago are remembered now. How seldom do we look back to the labors and sacrifices of those who have gone before us. Busy with the life about us, we often forget to give credit for the conditions and blessings under which we live to those who have brought these conditions and invoked these blessings.

What then must be the significance of the event commemorated to-day which prompts men and women and glad-voiced children to utter in tones of joy the word *Loretto*, and causes grateful hearts throughout the land to throb quicker, responsive to the mention of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross?

The thought of that event carries us back to the days when Kentucky was a land of magnificent forests, populated by brave-hearted pioneers, when our pious, Catholic forefathers

treasured the faith, and in their home life nurtured it with anxious solicitude in the minds and hearts of their children, and hailed with joy the occasional visit of the missionary on his weary rounds dispensing the divine mysteries to souls hungering in the wilderness;—back to the days when Fathers Badin and Nerinckx, the Apostles of Kentucky, traversed the paths marked out for them by their intrepid zeal in search of souls in every part of Kentucky;—yes, back to the days when the prayers, humiliations, and self-sacrifices of Father Nerinckx had merited from Divine Providence the rare privilege of founding a society devoted to Christian education, the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross.

Charles Nerinckx, from the days of his childhood, had walked in the ways of virtue and industry. His youth, well spent in assiduous application to study, developed a nobility of character that marked him as well worthy of the sublime dignity of the priesthood to which he was exalted in 1785.

Ever promptly responsive to the call of duty, he was soon distinguished by his zealous labors for the salvation of souls in the Archdiocese of Mechlin of his native land. These were the days when Revolution stalked red-handed through Europe, warring upon religion and civilization. Father Nerinckx was pointed out to be a victim. Had he fallen into the hands of

the sleuths of the Revolution he would have been a martyr; but his zeal nerved him to spend four years in seclusion, ministering at the constant risk of his life, to the desolate souls of his dying countrymen. Hampered and restricted in every way, spending his days in prayer and arduous study in his hiding place at the Hospital of Dendermonde, and his nights in ministrations to such souls as he could reach, his apostolic zeal longed for broader fields where he knew the harvest was great and the laborers few.

Driven out of his native land, he turned his whole heart to God for guidance. "My intention at that time," he wrote, "was to go to any place, even among the Indians, where it was thought I could do some good"; and directed by Divine Providence and aware of the great need of priests in America, he applied to Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, and was accepted for his diocese.

Looking out over the western sea towards the land of his destiny, his heart going out and his hands extended towards the people who had been praying for so many long days and weary nights for the arrival of a priest of God, he set sail in the first vessel he could reach to cross the Atlantic, and, after a perilous voyage of over three months and the death from contagious disease of forty of their number, he arrived in Baltimore, November 14, 1804, and was appointed to Kentucky.

Then began another period of preparation for his apostleship, namely, a preparation of further study. Well he knew, as was said by the prophet of old, that "the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and the people shall demand the law at his mouth." But how should he impart this knowledge unless he learned the language of the people to whom he was sent. And so he became a "school boy again" at the age of forty-three at Georgetown College, and set to work with a vim, as he did in every other undertaking, to master the idiom of the English language. Finding the language difficult at his advanced age, he wrote to Bishop Carroll in his humility that he feared he would be of "no use." The man who was destined to do such great things feared he would be of "no use."

Strengthened by twenty years of arduous mission work, of suffering, and the practice of every virtue, learned in the science of Theology and the Saints, at an age when men of the world begin to seek the ease and comforts of life, he arrived at the home of Father Badin in Kentucky, July 18, 1805.

I ask you to consider the meeting of these two apostolic missionaries which took place on that July 18, 1805,—in the wilds of Kentucky Father Badin was first in the field. Eleven years and a half, nearly five of them alone, had he labored with dauntless courage, never waver-

ing in his fidelity to the scattered flock entrusted to his care. How many a time had he longed for help in his solitary wanderings through Kentucky, for some missionary who could, as it were, multiply himself to meet the spiritual wants of his people. And now his wish was to be gratified, his prayer heard. What a meeting must that have been! Two exiles from their native land, two holy priests of God met in the forest, two minds with but a single aim, the conversion of Kentucky, two apostolic hearts throbbing in unison for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

With the generosity of heroic souls they took up the work and labored together; and that God blessed their labors is evidenced by the fact that in six brief years after Father Nerinckx's arrival they were privileged to welcome a bishop and other priests to Kentucky, and to see a diocese established where they had wandered through a wilderness.

Realizing that to build up the Church in Kentucky and preserve the faith in the hearts of the people, next in importance to bishop and priests come religious teachers to establish and conduct Christian schools, Father Nerinckx had prayed long and earnestly that God would supply this need. Baffled in his first efforts, and perhaps despondent at times, his trust in Divine Providence never wavered, and he persevered in

prayer. Well he knew that religious communities form an important part of the Church, because, by their wonderful organization, they are enabled to carry on all the works of mercy both corporal and spiritual. And well he knew that teaching, instructing the ignorant,—“to enlighten those who sit in darkness, in the shadow of death, and direct their feet in the way of peace,”—is the highest, the noblest, and the most necessary work of mercy; and that, therefore, vocations to the teaching orders of the Church are calls from God to participate in the work of the Apostles who were first commissioned to go and teach all nations.

The repeated call of his Divine Master:—“Feed my lambs, feed my lambs,” was forever ringing in his ears, and, being unable to secure religious teachers from Europe, he prayed without ceasing that God would establish a religious community for the education of the little children entrusted to his care.

What a wonderful answer to his prayer! God raised up a religious order, and has preserved it through a century to perpetuate the good works which he longed and labored to accomplish. What a glorious testimonial to his sanctity that so many generous souls are led by the graces which his prayers obtained to consecrate their lives to the great work of Christian education! In his humility he attributed all to

God, and counted himself a useless servant, yet the little society, which budded forth as a heavenly gift to the Church, was entrusted to him by Divine Providence for guidance, direction, and development.

Prompted by his teaching, zeal, and example, Mary Rhodes started a school to aid him in the work of instructing the children of his flock. Her motives were pure and religious; her aims were to promote Christian education and the salvation of souls. Other young ladies, with like dispositions, were attracted to the work by similar motives. Soon Christina Stuart and Nancy Havern came to assist her. Mutually encouraging each other, their holy aspirations began to center upon life-long consecration of themselves by vow to the service of God in the religious state. What joy must have filled the soul of Father Nerinckx when they came to make known the ardent desire of their hearts and to implore his fatherly direction! With what joy did he announce the good tidings to Bishop Flaget to obtain his approval and blessing upon the new enterprise! Human prudence would have advised against it. What! Start a convent in a dilapidated cabin with a dirt floor without means of support! But worldly wisdom does not plan the works of God. The two holy men were enlightened to recognize the gift of Providence, and never thought of questioning

whether He Who gave would preserve and mature the gift.

Thus, by Episcopal authority the day was appointed, and the fervent postulants were clothed with the religious habit. This definite act marked the foundation of the religious order, the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross, April 25, 1812.

If we look back to that lowly cabin, and to the rude, log Church of St. Charles crowded with curious and deeply interested pioneers attracted by the novelty of the event, we can perhaps form a juster estimate of the sublime oblation that Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart and Nancy Havern made of their lives when they knelt at the feet of Father Nerinckx April 25th, one hundred years ago.

As the bud unfolds leaf by leaf, other events soon followed to complete and reveal the beauty of the first. On that same propitious day Ann Rhodes and Sara Havern were enrolled as postulants, and the new society was temporarily organized, and began community life. These postulants were vested in the religious habit on the 29th of June, and then the society was completely established by a regular election of Mother Ann Rhodes as first Superior. The rule given to them by Father Nerinckx was adopted, and Loretto was founded. Immediately after the election of the first Superior, Nellie Morgan,

who had been teaching a school in the neighborhood of Holy Mary's Church, came, and by her happy disposition brought sunshine into the busy life of the little community.

Postulants came in numbers, and Father Nerinckx had the happiness of seeing the little mustard seed, which he had planted amid so many adverse circumstances, thrive and grow in spite of the hardships, the self-sacrifices, and the poverty to which the Sisters were daily subjected. The zeal and humility of their holy Founder were manifested in his spiritual daughters, and they vied with each other in a holy emulation, each striving to do more than the other in the gigantic task of clearing a pathway through the wilderness and letting the light of God's sunshine into the minds and hearts of men. Self-sacrifice has ever been the key-note of their success.

Father Nerinckx watched over the little community with paternal solicitude. Though engaged in the arduous work of the missions, he would return from time to time to direct and encourage them in their undertaking. In 1816 he went to Rome to obtain the approval of Pius VII for the society that had grown up under his guidance in the wilds of Kentucky. He submitted their rules and constitution to the Holy Father, who placed the new institution under the protection of the Sacred Congregation of the Propa-

ganda. This mission accomplished, Father Nerinckx's spiritual children, who waited for him at Loretto, saw him coming back from the Holy City,—as Moses returned from the Mountain of Sinai,—the light of God beaming in his face, the sanctity of God, like a halo, round about him, and the authority and approval of the Church of God in his hand.

Before his death at St. Genevieve, Missouri, August 12, 1824, he had the happiness of seeing the society grow from one community to seven, six of which were established in Kentucky, and one in the great state of Missouri; and it was while on a visit to this, the youngest of the branch houses of Loretto, that God took him to his reward.

His death was mourned throughout the land.

The Sisters of Loretto will never forget the teaching and example of Father Nerinckx. Their intense devotion to Jesus suffering and Mary sorrowing was inspired by his oft-repeated ejaculation:—"O Suffering Jesus! O Sorrowful Mary!" There is no phase of those sufferings that they have not contemplated, no depths of those sorrows that they have not explored in their manifold labors of one hundred years. Through trials and hardships they have always remembered the motto of their saintly Founder, a motto which was ever upon his lips in all his undertakings, "Do not forsake Provi-

dence, and He will never forsake you." Truly they have placed their abiding trust in Divine Providence at times when all other help seemed to be wanting, with the result that God has blessed their endeavors in the cause of Christian education with a success that has been unsurpassed.

They have been the pioneers in the field of education in Kentucky, ready at all times to come to the assistance of the missionary priest with their well equipped parochial schools and more advanced educational institutions. But, obedient to the call of duty and their superiors, they have not hesitated to go beyond the limits of the state of their origin; and, as "westward the course of empire took its way," taking with it so many souls to be educated and saved, they were dauntless in the face of dangers from wild beasts and savages thronging the prairies and deserts and lurking in the difficult passes of the Rocky Mountains, and were there also in the vanguard of civilization and Christian education. How many of them have yielded up their pure souls in martyr's death in these western wilds is known only in Heaven.

As we cast a hurried glance back over the labors of one hundred years to the day of its foundation, we can readily understand why the Loretto Society should to-day turn the gaze of her children to the beautiful lives of those that

have gone before. What wonder that event is commemorated by grateful thousands, bishops, priests, and people attesting their esteem and veneration for the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross!

Of the one hundred and twenty different institutions of learning they have founded in various parts of this great country, thirty-three have been in Kentucky. Bethlehem Academy stands to-day the oldest surviving branch of the Loretto Mother House. As early as February, 1823, a colony of six Sisters, under the leadership of Mother Agnes Hart, was sent from Loretto to Long Lick, Breckinridge County, where Father Robert Abell had built for them a new house which they called Mount Carmel, and where they labored heroically for seven years. While to-day this house is in a dilapidated condition, "Monastery Farm" and "Monastery Ford" and a faithful, Catholic people are still there to remind the new-comer of the great blessings that were showered upon Breckinridge county in the palmy days of its early history by the Sisters of Loretto.

About Christmas, 1830, with the assistance of Father Charles J. Cecil, they moved this establishment to Hardin County, and in commemoration of the Holy Season called their new home Bethlehem.

Bethlehem. What hallowed memories are

awakened by that word! It brings the voices of the angels floating down the centuries proclaiming the Savior's message of glory to God and peace on earth to men of good will. The Sisters of Bethlehem Academy have caught the spirit of that message, and have been for nearly ninety years singing the song of the Angels to an ignorant and sin-laden world. Who can estimate the amount of good that has been accomplished within these hallowed walls during that long period of time?

When a young lady has finished the course of study at Bethlehem Academy she goes forth well equipped for the battle of life, and able to fill with credit any position that may be assigned to her by Divine Providence, no matter how humble or how exalted it may be. The edification given by the graduates, by their modesty and good example, their fidelity and zeal in the practice of their religion, and by their charity in ministering to and instructing others, has been remarked on all sides.

Think of the number of happy homes that are happy because the mothers of those homes were educated at Bethlehem; the number of bishops, priests, and laymen in every walk of life, who are laboring for the cause of God and the salvation of souls, because they drank in their first lessons in religion at the breasts of their mothers who were educated by the Sisters of Loretto;

and you may be able to form some adequate appreciation of the far-reaching work that is being done here and elsewhere by the spiritual daughters of Father Nerinckx.

Here the missionary has always found a home, from which he was enabled to attend the poor, scattered congregations of Hardin and the neighboring counties; and here, in the little cemetery near by, are treasured the hallowed remains of one of Kentucky's pioneer priests, the Reverend Augustin Degauquier, who resided for nearly thirty years and died at Bethlehem. Here too, the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross, with tender and reverent hands, care for the humble grave of Nancy Havern, the third among the founders of the Order, where her body rests in the shadow of the Academy awaiting the glory of the Resurrection.

Bethlehem Academy, successful from the beginning in her work of education, has grown steadily under the direction of efficient superiors whose excellent characteristics have distinguished them as model religious, whose services have been appreciated wherever they have lived and labored, and whose memory is venerated, not only by the Society, but by all who have known them. Their names are household words in many a happy family, and the young ladies who came within the radius of their careful solicitude loved them as mothers.

Mother Agnes Hart, the first Loretto pupil to join the Society, and the first Superior of Bethlehem, was among the founders of the first branch houses of the Order in Kentucky, and afterwards opened establishments at St. Genevieve, Mo., and at St. Mary's, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where she died in 1839. She was the last Sister buried without a coffin, according to the ancient custom; and when, some years later, the inroads of the river necessitated the disinterment of the bodies of many of the dead, that of Mother Agnes was found entirely petrified. The people of Pine Bluff cherished her memory as that of a saint, and erected a magnificent monument to mark her last resting place in the new cemetery.

Mother Sabina O'Brien, who had been the Mother Superior of the Society, became the next Superior of Bethlehem, where she remained until her death. Of her Bishop Flaget wrote: "Mother Sabina has won all hearts; she has filled them with a holy joy. The neighbors at Bethlehem are enchanted with her manners."

Mother Generose Mattingly, honored by being the last to receive the religious habit in Kentucky from the hands of Father Nerinckx, the first to hold the office of Superior of the Society by Episcopal appointment, and the first to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of her life in religion, edified the Sisters and pupils of

Bethlehem Academy by her many virtues in their midst for fifty consecutive years.

The mere mention of the names of Bertha Bowlds, Sophronia Hagan, Liberata Pike, Domitilla Furlong, and Kevin Coffey is sufficient to call to mind the virtues and perfections of the valiant woman described in the inspired Word of God. These and others have served Bethlehem in the capacity of Superiors for many years; and last, but not least, the present Mother Christina who has made beautiful Bethlehem still more beautiful and attractive by the modern touch she has given the ancient place during the past few years.

“By their fruits you shall know them.” These humble Sisters, following in the footsteps of their saintly Founder, have not sent a crier to proclaim their heroic deeds to the world, but, for a hundred years, have silently gone about the performance of their daily duties in the most perfect manner possible, leaving the result to be determined by Almighty God. The greatest works of nature and of nature's God are done in silence. Who hears the planets revolving in space? the life and growth that are producing such wonderful results everywhere about us? The greatest works of men are also done in silence. The greatest inventions are, as a rule, the result of years of silent labor, and we hardly know the names of the inventors,

yet they are among the heroes of the world, for they have left great gifts to humanity.

What, then, must be said of the grand army of the world's consecrated Christian teachers, who have sacrificed home and country and all that the world holds dear, to labor in secret behind the walls of a schoolroom, to bring the light of God's truth and love into the minds and hearts of the little ones so dear to our Blessed Lord? Surely here are the real heroes and heroines before whom all others grow dim and lose their luster. The world in its bustle and money-getting is too busy to take note of them, but they are the real "power behind the throne," and are continually sending forth others of heroic mold into the world to disperse the mists of ignorance and prejudice from the minds of men.

May God grant that the work, begun by the Founders of the Loretto Society, and prosecuted so successfully for one hundred years, may be continued till the great day of His second coming, Who taught that "they who instruct others unto justice shall shine as stars for all eternity."

LORETTO AND ITS HISTORY

VERY REV. M. S. RYAN, C.M., D.D., PRESIDENT
OF THE KENRICK SEMINARY.

AT ST. LOUIS, MO., APRIL 25, 1912.

“And this day shall be a memorial unto you, and you shall keep it a feast unto the Lord.”—Exod. xii, 14.

On the twenty-fifth day of April, 1812, in the little log church of St. Charles, in Kentucky, Father Nerinckx performed the ceremony of religious reception for Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart and Ann Havern, and the corner-stone of Loretto's foundation was laid. Thus began a luminous page in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States. One hundred years is a long span of life. One hundred years is but a moment. Which is true? Both are true. One hundred years of labor for things that perish — what is it, but the anguished dream of a moment? What means it but laurels that fade and a name that is written on water? But one hundred years for God, such as Loretto has given, ah! it is a long span of life, for it reaches out into eternity.

Much happens from dawn to sunset of an ordinary day. Much that is of infinite impor-

tance. By what proportion, then, shall we find the value of the happenings of a hundred years, with their many circling months and their myriads of days? Only in eternity can the problem be solved; only the Creator can express the relation of the divine assistance to the creature's labor. To God be all glory!

All history, sacred and profane, opens with the heroic period. The philosophy of history requires that it should be so. The founders of society, the pioneers of faith and civilization must be heroes. Weak, timid souls can have no part in the work. It requires too much self-denial, too much strength of heart and will, too much confidence in a brilliant future as contrasted with present cheerlessness, for any but the bravest souls. Such were Father Nerinckx and the early Sisters who laid the foundations of the Loretto Society. They laid them broad and deep. Theirs are names that should be pronounced with reverence by all American Catholics.

The Institute of Loretto, venerable in its century of existence, has its origin in the thought of one greatly esteemed, in his time and place, by men of lofty mind. Loretto's early years bore the stamp of his greatness. The work of Father Nerinckx, and still more his character, must make an eloquent appeal to every noble priestly soul, to every honorable, manly heart; in his

fidelity to the onerous duties of a pioneer missionary in Kentucky and in his unselfish devotedness to the Loretto Community he had instituted, we discover the nobility and the tenderness of the true pastor of souls, and the highmindedness of the true religious founder.

The Rev. Charles Nerinckx was born in Belgium, October 2, 1761. The early chapters of his life story we must pass over in silence. He was ordained priest November 4, 1785. In Belgium he exercised the holy ministry for well nigh twenty years and under the most untoward circumstances, owing to the disturbed conditions of Church and State incident to the French Revolution. In the year 1804 Father Nerinckx came to America. The first priest who set foot on Kentucky soil, the Rev. Charles Whelan, an Irish Franciscan, commenced his labors in 1787. Six years later, the first priest ever ordained in the United States, the Apostle of Kentucky, the Rev. Stephen Theodore Badin, entered upon his missionary career. In 1805 when Father Nerinckx reached Kentucky, there were only three priests in the entire Middle West — Father Badin in Kentucky, Father Olivier at Prairie du Rocher, in Illinois, and Father Richard at Detroit, Michigan. His life story enables us to recall him as the humble, unselfish, zealous priest, the persuasive preacher, a fearless missionary among strange people, a successful

builder of many churches, an inspired apostle to the ignorant and unbelieving.

Nothing in the whole career of Father Nerinckx showed forth so clearly the range of his vision and the courage of his soul as his resolve to found in the wilderness two communities, one for young women, the other for young men, both to grow with the growth of the Middle West and to instill into it the principles of knowledge and religion, which are ever the essential conditions of progress and prosperity. Father Nerinckx foresaw the future; he built for the future. Through untoward circumstances his religious brotherhood failed to realize the expectations of the founder. His community of women was blessed with success; it has lived and grown and flourished; it is the Loretto of to-day.

As a rule we do not look for religious vocations among people struggling in a wilderness and hampered with the difficulties incident to the rudimentary stages of society. They usually manifest themselves in thoroughly organized communities where the beauties of God's house can be leisurely studied and taken to heart and where the faint whisperings of grace may not be drowned amid the all-engrossing cares of every-day life. Father Nerinckx had the keen insight of a Saint. He understood his people. He felt sure that among the children of those whose faith, hope

and charity showed such wonderful life, he would surely find some called by God to the religious life. His faith was rewarded.

And who that has not seen the archives of Heaven can tell what mighty and enduring work has been accomplished during these first one hundred years by the Sisterhood of Loretto. The glory they gave the Most High will never be known by angels or men until the day of reckoning, when the trumpet shall sound and the seal be broken, and the book shall be opened in the Valley of Judgment.

If we had no historical fact to prove it we might fairly conjecture that Father Nerinckx was bitterly opposed in everything he undertook for the glory of God and the service of religion. For it is a fact that admits of no exception, that never yet has a good work been attempted that has not been in its very inception violently thwarted and opposed by the wise and good. The work of Father Nerinckx was no exception. He had no sooner laid the foundation of his great Order than immediately a storm was raised around him, terrific in intensity and promising, alas, to be successful in its attempts at destruction. He was called a visionary. And then, to crown all, behold not only have the rules of his Sisterhood been changed for the worse without his consent, but practically he is driven from the scene of his labors.

When after penning a letter of farewell, on that sad day, June 16, 1824, he left his beloved daughters, they felt all happiness swept from their hearts. Father Nerinckx had left them — no, his fatherly interest was never withdrawn from Loretto.

An humble tribute of devout admiration is the only privilege we now venture to exercise as, glancing beyond the limits of a century, we tender our respectful greetings to the saintly Nerinckx, so largely instrumental in the foundation and success we are commemorating.

What shall we say of the early Superioresses and Sisters of Loretto? Of Mother Anne Rhodes, Mother Mary Rhodes, Mother Benedicta Fenwick, Mother Generose Mattingly and Mother Berlindes Downs? These and countless others, too, deserve to be recalled. Theirs was the inspiration to which we may trace the prosperous issue of a hundred years. Proudly we cherish the thought that a fame undying surrounds these names all so truly revered, although no earthly balance can justly weigh their generous devotedness and no human judgment decide their merit.

The growth of religious orders in newly settled countries is naturally attended by hardship and adventure. And the experiences of the Loretto Sisterhood in this country are no ex-

ception to the rule. Some of these experiences are more or less tragical, some are amusing, and nearly all are interesting, not only in themselves, but on account of the fortitude, patience and tact with which they have been met by the Sisterhood. The early adversities of Loretto, like winds sweeping over some majestic palm, have had no other effect on the whole than to strengthen its foundations and perfect its symmetry.

The annalist of Loretto tells a beautiful and dramatic story: how house after house was established, often only cabins of logs; the nuns were often without food; their household accommodations of the poorest, and there were long journeys for new foundations. Indians are met with here and there and one poor little Sister dies of fright and is buried somewhere out on the lonely prairie, no one knows where. Wherever they went a trail of fire seemed to pursue them. It is marvelous how many of their houses were a prey to disastrous conflagrations in those early days. But such losses only added new courage. Other establishments were begun, each year seeming to add a new building to their possessions or to develop those already built until now, as we turn the leaves of the attractive history, we are amazed to see how after a lapse of only a hundred years, such splendid institutions of learning could have grown from the little

log hut where Nancy Havern, Christina Stuart and Mary Rhodes started their work.

The Sisters of Loretto hold in their charge to-day fifty schools and academies spread over two Archdioceses and eighteen dioceses of the Middle West and West.

The mission assigned to Loretto by Father Nerinckx and faithfully and successfully carried out by the Sisterhood is that of Christian education. And surely I do not exaggerate when I say that the guardianship and fulfillment of this sacred trust, committed to the children of Loretto are not only the supreme honor of the Sisterhood, but a responsibility which demands on their part zeal, fidelity, discretion and intelligence commensurate with so great a vocation and so sublime a trust.

The Church is the teacher of truth. By divine appointment it holds in its keeping the truths which Christ brought upon earth and that mark out the way to eternal salvation. The commission given to it was: "Teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The Church is always the teacher of religious truth; but frequently it is also the teacher of secular knowledge. The glorious record of the Church as teacher of knowledge, religious and secular, the annals of nineteen hundred years will not allow us to forget.

To its Sisterhoods the Church commits a very large part of its educational work; and so effectively do they perform their task that they rank among the Church's choicest and most valuable agencies. Need we wonder, then, when the founder of Loretto, Father Nerinckx, proposed to his children to consecrate themselves entirely to God, to dedicate themselves heart and soul to His service and glory, to live with Him and for Him, to do His work and to trust in Him for their reward, they were bidden to take upon themselves the task of Christian education? For it is God's own task — the building up of souls in His own image and likeness; nothing is more worthy of the daughter of Christ than the work of Christian education, nothing more worthy of her holy vocation, nothing that bears richer fruitage in time and in eternity.

Never before was there such need of the Sisterhoods of the Church in the work of education as there is to-day. Never was there a time in the history of the world when education was so universal, never a time when education and methods of education were so widely discussed. Unfortunately, in the ardor for education the tendency of the world is to think only of mind and to overlook the will and the conscience. Experience shows that such a tendency is inimical to the moral welfare of the child and opposed to the true idea of a Christian education. Mean-

while, Loretto does its part by giving a full and adequate formation of mind and heart to the children who frequent its schools, and by holding up to the country the ideals and principles that should rule true education. Beautiful, then, and sublime is the work of Loretto and surely the ecclesiastical historian is not mistaken who declares that Loretto has during a century of life proven true to her appointed mission.

In this centennial year when the garnered memories of a whole century and a whole community are recalled, it is not becoming to pass over in silence things of special interest to the friends of Loretto in St. Louis.

Missouri is the second home of the Loretines. In response to the request of Bishop Dubourg of St. Louis, twelve Sisters, with Sister Joanna Miles as Superior, left Loretto May 12, 1823, to open a school in Perry county, Missouri. We are told that not even the founders in the first cabin convent of Kentucky endured the misery and privation known by this band of valiant souls. The poverty of their new home suggested the stable of the Nativity, and they called it Bethlehem. Whilst the Sisters here experienced severe trials and hardships, yet, Bethlehem, the eldest sister of the houses beyond Loretto's native state, is dear to every Loretine, though but the memory of it now remains.

The St. Louis Loretto Academy was erected

in 1874 at Jefferson Avenue and Pine Street. Immediate success crowned its efforts. A change in location becoming desirable the present handsome Academy was erected on Lafayette Avenue. This St. Louis Loretto Academy has stood in the forefront of Catholic educational establishments in St. Louis and its vicinity. It has been an important factor in the education of the Catholic womanhood of St. Louis. Throughout the existence of this well beloved institution it has been the aim of the Sisters in charge to inculcate lofty ideals as well as to develop brilliant intellects. Hence the training given here is that which produces the woman fitted alike for society, the home or the cloister.

Do you seek her children? Then look you in society for the ideal woman, in the home for the ideal mother, in the convent for the ideal nun, and there shall you find the daughters of Loretto Academy of St. Louis marked for their intellectual attainments, lofty ideals, sterling character and active faith, loyal ever in weal and woe to the safe traditions of their Alma Mater. The St. Louis Academy has been a wellspring of Catholic education in this Archdiocese for well nigh forty years. Thousands of young women have drunk at this fountain. That many will still come to slake their thirst at this spring is not only a hope but a certainty, for the Archbishop of the Church of St. Louis

is here to-day to show his interest in its welfare and to bid it continue to discharge its limpid waters.

If, then, I have drawn a faithful, though faint, portrait of Loretto and its history; if I have rightly interpreted its spirit, if I have, though imperfectly, traced the rise of the community from the first streaks of dawn in the east through gloom and tempest to the unclouded zenith of this centennial year, we may now fitly stand aside: its noonday splendor proclaims itself.

The glory of the past is but an earnest of what yet will be accomplished through the agency of this community. The Sisters, ever facing forward, placing their trust always in Him Who has safely guided them through the storms and perils of a century, ever inspired by the deeds of their predecessors, shall continue their labors in the front rank of Catholic educators. With the work of the past as an incentive, with saintly intercessors before the throne of mercy, the future of this Sisterhood shall be as wealthy in noble and inspiring works of heroism and charity as has been the century which now is history.

CENTENNIAL ORATION

VERY REV. JAMES T. WALSH, LL.D.

FOUNDATION DAY AT KANSAS CITY, MO.

One hundred years ago to-day three pious young women in whose hearts glowed the flame of love for God and fellow creatures, received from a pioneer priest, Reverend Father Nerinckx, the holy habit of a spouse of the Redeemer, having pronounced the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. By these vows they consecrated their lives and the lives of their successors, in the community then born to the service of God, to the sacred cause of Christian education. The community, that day only three, now numbers in the flesh several hundred whose best endeavors are spent for education, while many devoted souls have already gone to their eternal reward.

Charles Nerinckx, a child of pious parents, was born in Belgium in the year 1761. Ordained to the holy priesthood in 1785, he labored among the people of his native land during the exciting times of the French Revolution in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Like many others he refused to bind his conscience

with the irreligious oath of the atheistic propaganda, and by his refusal became an object of their hatred. They sought to cast him into prison, but in the darkness of the night he sought safety from their fury, and kind friends concealed him from the prying eyes of the enemy.

Obliged to leave his native land he turned toward America and found a welcome for his services among the people then under the spiritual jurisdiction and guidance of the shepherd, Bishop Carroll.

Reaching America, he spent some time with the Fathers of the Society of Jesus at Georgetown, where he acquired a working knowledge of the English language, and where also he learned something of the habits and customs of the people. He realized, as a wise man must, that a foreign tongue, foreign habits and foreign customs, tend to repel rather than to draw the people. Bishop Carroll then sent him to the frontier of civilization which at that time was in the regions of Kentucky.

This journey from Maryland to Kentucky was one of hardships and dangers, as history vividly mentions. A warm welcome was given him by the people upon his arrival. They looked upon him as a man sent from God to bring to them the comforts of Bethlehem, the consolations of Calvary and the triumphs of Thabor. He in-

structed the young, and refreshed the memories of the old, in the doctrines of Faith. He baptized many, heard confessions, broke the Bread of Life to all. He knew full well all his efforts would be nearly fruitless, unless the growing ones of this new country received the advantages of a practical Christian education.

His soul's desire was for schools, while his most strenuous ambition was to make his desire a reality. The day came, and his soul rejoiced. After many disappointments his ambition was realized on that day when a few children with Mary Rhodes as teacher entered the door of the lowly log cabin, and the first session of school work began.

Success crowned their humble beginning and the school's reputation grew, attracting other children. Christina Stuart came to the assistance of Miss Rhodes, and later on we find another teacher, Nancy Havern, added to the faculty. Souls devoting the best and sweetest years of life to this sacred cause of education, could not but win special recognition from Heaven, and this recognition manifested itself by the holy desire to consecrate their lives more thoroughly in the service of God, and the children of the Church, by binding by sacred vow their hearts, their souls, and their minds to the Heart of the Master.

This wish made known to Father Nerinckx,

he sought the approbation of the bishop which was willingly granted, and on the twenty-fifth of April in the year eighteen hundred and twelve, the society of the Sisters of Mary at the Foot of the Cross first saw the light of day.

One hundred years ago to-day this American teaching order was established. A day sacred to the Sisters, to the people, to the Church in America. We are present in this beautiful chapel, the offspring of the little log cabin of one hundred years ago, to congratulate this community and through them their Sisters everywhere, and we bear willing testimony to their success.

Success has come to the Loretto Sisters in the work of their vocation, of imparting a Christian education, and the order remains true to the primary purpose of its organization: Christian education.

For a century the Sisters of Loretto have been instilling into the minds of their pupils a knowledge of the material, temporal life, so essential to success, while at the same time infusing into the heart a love for God without which there is no happiness in this life nor glory in the next. Knowledge of life and love of God must go together. The one must be permeated with the other. Give material knowledge alone and you lead the soul to the edge of a precipice, another step and it falls to destruction.

Education is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by God on the human race. Education, however, must be twofold in development — development of the mind and of the heart. To neglect moral development is to invite spiritual destruction.

Nowhere may we find opportunity for acquiring to better advantage moral education than in those schools, where men and women labor for love of God rather than for the money of the realm. The greatest of all lessons is that given to us by the lips of Him who came on earth for our salvation, and in whom all our hopes are centered.

That lesson teaches us the dignity, power and authority of God, and our relationship to Him. It teaches us to say "Our Father who art in Heaven," where we hope to join Him after a temporal life of child-like simplicity, confidence and obedience.

In filial love we seek to make Our Father's kingdom abound upon earth by inspiring all humanity to know God, to love God and to serve God, by doing His Will upon earth as it is done in Heaven. With a full understanding that of ourselves we can do nothing, we pray God to "give us our daily bread," not alone the material bread for the support of the body but also the spiritual food for the strength of the soul. In acknowledgment of His attribute of justice we

seek pardon for human frailties in that measure only in which we accord to others forgiveness for the faults committed against us.

Human power only is ours, such power unassisted is unable to cope with temptation against the soul, so we ask help of Our Father to "lead us not into temptation but to deliver us" from the evils that beset us. This is practical Christian education, and such, for one hundred years, has been the teaching of the society whose Jubilee we enjoy to-day.

We recognize in their work the virtues of their great Founder. Holy Scripture tells us to look for a man's standing, in the nature of his work—"by their fruits you shall know them." The greatest of the many fruits of Father Nerinckx is the Society of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross.

One hundred years have they labored amidst worldly privations and affluence, in log cabin, and splendid Academy, and always have they been mindful of that salutary advice and counsel of their Spiritual Father, "Never forsake Providence, and Providence will never forsake you."

On occasions such as this it is customary to extend congratulations,—we do so. On occasions such as this it is proper to acknowledge work well done,—we do so. On occasions such as this it is appropriate to wish continued success,—we do so. On occasions such as this cus-

tom and appreciation, suggests the wish "Ad multos annos," but to-day recognizing, Sisters of Loretto, the high standard of excellence reached by you in the love labor of Christian education and judging the future by the past, we prophesy for you greater, grander success, and so we say not only "Ad multos annos" but "Ad finem temporis."

FATHER NERINCKX

THE REV. HENRY S. SPALDING, S. J.

PRESIDENT OF LAYOLA UNIVERSITY.

AT LORETTO, KENTUCKY, MAY 22, 1912.

“Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.”—Mat. xxviii, 20.

We read in the Old Testament, in the first book of Josue, that, when the law giver and liberator of God's chosen people was called to his reward, another valiant leader was given to the Israelites, and God said to Josue: “Behold I command thee take courage and be strong. Fear not and be not dismayed; because the Lord, thy God is with thee in all things whatsoever thou shalt go to” (Josue i, 9). This people was to possess the Promised Land, not by the power of arms, but because they had with them the might of God. When they came to the strong city of Jericho and prepared to storm and capture it, when they wished to show their prowess and bravery, God forbade them to draw a sword or strike a blow. He, the Almighty, would prove to them that His power and not their strength of arm would give to them this last city which opposed them in taking

possession of the Promised Land. By His command the army marched around the walls of Jericho on six successive days, on the seventh day as they resumed their march, amidst the sound of trumpets and cries of soldiers, the walls of the doomed city fell,—fell before the power of God, fell in the presence of God's people, fell as a reward of the faith of Israel, and Israel entered in and possessed the spoils of the enemy.

When the old law had passed away, when types had given place to realities, when the sacrifices of Sion had yielded to the sacrifice of Calvary, when Christ sent forth His Apostles to bear the tidings of His teachings to every nation of the world, then, too, as in the old dispensation, did God promise to abide with his people. "Behold, I am with you," said the Master to His Apostles, "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Truly, if God's chosen people needed the special help and guidance in the Old Law and under a less perfect dispensation, they needed it far more in the dispensation of grace, for great indeed was the task which the Founder required of His Apostles and His Church.

Let us pause for a moment to consider this wonderful task set before the Church. She was to endure the persecutions of Jew and Gentile; her battles were to be fought in the synagogue

and the pagan temple; she was to rebuke the imperfect law of the past and to crush the heathen superstition, the immoral practices, the gross vices of paganism. She was to seek refuge in the chill underworld of the Catacombs, to hear the cries calling for her blood, to feel the lash, and nails, and ax of the persecutor;—gashed and bleeding and supplicating she was to shrink from the hand that would slay her. Then with a Constantine she was to come forth with head erect and heart that failed not. Then she filled the cities with her churches, the deserts with her anchorites and hermits, the mountain sides with her convents and monasteries. She went out to meet the invading nations when arms could no longer withstand them, she sent her missionaries to the forests of Germany, the bleaker lands of the north, and the islands of the west. Her priests went with the discoverers of the new world, with the explorers of the vast continent, with those who penetrated into the unknown regions of the east. Why did this Church succeed? Why did her priests and bishops never falter in their work? Because they had trust in God and remembered that promise of the Master: “Behold I am with you all times even to the consummation of the world.”

There came a time in the history of the Church in this country when she needed the sus-

taining hand of God, as she needed it in past centuries. But, as in the past, God was faithful to His promise, and raised up devoted men and women to do battle in His service.

I know that I am addressing many who can trace their families back to the landing of the Ark and the Dove, to the families who settled amidst the estuaries and bays of the Chesapeake, to the Catholic families of Catholic Maryland. It would, therefore, be a great pleasure for me to dwell upon the history of this hallowed sanctuary. It has been my business to stand with uncovered head beneath the shaft that marks the site of old Saint Mary's City in Maryland, and I have read with honest pride of this home of religious liberty. Prejudice and falsehood have tried in vain to rob the Catholics of Maryland of the honor of being the founders of religious liberty in this land; but that claim is true. History has given its verdict and Maryland has carved that verdict in stone at the foot of the monument at old St. Mary's; "Erected on the site of the old mulberry tree under which the first colonists of Maryland assembled to establish a government, where the persecuted and oppressed of every creed and every clime might repose in peace and security, adore their common God, and enjoy the priceless blessings of Civil and religious liberty." Maryland, Catholic Maryland! The Maryland from which our

fathers came, set an example of religious liberty to all lands and all times. She was repaid with ingratitude, with war and plunder, with political disfranchisement, with privation of that very religious liberty which she had so generously given to others. The Puritan, who came as a stranger and an exile from Virginia, was received as a brother by the Catholics of Maryland; he turned a traitor to those who had befriended him. He enacted laws by which the Catholics of Maryland could not worship God as they would in the very land which they had made a religious asylum, could not be educated at home and were fined if they went abroad; could not vote in the province where they had given political equality to the stranger. Glory! eternal glory to the Catholics of Maryland! Shame to the traitors who deprived these Maryland Catholics of their religious and political freedom!

When Israel was oppressed in Egypt and the cry of God's people went up to heaven, that prayer was heard and God lead His people into another land. So, too, did the Catholics of Maryland look beyond the mountains to the west for a refuge and a sanctuary. But before the project could be carried out the persecutions of Maryland were relaxed, and men's minds turned to the great struggle of the American Revolution. When that war was fought and won, and political equality was guaranteed, the Catholics of Mary-

land still looked towards the west where chances seemed brighter in the new lands.

The exodus of the Catholics from Maryland to Kentucky began in 1785, and in a few years a Catholic community sprung up in and around the land where we are now assembled. Be it said to the glory of the first Catholics of Kentucky that they asked not where lands were richest, where prospects were brightest; but they asked for a settlement where there was a Catholic priest, for a place where they could serve God, assist at Mass, and know that their children would receive a Catholic education. God was good and merciful to this people. He sent them zealous priests. He sent them a Whelan, a De Rohan, a Fournier, a Badin, a Guillet with his monks of La Trappe, the Dominicans, Fenwick, Wilson and others, a Flaget and David,—and God in His providence sent the zealous, the indomitable, the saintly Nerinckx.

There is one thing for which we Catholics of Kentucky must be thankful, namely, that the early annals of the Church in this state have been written copiously and by able minds. We have the fullest details of the lives of the early missionaries. I believe that no other state in the union has so preserved and published its records. These records were cherished not through family pride and distinction, but because the lives and deeds of these heroic men were sacred to

the people. It is because the life of Father Nerinckx has been so fully written and is so well-known to those who listen to me that I can omit details and dwell upon more salient features of his life.

This apostle of Kentucky was born in 1761 at a time when both Europe and America were on the verge of political chaos; when the Bourbon rulers had degenerated from their former glory, when Voltaire, the forerunner of the Jacobins, was preparing the way for the French Revolution, when the English colonies were still smarting under the defeat of Braddock, when the Church of God was girding herself for terrible ordeals in both continents. In the English colonies of America the Church of God lay stricken, priests were hunted in the streets of Boston; Catholics hid away from the light in New York and Philadelphia, they were disfranchised in Maryland.

Yet God was preparing apostles to send them forth. He was raising up leaders to guide his people. I need not dwell at length upon the family of Father Nerinckx in the quaint old Belgium town, nor on the lives of other members of the family who devoted themselves to the service of God. He made his course of Philosophy at the famous old University of Louvain and in the fall of 1781 entered the Seminary of Mechlin. Ordained 1785 he at once, of his own

choice, began an apostolate among the poor of the city. Though fitted by knowledge and powers of eloquence to fill the more honorable pulpits of the city, he preferred the humbler work. Thus did he labor until 1794 when he was called to Everberg — Meerbeke in the Province of Brabant.

Like many of his fellow workers he was driven from his native land by the soldiery of the French Revolution, and in 1797 we find him in a hospital at Dendermonde where he fled for protection. Here he worked among the stricken soldiers and other sufferers. When quiet was restored, he knew not where to turn. He feared no danger, but he sought for a place where his spiritual ministrations would bear most fruit. His decision was not hastily made; we have from his own pen the motives of his choice of America. He considered the dangers of perversion at home, the obstacles in his way, the hopes held out by the missions across the waters. He weighed well the dangers and difficulties of the mission; he had not the means, or perhaps the health or inclination for such work. But the answer was, that God would be with those strong of heart and faith, that God would supply means to the willing and trusting worker, that He would raise up others to take his place in his native country.

Recommended by the Princess Gallitzin to

Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, he thus wrote to that Prelate. "I have determined to come to you, not to seek promotion or comfort, which, generously proffered in my native land, I refused without regret; but that I may save my own soul, and work a little for the spiritual welfare of my neighbor, if my superiors deem proper. My secondary motive is to encourage others, more able than I am, and who, because of the sad state of religion in Belgium, have nothing to do, to come also to the missions, and there exercise their well-known zeal."

In 1804 we find Father Nerinckx at Georgetown College studying English and otherwise preparing himself for the missions of Kentucky; and in the following year he was at his post — amidst the scenes and people to whom he was to give the rest of his life. With his own hands he built his log cabin, calling it his palace.

Priests of this Diocese of Louisville, you who have come to do honor to this great servant of God, if ever you are tempted in the work of the Master to complain of the path which Providence has marked out for you, to think that your lot in life is hard, kneel with reverence in the little chapel near by. See the cramped, rough, dingy log cabin, the abode of this renowned missionary priest. Here he slept upon his hard bed, and prayed by the flickering light of his tallow candle. Happy he, as those who abode in true

palaces, because his home was like the birth-place of his Master. From this humble home as his headquarters the zealous priest visited the scattered settlements during his first year of missionary work. Then, with the venerable Father Badin he extended the field of his labor across the Ohio; for in the spring of 1806 we find them at Post Vincennes. Writing in the London Miscellany in 1826 Father Badin bore this testimony of the career of his fellow laborer:

“Father Nerinckx’s courage was unequalled. He feared no difficulties, and was appalled by no dangers. Through rain and storms; through snows and ice; over roads rendered almost impassable by the mud; over streams swollen by the rains, or frozen by the cold; by day and by night, in winter and summer, he might be seen traversing all parts of Kentucky in the discharge of his laborious duties. Far from shunning, he seemed even to seek hardships and dangers.

“He crossed wilderness districts, swam rivers, slept in the woods among the wild beasts; and, while undergoing all this, he was in the habit of fasting and of voluntarily mortifying himself in many other ways. His courage and vigor seemed to increase with the labors and privations he had to endure. As his courage, so neither did his cheerfulness, ever abandon him. He seldom laughed or even smiled; but there was withal an air of contentment and cheerfulness

about him which greatly qualified the natural austerity of his countenance and manners. He could, like the great Apostle, make himself 'all to all, to gain all to Christ.' He appeared even more at home in the cabin of the humblest citizen, or in the hut of the poor negro, than in the more pretending mansions of the wealthy.

"He was averse to giving trouble to others, especially to the poor. Often, when he arrived at a house in the night, he attended to his own horse, and took a brief repose in the stable, or in some out-house; and when the inmates of the house arose next morning, they frequently perceived him already up, and saying his office, or making his meditation. He made it an invariable rule never to miss an appointment whenever it was at all possible to keep it. He often arrived at a distant station early in the morning, after having ridden during all the previous night. On these occasions, he heard confessions, taught catechism, gave instructions and said Mass for the people generally after noon; and he seldom broke his fast until three or four o'clock in the evening.

"God blessed his labors with fruits so abundant and permanent as to console him for all his toils and privations. He witnessed a flourishing Church growing up around him, in what had recently been a wilderness, inhabited only by fierce, wild beasts and untamable sav-

ages. He saw, in the virtues of his scattered flock, a revival of those which had rendered so illustrious the Christians of the first ages of the Church. The results of his labors prove how much one good man, with the blessing of God, can achieve by his single efforts, prompted by the lofty motive of the Divine glory, and directed with simplicity of heart to one noble end."

Father Nerinckx at once saw that more workers were needed for the harvest. His views like his zeal were broad and far sighted. He saw that the west was too far distant to depend upon the east, that not only priests, but even a Bishop was needed. In letters still extant he recommended Father Badin for the new see; but the latter went in person to Baltimore and pleaded for the consecration of the distinguished Sulpician Flaget.

What a day of spiritual joy it must have been for Father Nerinckx to welcome the newly consecrated Bishop at Bardstown on June 4, 1811, and to escort him to St. Stephen's. What a happiness and a privilege to be the companion of the Bishop in his log cabin, the episcopal palace in the wilderness. Here is the cradle of Catholicity in Kentucky! We are as proud of its humble beginnings as we are of the rude crib at Bethlehem. We call this log residence a palace for it was rich and kingly; rich with the riches

of virtue and heroism, and kingly in its imitation of the abode of the King of kings.

In reading the annals of the early history of Catholicity in Kentucky one is impressed by the fact of the completeness of the ecclesiastical organizations. Within a few years there grew up a perfectly developed diocese. The Cathedral at Bardstown, the diocesan seminary, convent schools and colleges, religious communities of men and women — everything to make this western diocese a harmonious and self-perpetuating part of the Church. It is to be said to the honor of Father Nerinckx that he bore more than his part in the upbuilding of this western diocese. Even before the advent of the Bishop he had looked for a means of educating the children; for he knew well that the Church could not prosper and faith be preserved unless the children were instructed. And this brings us to the crowning glory of his life, the founding of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross.

Not only have members of many religious orders and congregations come to the United States from Europe, but our country can point with pride to congregations of men and women founded within the land. Yet when the history of all these orders and congregations has been written, there will stand prominently among the religious institutions of this country one that was first in its foundation, the Sisters of Loretto. I

know, Venerable Sisters of this community, that you have not assembled here to listen to any words of fulsome praise, that you prefer to have your good deeds written in the book of life, and not held up to the laudation of man; yet truth and justice bid me recall the fact that your community has this distinction of being the first to be founded on American soil. In praising the virtues of the devoted women who first banded together to form this community, I am at the same time praising the faith and piety of the early Catholic homes in Kentucky, the names of Rhodes, and Stuart, and Havern. From such families did God choose those who were to be the humble beginning of the first sisterhood in this country. I admire those early postulants who would not have nuns come from Europe to teach them the spirit of the religious life, but who, under their saintly founder, wished to give a spirit to a religious community,—a spirit directed by the Spirit of Truth, and still a spirit all its own.

When a Saint Francis began his life of lowliness, little did he dream of the vast army that would follow him in this severe way of evangelical poverty. So it has been with most of the works of the Church, for those who inaugurated them did not think in their humility that these works could become great. It was the wish of the Founder and the first postulants at Loretto

to sanctify their own lives, and at the same time to instruct the children of the immediate neighborhood; but God, who inspired and directed the work, had other designs. The good seed was to spread like the mustard seed of the Gospel and to become a tree. Where the hunter blazed the trail, where the western settler built his cabin, by the banks of the Mississippi and the mountain side of Denver, where the Osage Indian camped in Kansas, and the miner delved in New Mexico, where there were children of the Faith to be instructed,—went the daughters of Loretto. During the century that has passed many laborers indeed have been called into the field of Catholic works of charity; but to the daughters of Loretto, to the foundation of Father Nerinckx, must be given the honor of being the first American Sisterhood to enlist in the work of the Master.

In his far sighted zeal Father Nerinckx looked to the wants of the future. We find him in 1816 visiting his native land in the interests of the infant Church of Kentucky. We find him in Rome kneeling before the Vicar of Christ, Pius VII; but on his way he had paused and prayed at Loretto, prayed for his own Loretto in the far away virgin forests of Kentucky. But what gave him the greatest pleasure at Rome was the assurance that his newly founded congregation would be approved, and that the documents would reach him in Belgium before his departure

for America. At his Belgium home he received a long letter from Bishop Flaget that his spiritual daughters were prospering and that new recruits had entered the community.

It was during this visit to Europe that Father Nerinckx appealed to his countrymen for aid; an appeal that was generously answered by the faithful of Belgium. Kentucky can never repay his and their donations. His object was to beautify the churches of God and to make the services respected and loved. As he gathered, so he gave; not only to his own church and community, but to other churches, to the Monks, the Dominicans, to the Cathedral at Bardstown. Many a time as an acolyte after extinguishing the candles have I stood before the high altar in old St. Joseph's, Bardstown, and in the mystic glow of the sanctuary light have looked at one of those works of art, the generous gift of Father Nerinckx to that venerable Cathedral Church. Well might I have exclaimed: "How beautiful are thy tabernacles, Oh! Jacob, and thy tents, Oh! Israel. (Numbers, 24, 5.) Perhaps, under God, it was the inspiration of one of those moments that turned my thoughts to the priesthood.

As representing the Jesuit Fathers of the middle west I take this occasion to acknowledge our debt of gratitude to Father Nerinckx, for on his return to America he brought with him many

who were to build up the Missouri Province of the Society of Jesus, a Vandavelde and Vanquickenborne. It was during his second visit, however, that he was accompanied by the greater number of those who were under God to be the real founders of the educational institutions of the Jesuits in the west,—Verhaegen, Desmet, Verrydt, Van Asshe and others, to be followed later by such apostles as Smarius and Damen. How wonderful indeed was the zeal of this man of God! Founding a congregation of women, encouraging the monks to settle in Kentucky, securing property to establish a teaching brotherhood, assisting the Jesuits to undertake the mission work farther west.

Yet, with all this knowledge of the wants of the Church, Father Nerinckx shrank from positions of honor and trust. He insisted that Bishop Flaget remain the superior of the community at Loretto; only during the absence of the Bishop on his visitations would the good man take the management of the affairs of the Society which he had founded.

There was no one whom Our Divine Lord loved more than His own Mother, the Mother of God; and yet her sorrows have been compared to the ocean that knows no limit. Here is the mystery of suffering, the mystery of dereliction. Whom God loves most, God has been pleased to bring closest to His Cross. When Christ

appeared in a vision before St. Catherine holding in one hand a crown of roses and in the other a crown of thorns, and asked the saint to choose, in her longing to be like the Master, she grasped the crown of thorns, and pressed it on her head. When the Canadian missionary Breboeuf knelt in prayer and asked for suffering, there appeared before him the vision of the many crosses. Which would he carry? which would he choose? In his eagerness for suffering he reached out and grasped them all. So it was with the saints; so it was with the saintly Father Nerinckx. God in His providence laid a heavy cross upon his shoulders. It was weighted down because it came in his old age. It was weighted down because it was placed there by one who should have loved and venerated him. But while we withhold censure from another we cannot but admire the really heroic virtue of Father Nerinckx. I find in his action a heroism that measures up to the deeds of the lives of the saints. For the sake of peace with Father Chabrat, with whom he disagreed and who was a severe critic, indeed, he made the greatest sacrifice of his life — he left Loretto. I can picture this venerable missionary, this founder of a religious community, riding away from Loretto, riding away from those who regarded him as their father in Christ, riding away from the scene of his labors, turning

with breaking heart to take a last, last look at Loretto.

Priest of this diocese of Louisville! You have in Father Nerinckx a model, an exemplar. When Moses would make the Ark of the Covenant, God said to him: "Look and make it according the model which I showed thee on the mount." So I can say to you, you have a truly great model in the life of Father Nerinckx. He was a man of zeal, untiring zeal. How he loved the beauty of the Church of God! He was a man of prayer, of mortification—few of you will ever be called upon to make the sacrifices that he made, to drink, as he drank deep, of the chalice of suffering. Religious prejudice and ignorance are rife in this state of Kentucky. That most un-American association called the A. P. A. found a footing here when other states of the Union had crushed the vile thing and stamped it out. But you have the consolation of knowing that the Catholics of Kentucky are true devoted members of the Church. Great is the work still to be done by the clergy of this diocese; and in that work I can offer as a model the missionary priest, Father Nerinckx.

And to the members of this community here assembled, and to those who are prevented by distance and circumstances from being here to-day to celebrate the centenary of your foundation, I can say what Christ said to His disci-

ples: "Behold I am with you even unto the consummation of the world." You need this presence and this help of Christ, the Master. The two disciples of Emmaus said to him: "Stay with us, O Lord, for the day is far spent." So each of you can say to the Master: "Stay with us, O Lord, stay with us." There are some who stand at the dawn of their religious life. They need and will need the Master's presence. Their prayer must be: Stay with us, O Lord, stay with us. And there are some who have reached the midday of life. You needed the Master at the beginning of your religious life, you need His cheering help and His strength now, and you will need Him in the future. Your prayer, too, should be: "Stay with us, O Lord, stay with us." There are among you venerable Sisters for whom the shadows of life have grown long; who have served the Master from youth to old age. But as you had need of His help then, so you need it now. And crossing your hands, you can raise your eyes and say as said the disciples: "Stay with us, Oh Lord, stay with us, for the day is far spent."

And if I may speak in the name of the clergy here assembled, we will not forget the members of this congregation of Loretto. At Holy Mass we will pray that its members may emulate the virtues of its holy founder; that the next cen-

tenary may find its numbers increased, its spirit of religion undimmed; that its schools and convents may still be doing heroic work for Christian education.

FATHER BADIN

VERY REVEREND JOHN CAVANAUGH, C. S. C.
PRESIDENT OF NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY.
AT LORETTO, KENTUCKY, MAY 22, 1912.

The most powerful force in the world is religion. The mainspring of lofty action in every age of the world has been religion. The great civilizer has been, not money, not culture, not even personal or national ambition, but religion which first seized on the scattered families of men and wrought them into the primitive social unity.

The great educator has been religion, which in the beginning took hold of savage tribes, strong in the strength of the earth, and bent their stubborn necks to the yoke of obedience and restraint. The primary function of the Church, of course, is to make men holy rather than cultured, but because in the accomplishment of her high mission she has felt constrained to invoke all the aids and instrumentalities by which men may be influenced for their betterment, the Church as a matter of fact, has been found in history to have been a school of music and poetry and eloquence, and painting and archi-

ecture. A famous art critic has made a list of the twelve greatest pictures and every picture of these supreme twelve portrays a religious subject. The most beautiful structures ever reared by the genius of man are the cathedrals of Europe. The most exquisite music has been woven around the words of the Mass.

The great colonizer has been religion, which has done over the whole world what it did here in our own America — gathered up little groups of men, torn them away from their own homes, planted them in fresh fields, under alien skies, “where they might find the liberty denied them at home to worship God according to conscience, to build their own altars, to light their own sacrificial fires, to utter in fuller freedom those petitions for help and strength and consolation that in a hundred tongues and in temples of a thousand shapes men every day send up to God.”

It is true that the history of the world shows two chief causes of colonization; the first is some need of the body, the second some necessity of the soul. The first sends the laity chiefly into colonies; the second banishes both laity and clergy. When a country becomes over populated so that its people can with difficulty scourge a meager living out of the reluctant soil, men, like bees swarming from the parental hive, cast about for some less crowded field where in more primitive labor they may reap simpler but more

abundant results. Such colonization is still going on throughout our country and it had its part even in the establishment of the original states. It will continue so long as great multitudes of people are herded densely in the older countries and as long as broad prairies and fertile valleys and waving forests in America lie vacant and smiling to the sun.

The other cause, some need of the soul, has borne the larger part in colonization from the beginning of time. The revolt against tyranny, the desire to escape from extreme or unjust legislation, the flight of the weak from the power of the strong, the desire to escape religious persecution, in a word, whatever ministers to enlargement of mental or religious freedom, has always been the chief cause of colonization.

And indeed, nothing shows more clearly the providential government of the world than the results of these changing conditions. A man may be puzzled about many questions of life and death and destiny. I can understand that a man might doubt many propositions of philosophy and find difficulty in some formulations of dogma, but I cannot understand how a man looking upon the history of the world and the development of civilization, the rise and fall of dynasties, the growth and decay of principalities and powers, can have any doubt that high over the workings of this world, seated serenely above the vicis-

situdes of time and the changing fortunes of men, there is a governing Power which is Essential Wisdom, Essential Goodness, and Essential Force, which "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly." That the world should have come to its present state by the mere chance of fortune is the philosophy of a fool — of the fool who saith in his heart, not in his intellect, "There is no God." It is as incredible as that the elements which compose these majestic buildings have sprung mysteriously from their places in forest and quarry and mine, and have by merest accident arranged themselves to produce these beautiful results. We know that the architect with mind anointed of God had first to dream this dream of beauty before steel and stone and lumber at the bidding of industry leaped into their places to fulfill the architect's dream. The simple workmen who turned these arches, the men who laboriously brought material to the place where it was to be set, the toilers who placed stone upon stone and adjusted element to element, may not have known, may not have foreseen, may not have even dimly guessed the superb and finished beauty to which they were blind contributors; but the building stands forth perfect and symmetrical as the prophetic vision of the architect had planned it. Even so it is with the workings of Providence. A Nero shrouds the bodies of Christians in pitch

and uses them as torches to light his pleasure garden. Caligula persecutes the followers of Christianity with every torment that the genius of hell could devise and the malice of men execute. The tyrant knows not that he is contributing a stone to the upbuilding of the house of God, but the Christians flee into the country places to become new centers of propaganda for the Faith of the crucified Nazarene, and all over the world wherever the Roman eagle is borne, the Roman cross is uplifted to spread the Faith of God and work the salvation of men. The infidel despoils the holy places of Palestine and tramples under foot the most sacred traditions of the children of God, and he believes he is obliterating the last vestiges of the consecrated land made adorable forever by the foot-prints of the crucified Christ. He has no thought that he too is fulfilling the plans of Providence. His purpose is to crush out forever the memories of the Man of Galilee, and lo! out of the west is heard the shout of a mighty multitude and the crusader rides forth on richly caparisoned steed, holding aloft the banners of Christ until the land that once trembled with ecstasy under the feet of the meek and lowly Jesus resounds and quivers under the hoofs of cavalry and the steady beat of the soldiers' march. And wherever the crusader went he carried with him the grace and the power of God and the triumphant sword of His spirit.

The religious revolt of the sixteenth century which ministers to the unrestrained passion of men, threatens to shatter for ever, in the fury of an hour, the towering edifice of the old Faith. Disaster follows disaster, desertion follows desertion until there seems nothing left to the Church but the comforting promise of Christ that she shall not fail for ever. Rebellion for the moment seems victorious and the powers of evil set their heel in triumph on the fallen majesty of Rome. And here again the wrath of man believes it has destroyed the work of God, but far out in the jungles of India and deep into the heart of China and Japan the banished armies of God go thundering forth to new conquests, extending the knowledge and the love of Christ to nations which, had the times been tranquil, might have sat for centuries in the valley of darkness and in the shadow of death. Catholic Ireland, cursed by the domination of a strong heretical power, lies bleeding and prostrate under the sword of her traditional enemy, and again man thinks he is thwarting the plans of the Almighty; but girded by virtue and helmeted with Faith, her giant armies go forth unto the ends of the earth, and Ireland fulfills her providential destiny by carrying out the plans of God. Catholic Poland suffers a like fate from the great schismatic power of the north and her children populate the cities and plains of America and lift

up in mills and factories and farms the voice of praise and prayer. And just as the builders bore the stone and steel and lumber unwittingly to their places in the beautiful building, knowing not that their work was to fulfill the architect's dream, so these brutal forces of persecution and tyranny knew not that they were working out the plans of the great Architect of the universe and furthering the purposes of Providence.

It was to such a spasm of persecution that we owe the sacred memories to which these Loretto days are consecrated. The drums of Bunker Hill that first woke the echoes of liberty amid the hills and valleys of New England aroused more savage response among the oppressed peasantry of France. The return of Lafayette and Rochambeau clothed with the honors of war and shining in the glory of new-born liberty in America, shook the pillars of the ancient dynasty of France. The people, aroused from the lethargy of centuries, clamored for the rights of which they had been despoiled by the tyranny of Kings and the greed of nobility. But there was one great difference between the struggle for liberty in America and the aspiration for freedom in the Old World. The makers of our Fatherland put into the very charter of our liberty an acknowledgment of the existence of God and our dependence on His providence. They were religious men and in their darkest hours they

acknowledged joyfully that "unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guard the city, he watcheth in vain who keepeth it." The people of France, on the other hand, acknowledged as leaders men in whose hearts burned the fires of hatred against all that was called God and worshiped. They sought to lift up the standard of the rights of man by pulling down the standard of the rights of God. Instead of the orderly march from tyranny to freedom they fell into all the excesses of libertinism. When the shameless one was set upon the altars of Notre Dame in Paris and worshiped in an orgy of licentiousness and blasphemy, she typified fitly the spirit of that debauched and godless movement. And so while America was laying broad and deep the foundations of permanent freedom, while America was sending up shouts of worship and singing grateful Te Deums upon a thousand cross-crowned hills, the streets of the Old World ran riot in blood and sin. Her schools were closed, her monasteries were turned into stables and drinking halls, her exquisite cathedrals became theaters or restaurants, her bishops were hunted like wild beasts, a price was set upon the heads of her priests, her nuns were banished and her faithful children slain as they knelt around the altars, or they were driven into the desert places where thousands perished of cold and hunger.

It was the hour of the triumph of evil, the abomination of desolation was standing in the holy place. France, eldest daughter of the Church, has not yet fully recovered from that carnival of crime, but we cannot doubt that in the mercy of God the time of her deliverance and her triumph will soon come. We cannot fully see how France has been purified and strengthened by that bloody crucifixion, but long ago the ways of Providence were justified in the great companies of missionaries that have gone over the world to harvest the fields white for the sickle. The French Revolution still remains a hideous nightmare in the memory of mankind, but the French missionary and the Belgian missionary who suffered exile with him have won unto the shining heights of immortality.

To do honor to one of the noblest of these exiled priests we meet this day beside the cradle of Catholicity in Kentucky. No marvelous star in the skies heralded the birth of Stephen Theodore Badin, no halo of wonderful portent encircled his brow. Born in the beautiful and historic city of Orleans, France, on July 17, 1768, this child of destiny was privileged to grow up under the eye of pious and God-fearing parents. In the morning of life he vowed his soul and body unreservedly to religion. His childish play was of the sanctuary and to a wondering congregation of smaller children he played the

pastor, giving Mass and blessing and exhortation. As one elect of Heaven he chose his companions from among the fairest and manliest around him, and so he passed the innocent years of his youth, learning in safe ways and through holy channels the meaning of life, the sins and sorrows of men, the duty and the dignity of the priesthood. As naturally as the bird turns home to its nest, his face turned to the sanctuary; and in the cloisters of the seminary, surrounded by learned and holy men, he grew into the perfect stature of Christian manhood. Adown the vista of the years he beheld the vision of an altar and on it a chalice waiting for him, and when it seemed that at last the chalice was within reach of his anointed hand, his course was interrupted by the weakness of his religious superior and his own strong Catholic Faith. His disloyal bishop had taken the odious constitutional oath and Badin refused to accept from him the priestly ordination. Persecution with its hundred hands at once stretched out to seize him. Suffering and privation became his daily experience, but the providence of God at last plucked him out of this thorny garden and transplanted him to a new field of labor in America. Received as a sub-deacon by the venerable Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, he completed his ecclesiastical studies and mastered the rudiments of English. On May 25, 1793, came the

day for what the world calls the Great Renunciation, but for him it was a day of exultation. For him that day fulfilled the dream of many a year. When first he ascended the steps of the sanctuary to perform the miracle of the Altar, his heart beat tumultuously with such a joy and such an awe as must have filled the soul of Holy Mary that first Christmas when the cry of a little Child was heard in the night and the mighty God lay a trembling infant on a bed of straw. From that morning until the day when his hands lay folded white and cold upon his bosom there was no priestly work that he did not perform. The diocese of Bishop Carroll embraced the whole United States and Father Badin was the first fruit of his consecrated hand. To Badin will ever remain the glory of being the first priest ordained in the United States.

At this time the Catholics of Kentucky had no priest and his diffidence in his own power, his inexperience, his imperfect knowledge of English, made the young priest shrink from taking up the work in Kentucky to which Bishop Carroll had appointed him. There was no lack of courage and no recoiling from self-sacrifice, but only a modest fear that he might not be able to cope with the emergencies of priestly work on the frontier. When the Bishop convinced him that the call to Kentucky was the voice of God his fears vanished and he set out joyfully to the

distant and dangerous mission. Two Irish priests had preceded him for a brief period and had had only a modest measure of success in their work, yet in this day of triumph let the names of Father Whelan and Father de Rohan be mentioned with honor. From the day when Badin first turned his face to this new field of labor he entered upon a career of zeal and self-sacrifice which continued with little mitigation until he laid his worn and wasted body down in death. It was prophetic of all that was to follow that on setting out for Kentucky he walked with a staff in his hand from Baltimore to Pittsburg over a rough and muddy road, and that after leaving the boat in his journey from Maysville to Lexington one cold night in late November, he slept without covering in an old mill where he had sought shelter. During his missionary journeys he traveled one hundred thousand miles in the saddle. Oftentimes a sick call summoned him fifty and even eighty miles into the forests in the dead of night, in the coldest weather, sometimes even without a guide and always over rough and difficult roads. When he came to Kentucky a young, active, energetic priest, people wondered even then how he could accomplish so much and endure so much, but even unto his patriarchal years he continued the labors and hardships of his youth. Usually he rode twenty or thirty miles before saying his Mass and after

that journey there were confessions and a sermon, and after the Mass another sermon, so that he seldom broke his fast before three o'clock in the afternoon. Archbishop Spalding tells us that he often suffered for the very necessaries of life, that his clothing was scant and fashioned from the rough fabrics of the country, that his food was of the coarsest and seldom of sufficient quantity, that at one time he was for days without bread until a kindly layman learning of his great need sent him the necessaries of life. Father Badin need not have been homeless. He might have interpreted his duty more narrowly; he might have confined his priestly administrations within a smaller sphere and lived with some degree of comfort under his own humble roof in the safety of the settlement and amid the affection of his people. We have even heard the insinuation of reproach that he did not do so, that instead of settling down in a single parish he moved from place to place covering all of Kentucky and large parts of Illinois and Indiana and Ohio in his labor; but it is easy for the modern historian in easy chair and slippers, seated in the comfort of his warm, well-lighted study, to find fault with the hardy pioneer who blazed a trail through the wilderness, who could not rest content if he knew that somewhere a Catholic family long deprived of priestly ministrations stretched forth hands of supplication and entreaty. What

is zeal that it is to be accounted an imperfection in a priest, and what but zeal could have tempted Badin to choose the dangers and discomforts of these long pilgrimages? Was St. Paul lacking in the wisdom of God when he entered upon his great journeyings and took the whole world for his parish? Shall we think it a reproach and not rather a glory that he was able to say, "In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren; in labor and painfulness, in much watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness, beside those things which are without: my daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches." (II. Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28.) Indeed, the comparison here suggested between St. Paul and Father Badin is recalled by a score of parallelisms in their lives. Both were men of small stature, both men of intense temperament. As St. Paul had suffered many perils, so Badin was often in danger of death from the white man and the red, from hunger and cold. The bark of the wolf and the shriek of the panther often awoke him from his scant slumber on the cold, hard ground. The swollen impassable river often bore him close to death. Even murder itself sometimes stalked at his heels, and hatred

often dogged his steps so that announcement was frequently made of his death. The record of these heroic exploits are not to be found on papyrus or parchment; they are graven on no stone and cast on no everlasting bronze; but in the radiant halls of Paradise the pictures of these deeds of heroism and endurance and zeal live eternally, for they are painted on the "unforgetting intelligences of the angels," and the story of them is written in the books of God.

As St. Paul denounced worldliness and self-indulgence and frivolity in words of fire, so Badin was indefatigable in his efforts to arouse fervor and to restore Church discipline among his people. As St. Paul was insistent in preaching the word of God in season and out of season, preaching indeed far into the night so that one who sat by the window was overcome with fatigue and fell to his death, so Father Badin was zealous by day and by night to preach to his people and to catechize children and servants. The very length of his sermons, though not always appreciated by captious hearers, was a proof of his zeal and his fervor. If he sternly rebuked abuses among his people, if he scourged with whips of scorn the paganism that he observed about him, does it not seem like an echo of the thundering denunciations of the Epistles? And as St. Paul was able to glory in the virtue of his converts whom he looked on as his pride

and his glory and the apple of his eye, might not Father Badin and those who shared in his labors make a modest boast that the grace of God had not been void in them? "It is a gratifying fact," says your great Catholic historian—"It is a gratifying fact in the history of Catholicity in Kentucky that with rare exceptions the descendants of the early colonists from Maryland are keeping up in their families to the present day, the pious practices introduced into those of their forefathers by Fathers Badin, Nerinckx, Fournier, and Fenwick. Still, night and morning, the households meet for prayer in common, still the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin is recited at fixed intervals. Still, once in the week, and sometimes every day, the children are brought together for catechetical instruction. Still, when the family, or certain of its members, are prevented, for any cause, from being present at the Holy sacrifice on Sundays or holidays of obligation, the custom remains of reciting the prayers for Mass in common at home. Still, the chapter of pious reading follows the evening orisons, and men and women and children sink to slumber only after having made emblematic profession of their Faith by signing themselves with the sign of the cross. All these practices, inculcated with so much persistency upon the minds of their fathers by Father Badin and his early associates of the priesthood in Kentucky, have

rarely been suffered to fall into disuse in the households of their descendants."

I like to believe that among this fervent people the memory of Father Badin and those who labored and anguished with him in the wilderness, is still in benediction. Inheritors of the great traditions of those heroic days, it is meet that they and their children should show to these apostles the tribute of veneration and imitation. What though the eye of criticism discovers in Badin an extreme severity towards the social pleasures of his pioneer flock? It was the spirit of the time and it was shared by the venerated Prince Gallitzin and the saintly Nerinckx; and who shall say that the world is better for the softer discipline of these comfortable days? What if his action sometimes seemed arbitrary? The hardships he bore, his remoteness from ecclesiastical superiors during many laborious years, the necessity of relying habitually on his own judgment, would have hardened and solidified meekness itself. What if his character seemed at times whimsical and eccentric? His isolation might naturally make him so. Again and again he found himself alone on the Kentucky mission. Once he was for nearly three years the only priest in this vast region, once he was so remote from a brother-priest that for twenty-one months he could not go to Confession. Moreover, he was a strong man and strong men, having the de-

fects of their qualities, are not usually complaisant. Doubtless there are among his critics, gentle, restrained, and moderate spirits who will never either amuse us by such eccentricities as his, nor inspire us by his apostolic zeal and heroic mortification. And so he stands forth in clear outline, a priest of blameless life, a pioneer with courage that knew no fear, a missionary to whom the saving of a soul was more than the conquest of an empire, a pastor who showed his people the affection as well as the sternness of a father, the proto-priest whom Father Nerinckx calls "The Founder of the Church in Kentucky."

It is well that the name of the saintly Nerinckx has been associated with that of Father Badin in the holy memories of this hour. For seven years they lived together on this sacred spot; for many more years they shared each other's daily life of zeal and privation. It was the chief of God's mercies to Father Badin that He gave him Father Nerinckx as a companion and co-laborer during these missionary years. Himself like Badin, an exile from Europe, he found in Kentucky a mission that drew out all his wonderful powers. As an apostle among the poor in Belgium he had won distinction; as a victim of the persecuting governments he had labored by stealth four years among the people from whom he was believed to have been banished. His apostolic zeal was hap-

pily united to giant physical strength and unwearying energy of mind. But best of all his heart was Christ-like, and out of his love for little children sprang the greatest of his works, the founding of the illustrious teaching Order of the Sisters of Loretto. Who shall say that the saintly Nerinckx is dead, so long as his spirit lives in his loyal and devoted daughters?

It is fitting that Notre Dame should waft this greeting to Loretto during these jubilee days, for Notre Dame like Loretto is dedicated to the principle that the heart of culture is culture of the heart; that the soul of improvement is improvement of the soul; that the making of a life is incomparably greater than the making of a living; that great epochs, creative epochs, the epochs that have glorified human history, have invariably been epochs of strong religious belief; that faith watches over the cradles of nations while unbelief doubts and argues above their graves.

It is right that Notre Dame should thus salute Nerinckx, for our forefathers in the University also suffered poverty and hardship and showed forth zeal and faith and piety.

Above all, it is a duty of filial love for me to proclaim publicly the indebtedness of Notre Dame and the Congregation of the Holy Cross to the noble pioneer priest, Father Badin, who was the first to give the Eucharistic God a permanent home among the Pottawatomies, and whose mem-

ory they venerated. For he came to them not with the sword that slays but with the cross that saves and purifies, not breathing words of angry menace or vengeance but whispering the sweet message of peace and mercy and forgiveness, and while he thus labored for the humble children of the forest his prophetic eye looked forward to the day when dome and spire and academic pile should leap into the sky from the sod where his log chapel stood. It was he who procured from the government the large domain on which Notre Dame is set, and I know that from their place near Christ this day, Sorin and Granger and Vincent and Francis lean over the battlements of Heaven and smile approval when I name Father Badin co-founder of the University.

No man who needs a monument to commemorate his memory ought ever to have one. Unless the story of the man's achievements lives in the hearts of his fellow-men no statue however high, can lift his name out of oblivion. History has already reared Father Badin's monument but to-day the generous Sisters have demanded that the noble features and the manly figure of this great priest should be preserved for generations that never looked on him in life.

Therefore in the name of the sainted apostles who, like him, bore the cross into the heart of paganism, in the name of the holy missionaries

of every age who have ventured for God where the merchant would not venture for gold nor the soldier for glory, in the name of humanity whom he loved and served with such sublime self-sacrifice, in the name of America, the scene of his labors and the land of his predilection, in the name of the invisible multitudes whose lives were touched and sanctified by his consecrated hand, in the name of Flaget and Nerinckx and David and the other noble priests who labored with him in the wilderness, in the name of the venerable religious of Loretto here present, into whose souls come rushing back so many sacred memories to-day, in the name of the Holy Catholic Church whose loyal and faithful priest he was, in the name of the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph whose names he magnified, in the name of Him, the Father of us all, whom he served and loved with almost perfect love and perfect service—I say unveil the statue of Badin.

ADDRESS

COMMENCEMENT DAY AT LORETTO ACADEMY,
THE HONORABLE EDWARD J. McDERMOTT, LIEU-
TENANT-GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY.

LORETTO, KENTUCKY, JUNE 5, 1912.

I am greatly pleased to attend this Commencement at Loretto in its centennial year. This beautiful and thriving academy is closely and honorably associated with the history of our State. One hundred years ago, when Kentucky was still sparsely settled by our hardy pioneers, three Catholic women of Maryland ancestry dedicated their lives here to the work of teaching and, under the wise guidance of good Father Nerinckx, they established this school, Loretto, and laid the foundation for this splendid institution. They began their work in a wretched log-cabin hardly fit for a home even in those days. This was the beginning of the first American religious order, and it has since spread its schools far and wide. After a century of growth and usefulness, and well-deserved honors, Loretto has invited us to this Commencement at the

mother-house; and we are delighted with what we see and hear in this beautiful home where learning and religion walk resplendently and happily hand in hand.

These bright-eyed, intelligent girls, led by their zealous and revered teachers, surrounded by admiring and joyous kindred and friends in this historic and charming place, make up an inspiring and elevating scene, never to be forgotten while we live. All of us are reminded of similar occasions in our own lives. A man has preëminence at ordinary times; but, at a Commencement like this or at a wedding, he is in eclipse. At such a time he is like a blinking tallow-candle beside a brilliant electric light or the great orb of day. The radiant girl-graduate, in her white gown, with her roses and invincible smile seems hardly to touch this poor earth with her nimble feet; and, when she is armed with her diploma and cheered with applause, we men are abashed and humbled by her splendor. Any man, whether young or old, married or miserable, must be pleased, unless utterly dull or callous, to see these young ladies start out in life under such favorable auspices. I heartily congratulate them and their good teachers. It is a rare advantage to a girl to be in constant contact, for several years, with educated, refined, religious women who are fit to train the mind, the hand and the heart of their

pupils, for the serious duties of life. In these healthful and beautiful surroundings, with regular hours for study, recreation, and sleep, free from the distractions and dissipations of ordinary social life, leading a sensible and simple life, at a time when the body, the mind and the soul are unfolding and must have the tenderest and wisest care, many a young girl can here find advantages which are worth more to her than mere learning or fashionable manners that may only bring discontent and trouble, when she returns to her home. The world with its labors and multitudinous cares, with many hollow or enervating pleasures as well as wholesome enjoyments to withdraw our attention from serious studies and religious thought, will be faced soon enough. As Wordsworth said:

“The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in nature that is ours.”

Many people, with little reflection, are opposed to private schools altogether. It is a fad to decry them: it is thought that we must all have the same education — that we must all be as much alike as ready-made shoes out of the same factory. It is right for the State to foster education — to give every child, however poor, a chance for an education; but it is not the duty or the right of the State to crush out private

schools which save the State much expense while promoting education. In fact, it is better that many of us should be developed along different lines; that there should be diversities in our education as well as in our food, pastimes and business pursuits; that each of us should have a chance for a distinct individuality and even for eccentricity. Diversity is far better than a deadly uniformity. The long sleep of China shows that it is not good for all the people of any land to have practically the same ideas and standards. John Stuart Mill in his book on Liberty said:

“If there are any persons who contest a received opinion, or who will do so, if law or opinion will let them, let us thank them for it, open our minds to listen to them, and rejoice that there is someone to do for us what we otherwise ought, if we have any regard for either the certainty or the vitality of our convictions, to do with much greater labor for ourselves. . . . In this age the mere example of non-conformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service.”

Schopenhauer said that most of our faults and failures are due, not so much to a deficient intellect or to deficient information, as to a deficient will. We too often see the right but do the wrong. Herbert Spencer, of great repute in England as a scholar and a scientist, said truly that all of us expect too much from mere education; that many criminals were educated; that

the conversation and conduct of people of ordinary education showed how little profit they derived from their schooling. To educate in the right sense is to train every faculty and to develop every power of the body, the intellect and the soul of the child. It is not what we know or have that makes us useful or happy, but what we are and what we do. The teacher that merely instructs us in books or manners is not doing enough. We must not only have our intellect sharpened and our information enlarged, but we must be made moral and faithful in the performance of our duties. Good habits must be formed. Bad tendencies or bad habits must be rooted out. The tact, refinement, and character of the teacher, therefore, must be considered as well as the teacher's learning. The skill and culture of the teachers here have given these young ladies a chance for thorough mental improvement and genuine refinement. I believe in scholarship for women, but there is a charm and there is a virtue above scholarship.

It is customary on occasions of this sort to offer the young ladies much advice; but Rochefaucauld said: "We may bestow advice; we cannot inspire conduct." If I were to advise these young ladies how to catch a beau or to get a husband, they would only smile at me; for a young girl knows, or thinks she knows, more about that matter than anybody in the world can

tell her. If, on the other hand, I turn to serious matters, I am in danger of being entirely too serious and prosy for such a merry occasion.

Most girls after graduation are inclined to rush into the frivolities and excitements of society, and to stop almost entirely their serious reading. If they read at all, they confine themselves to newspapers or magazines or mere novels, perhaps to trashy, short-lived novels of the day. I have known college men and well educated women who, fifteen or twenty years after leaving their teachers, became practically ignorant. They gained little as the years rolled on and lost what they had once acquired. Conversation, as understood in France and as it was once understood among cultured people here, has become a lost art; and, hence, society has lost some of its charm, except to the frivolous or dissipated. I do not mean that you should become mere students. As Herbert Spencer has well said, "Life is not for working nor for learning, but learning and working are for life." We must not work or study all the time. Goethe truly said: "Unqualified activity of whatever kind leads at last to bankruptcy." There must be goodness and sweetness in life. Intellectual women are too prone now to push themselves into notoriety or to waste their energies in unfruitful fields, or to attempt tasks for which men are better fitted.

It is said that the status of woman in any country or age clearly indicates and fixes its position in civilization. The supernatural exaltation of the Blessed Virgin by the Church from the beginning has elevated womanhood in all civilized lands. The ennobling and sanctifying sisterhoods that the Church has established and fostered for ages have been a source of protection and inspiration for innumerable pure, unselfish, saintly women who wanted to consecrate their lives to the religion of Christ, to the children, the poor, the old, the sick and the suffering. Such women endure hard labors, privations, poverty, and pain without complaint or repining. Many of them have endured envy, detraction, exile, and martyrdom; but they falter not. Indeed they have been an unmixed blessing to the world. Almost every Catholic family, for ages, has furnished a recruit for these great armies of saintly women. Every Catholic family, most of them having some revered and beloved representative in the ranks, knows, as many non-Catholic families know, what these good sisters are and what they do for religion and humanity. When they are belittled or reviled or persecuted, every Catholic heart gives them a royal and loving cheer and a generous support, and has only contempt for the ignorance, or hatred for the malice, of their critics and detractors. In our land at least, there are few men so ignorant or so base

as to misunderstand or to abuse such good and unselfish servants of the people. The noble deeds of such modest women are not blazened before the world. They only want to help mankind, to serve the Master, and to follow Him. The only reward they seek for their self-imposed toil and poverty is a quiet conscience here and sweet communion with the blessed beyond the grave. The least that we, the beneficiaries of their devotion, can do is to honor and sustain them.

The entertaining history of Loretto written by Anna C. Monogue this year is a book well worth the study of every intelligent man or woman who wants to know how our State was developed, and how the Sisters of Loretto began and how they fostered and enlarged their splendid community. It has the glory of being the first American Sisterhood. It was founded by three young Catholic women of Maryland stock, Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart, and Anna Havern, who, under the guidance of Father Charles Nerinckx, took the veil here on April 25th, 1812. In a few months they were joined by Ann Rhodes, Sally Havern and Nellie Morgan. These young women labored like slaves to support themselves and to teach the children of their neighbors. The poverty, the toil, the sickness and the misfortunes that they endured made their sacrifice heroic; but, in spite of every ob-

stacle, they prospered and now this order has seven or eight hundred members and almost innumerable schools, small and large, here and in the west and south. The fruitage from the little seed planted in 1812 in Kentucky soil has been rich indeed. The alumnae of Loretto and all enlightened men and women interested in the education, prosperity and contentment of our people should rejoice in the vigor, usefulness and success of this American religious order after its hundred years of splendid service to the girls and mothers of our country. Its schools, in many States, are beacon lights from which stream forth the gladsome rays of learning and religion. Long may Loretto flourish!

LORETTO A GIFT OF PROVIDENCE.

REV. PHILIP BIRK, C. P.

ALUMNÆ DAY, JUNE 13, 1912, AT LORETTO,
KENTUCKY.

“My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior. . . . For He that is mighty hath done great things for me.”

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

These words are taken from that sublime Canticle which the Mother of our Lord intoned when she was saluted by her kinswoman, Saint Elizabeth, as the most blessed of all the daughters of Eve. Overwhelmed with a sense of the stupendous prodigies which the Almighty had wrought in her favor, filled with the deepest sense of gratitude to God, she cried, in an outburst of thankfulness, “My soul doth magnify the Lord, my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; for He that is mighty hath done great things for me.” I know no words in the inspired writings that seem to me more appropriate to the event which you are celebrating than these

words of the ever-blessed Mother of our Lord. Ah! surely Loretto, too, has reason to intone her magnificat, on this her day of triumph, her day of glory, her day of joy. As she looks back to the humble beginnings of a hundred years ago, as she recalls to mind the many and great events that have crowded themselves into these hundred years, as she considers her present condition and compares it with her condition of a hundred years ago, she has surely reason to exult in spirit, to magnify the Lord, to cry out with Mary, "My soul hath rejoiced in God, for He that is mighty hath done great things for me!" It is not well for frail, human mortal to boast of his achievements. It is not well for any man to glory in his work as though it were in the might of his own power that he has done great things. The Gospel tells us that when we have done all that is commanded us we are yet to have a lowly opinion of ourselves, and we are to believe that, after all, we are unprofitable servants; yet when the providence of God chooses any man or woman or any institute for the carrying out of some great design, and enables that man or that institute to carry out that design, that man or that institute cannot be accused of vain boasting, cannot be accused of robbing God of the glory that belongs to Him alone if they rejoice in the fact that God's providence has made use of them as of humble instruments in executing

His plans, and this has been the case with Loretto.

I was requested to speak in this church on the 25th of last April. For reasons which I need not mention, that program was changed, and I was subsequently requested to say this morning what I would have said had I spoken on the 25th of April. I propose to show you in brief this morning, the history of God's providential dealings with Loretto, and this rapid glance over the past will show us what reasons the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross have to rejoice,—yes, rejoice, and to be thankful.

On the 25th of April, one hundred years ago, in the year 1812, three young women knelt before the altar of a humble log chapel a few miles distant from this place. They besought the Reverend Charles Nerinckx, the great Apostle of Catholicity in Kentucky, to clothe them with the religious habit. With unspeakable joy of heart he acceded to their request, and by that act laid the foundations of the Loretine Society. Look at these foundations. Are they suggestive of massiveness or of solidity? Do they seem to be able to support a great, magnificent building? Yet look at Loretto to-day. To-day Loretto is a great religious order in the Catholic Church. It has the most formal and the highest approbation that the Church can give

to a religious society. It has the same fixed canonical status in the Church as any other order of men or women that exists anywhere in the Catholic world; and here you have what I will call the first chapter in the history of God's providential dealings with Loretto. It was God that created the order. Religious orders are not the work of man but the work of God. Men and women undertake to found religious societies in the Church, but these men and these women are only instruments which God employs for carrying out some great design. It is the artist's brush that paints the picture, but you do not say that the picture is the work of the brush but the work of the artist. And so it is with religious orders; although apparently instituted by men or women, they are really the work of God's providence. They are the work of that Providence which ever watches over the Church and never fails to provide for her all the means which she needs to carry on her mission of works of benevolence in the world. It is true, indeed, that these orders are not an essential part of the constitution of the Church. The Church has existed without them and she could exist without them again; yet were all these orders of men and women that exist today to be swept from the face of the earth would not the Church herself regard their destruction as one of the greatest disasters that

could befall her? We have in these United States some five thousand parochial schools; we have some nine hundred — speaking in round figures — some nine hundred colleges and academies; we have some fifteen hundred charitable institutions, hospitals, homes for the poor, houses of the Good Shepherd, and so on. Now were all these orders in these United States to disappear from the Church of a sudden, in what a condition would that not leave the Church? It is true, of the stones themselves God can raise up children unto Abraham, but as a matter of fact, He creates these institutions in the Church to serve her as powerful auxiliaries in carrying on His work in the world. Therefore the men and women whom God chooses as founders of religious orders may be very properly called Providential men and women, men and women whom God raises up in the Church from time to time — to do some great work or to start some important movement, either in the world at large or in some particular country, and to every one of these Founders we may rightly apply the words written of John the Precursor, “Fuit homo missus a Deo”—He was a man sent by God. Sent by God — he did not intrude himself into the work, but he was sent by God to carry out God’s plans in the world. It was God, therefore, Who put into the mind of Father Nerinckx the design of establishing the Loretine Society.

It was God that enabled him to realize that idea, to make it a complete fact; and it was God that disposed and moved Mary Rhodes and her two companions, Christina Stuart and Nancy Havern to offer themselves to Father Nerinckx to enable him to carry out God's project.

And now we have come to the second point in the history of God's providential dealings with the Order. To God's Providence you owe your existence, to God's Providence you owe the mission you have in the Catholic Church. You know what is the mission of the Loretine Sisters. You know they are a Society in the Church which devotes itself exclusively to the work of Christian education. These Sisters do not provide homes where the aged poor can spend peacefully the days of their declining years. The Loretines do not nurse the sick in their homes, as some of our Sisterhoods do, and you will not find the Loretine Sisters in hospitals or in other institutions where human suffering is relieved. If you want to find the Loretine, you must look for her in the school room. There has Providence placed her — there is her field of labor, and it is the most glorious, the most useful, the most important work that God's Providence has ever assigned any Society of women; and when I say this I do not at all under-rate the immense services which those other sisterhoods of the Catholic Church

render to suffering humanity, and I am perfectly willing to admit that the work of these sisterhoods demands at times a heroic courage, the most heroic courage of which human nature even when sustained by divine grace, is capable. Yet, I still hold that the most important work that is rendered to the Church by our sisterhoods, is the work of Christian education. When we wish to set a true value on the services of a man we have to apply one criterion — what influence has the services he renders, on man's highest interests? Now the highest interests of man do not lie in the physical but in the spiritual, not in the natural but in the supernatural order. Had God made man for this world, then the greatest favor we could confer on a man would be to enable him, as far as possible, to enjoy the good things in this life. But God has made man for Himself, and therefore man's highest happiness, the perfect rest which his nature craves, cannot be found but in that eternal union with God in Heaven, for which he has been created. Therefore the greatest service that you can render to anyone is to help him to save his soul. Take him by the hand, and lead him on to that God for Whom he has been created. And, therefore, again, the greatest benefactor of the human race is the priest of the Church, and next after the priest is the Christian educator. The aim of the priest's ministry is the eternal salvation of

souls, and the aim of a Christian educator, of our teaching Brothers and Sisters, is the eternal salvation of the soul. The two have the same end, they work for the same end, they work hand in hand. The difference in the two lies not in the difference of the ends they propose to themselves in the work, but in the difference of the means they adopt to do that work. The priest finds in the Christian teacher his most efficient auxiliary, and the two work together hand in hand, for the same purpose: that is, to promote the affair of the highest interests of human society. This of course does not imply that the Sisters who devote themselves to the work of Christian education make light of what we call secular education, or that they are indifferent to the many and great advantages that our young people reap therefrom. The Christian teacher alone has the true idea of education. He knows that the child committed to his care will attain his true destiny only in the next world, yet Providence has so ordained that that child shall remain in this visible world for a time and in the use of proper means attain his true end. One of these means is education, and this education the Christian teacher ever bears in mind. Whilst it is true that his primary aim is the spiritual interests of the soul, it is likewise true that even the temporal interests of the child are attended to by the Christian educator. We

might say the only aim of the Catholic Church is the salvation of souls: it is for that she exists, yet she does not therefore neglect man's condition of the present. No institution that has ever existed, has done so much for the betterment of man's earthly condition, so much to alleviate human suffering, as the Catholic Church; and these teaching orders form themselves on the model of the Church and try to act in the same spirit in which the Church acts in the salvation of the world. While attending to what is the most important part of education, they do not neglect what we call the secular education, that which will open to men the avenues of success in this present life. You Sisters teach in your schools all that is taught in the schools supported by the State. We hear it often said to-day that the Catholic Church is no friend of the public school; we are decried as the enemies of such schools. Those who speak thus do not really understand the Church's attitude towards these schools. She does not blame these schools for what they teach, for she teaches the same in her own schools. What the Church objects to in the public schools is not what they teach, but what they do not teach. They are one-sided. Their work is not complete — it is not an education that is needed by one that has been created for God. The education given in the public schools aims at nothing more than the child's

temporal welfare; now if man had no higher destiny than the irrational animal; if all existence ended in the grave, then the public schools would be perfect. They would be admirable institutions. They would leave nothing more to be desired. But no system of education that ignores God, that ignores the relations in which man stands to God, is adequate. It ignores what is most important. Our teaching orders, therefore, do not neglect to impart secular education, but when a child is placed under their care they bear in mind ever the idea that underlies their whole conduct towards that child; they say: this child remains here in this life for a few years, I must try to supply its intellectual needs, but this child was made for God. The Christian teacher must ever bear this in mind. It was his burning zeal for souls that moved Father Nerinckx to found the Society of the Loretines. It was his zeal for the salvation of souls that moved him to establish in this western country, or what was then considered western — a Society of Religious who would consecrate themselves to the great, the noble work of God, by imparting to them Christian education. And here, my dear Sisters, you have the second fact for which you should rejoice and give thanks — I mean the glorious work which the Providence of God has apportioned to you in the Church.

And there are other facts for which you should

rejoice and give thanks. That Providence which appointed to you the work which you are doing as a religious Society in the Church has never failed to supply you with all the means that you needed to fulfill with credit to yourselves the mission entrusted to you. See with what loving care Divine Providence has watched over you in the last hundred years! See, in the first place, your wonderful growth. Your first community was composed of three members. Father Nerinckx died in the year 1824. Twelve years after he had laid the foundations of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross, the number of three had increased to over a hundred! The growth from three to a hundred in twelve years does not seem to us to-day to be anything extraordinary. No, it is not anything very remarkable to-day, but the Society of Loretto was not instituted to-day but a hundred years ago. It was instituted at a time when in the whole State of Kentucky there were not more than six or seven priests, and, where priests are not, vocations to the religious life do not abound. There were not in the whole State of Kentucky more than six or seven thousand Catholics, and it was from that small number of Catholics that the Loretines had to get their recruits. On the other hand, there were the terrible hardships the Sisters had to suffer in their early years, on account of their extreme poverty. With both

these facts before us, we realize that it demanded nothing less than the courage of a hero to cast one's lot with the Sisters of Loretto, and one is simply amazed at this rapid growth of the Society. What their subsequent growth was is sufficiently understood from the fact, that for every one of the hundred years of the existence of the Society, it can show some new school, convent or academy. To-day the little flock is found in several archdioceses and in eighteen different dioceses of the country. It exists in nearly all the States of the Union from the Middle West, to the Northwest and the Southwest, from Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, all the way to Texas, New Mexico, even to California. Surely this is marvelous growth, and this is the third fact in the Providential dealings with Loretto for which you should rejoice and give thanks.

And the gracious dealings of God's Providence show themselves yet more strikingly in the trials through which the Society has had to pass. It is no new thing in the world for men and women who undertake great things for God to meet with opposition. It is no new thing for religious orders that seek to establish themselves in a country to encounter difficulties that seem at times to be simply insurmountable. But I do not think that among all the orders that have ever sought to establish themselves here in America there has been one that has encountered greater difficulties

than the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross. Recall to mind for a moment the extreme poverty which the Sisters of Loretto had to suffer,—a poverty that would have delighted Saint Francis of Assisi — that “desperate lover of Poverty,” as Bossuet calls him. I do not think, and I know the history of many religious orders in this country — I do not think there has been an order that has suffered more the inconveniences of religious poverty than the Sisters of Loretto in their early existence. And they have been tried in other ways — they have been tried “so as by fire.” One is simply amazed in reading their annals to see how many times they have suffered in this way. Over and over again those brave Sisters, after they had succeeded, at the cost of infinite labor and self-denial, in putting up houses for themselves and those entrusted to their care, have seen their homes reduced to ashes. As the Reverend Doctor Ryan of Saint Louis said, in his oration, “a trail of fire seemed to follow the Lorettoines wherever they went.” And there were other trials, trials more dangerous than poverty and more destructive than material fire. The Society had not yet emerged from its infancy, and at a time when it needed its Founder’s care as the child needs the protection of its mother, when a storm arose against it and threatened it with destruction. Father Ner-

inckx had obtained from Rome — not indeed the final approbation of its Rules, for that is not given at that stage of existence, but he had obtained from Pius VII the approbation of its Rules, and scarcely was this done before the terrific storm burst upon him. The direction of the order was forcibly wrested from him: he was practically driven from Kentucky, for while not really banished, a condition of things was created that made it, humanly speaking, impossible for him to remain on the scene of his labor, and he left Kentucky, where he had labored for nineteen years, and he died away from his beloved Society! More than that; changes were made in the Rules, changes that not only altered the original character, but that threatened the very existence of the Society itself. But these are all things of the past, and past and gone are the days when the Sisters need worry about what they shall eat or wherewith they shall be clothed. Out of the ashes of the buildings destroyed by fire have arisen new structures. The modifications and changes made by misguided zeal — for I cannot call it anything else — have been eliminated by Rome, and the Rule has been brought back, as far as the present conditions and times make practicable, to what it was as originally written by Father Nerinckx; and the persecutions of later times, those more painful trials that might have caused a feeling of regret

in some of the Sisters for ever having crossed the threshold of Loretto, these trials have not disrupted the Society; on the contrary, they have consolidated it, they have united it by stronger bonds and they have given to the Society a stability that perhaps it would never have attained had it not met with opposition. And so did God's Providence permit these things, to show that the Order was His creation and not the creation of man; and here you have the fourth fact for which you should rejoice and give thanks to God. Well may you exclaim with the Psalmist, "We have rejoiced for the days in which Thou hast humbled us; for the years in which we have seen evils."—Psl. lxxxix. 15.

After all that I have said it would seem superfluous to add anything in praise of the good Sisters, for their fidelity to their noble calling, the mission which God has entrusted to them. The abundant blessings Heaven has showered on them is the Sisters' best panegyric; it is Heaven's own testimony to their worth, to their fidelity; it is the strongest proof that the Sisters have not become degenerate daughters of Father Nerinckx, that their first charity has not grown cold. The first Sisters of Loretto, great, noble souls, had the unspeakable privilege of being brought up by Father Nerinckx; he had the training of their characters, both as religious and as teachers; he had imbued them with his own great missionary

spirit; he had kindled in their hearts the zeal for the glory of God, the insatiable thirst for souls that was the most characteristic trait of his own saintly life; therefore they threw themselves into their work, heart and soul, and left nothing undone to fit themselves ever more and more to do creditably the work which Divine Providence had assigned to them.

The Sisters that came after have walked in the footsteps of those gone before. They have been faithful educators in these United States. They devoted themselves to the work of Christian education with a zeal worthy of our admiration. They did not wait till the condition of things in this country made it possible for Bishops to enact laws making it obligatory on pastors to have parish schools; no, the Sisters themselves took the initiative, and so became pioneers of Catholic education in the States from here to California. Other orders have come after them and have done great and noble work, but the Sisters of Loretto were there before them. In that great movement of Christian education which has been going on for the last hundred years you will always find that the Loretines were in the lead; they have not been in the rear, but leading. They have kept abreast of the times and have proved themselves able to meet successfully the ever-growing demands made on teachers. This is more than evidenced by the

fact that, notwithstanding their steady growth in numbers, there has never been a time in their history when they were able to fill all the requests from Bishops and priests for Sisters. The services they have rendered to the Church during the hundred years of their existence, especially in the Middle West and Southwest are simply incalculable; the number of souls that they have led into the way of virtue and salvation, no man can number; the sacrifices, the self-denials they have practiced in the fulfillment of their calling, are known to God alone. We know not what the future may have in store for them, but if we can judge from their present condition, their numerical strength, the many great establishments they have in so many States of the Union, if we can judge from the fact that at no time in the history of the Society have the Sisters of Loretto been in so flourishing a condition as we find them to-day, we may, I think, venture to predict that the panegyrists who, a hundred years hence, shall celebrate the praises of Loretto, will tell of achievements even greater than those which excite our admiration to-day. As far as human eye can see, there is no sign of impending dissolution in the Society, there is no sign of decrepit old age. The spirit of Father Nerinckx is as vigorous in his daughters to-day and as active as it has ever been, and as long as that spirit shall continue among the Sis-

ters, no power on earth can stand in the way of their progress nor prevent them from enlarging their field of labor for the glory of God and the good of humanity, and this is the blessing which I wish the Loretines from my heart, on this their Centennial.

LORETTO'S GLORIOUS CENTURY

IN THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY, OF RELIGION AND
OF GOD.

THE REVEREND J. B. O'CONNOR, O. P., AT LO-
RETTO, KY., JUNE 26, 1912.

"I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase. According to the grace of God that is given me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is Christ Jesus."—
I Cor. iii: 6, 10, 11.

Of the many splendid and impressive ceremonies that have marked the celebration of the first century of this community's existence, there was none, I think, more significant or more appropriate than that for which we have foregathered here to-day. Before various assemblies of the faithful the trials and vicissitudes, no less than the splendid triumphs, of the Sisters of Loretto were eloquently proclaimed by distinguished ecclesiastics. And they who sat at the feet of these inspiring preachers could not but grasp in some degree the deep significance of this first century of rich accom-

plishment in the cause of humanity, of religion and of God. But only to you religious, who have come here to felicitate your sisters in Christ and to share with them the joy of this memorable occasion, is it given to enter fully into the spirit and to grasp the larger meaning of this century of consecrated effort. Only to you who are animated by the same spirit, pledged to the same ideals, vowed to the same virtues; you who have experienced the same reverses, endured the same trials, wrought the same works and achieved the same success — only to you is it given to view with undimmed vision and unfettered understanding the full and glorious significance of this centenary of religious service.

Piercing the outward veil of its material form, it is given to you to realize with sympathetic insight the spirit that made it possible; to understand the heroic sacrifice that formed its deep groundwork and broad foundation; to appreciate the unifying and strengthening power of grace that organized the weak, human elements of this society into a mighty engine of religious achievement; to comprehend the loving devotion, the unfaltering courage, the exalted motives, that sustained and encouraged them in the face of appalling difficulties and disheartening trials, and made possible all that this centenary stands for. Even as you sister religious can best grasp its meaning, so can you most accurately gauge its

worth, and consequently you can offer the largest measure of felicitation to your elder sisters in the American vineyard of God's universal Church.

It is eminently fitting and proper that this epochal event should be observed with every rite and ceremony that can give outward expression to its hidden meaning. For it is only on extraordinary occasions of this kind that the glorious deeds of those whose lives are "hid with Christ in God" are brought before the world for the edification of the faithful and the vindication of the wisdom, the policy and the institutions of our Holy Church.

How richly our sisterhoods and brotherhoods deserve the gratitude of the faithful; and how seldom is even a modest meed of praise accorded them for the great and enduring works they have quietly and piously accomplished within their silent cloisters. With legitimate pride we view our magnificent system of Catholic education with its million and a quarter pupils and its glorious army of thirty thousand consecrated teachers. But how seldom do we give thought to the devotion, the sacrifice and self-effacement of these faithful teachers without whom that system would fade and vanish like an iridescent dream.

When a member of the laity, an O'Connell, a Windthorst, an Ozanam, a Garcia Moreno, rises

to the full strength and dignity of Catholic virtue his name and deeds are indelibly recorded on the scroll of history. When a churchman has stood like Samuel among the prophets, head and shoulders above his fellows, a grateful people perpetuate his blessed memory with enduring monuments of bronze or stone. But for the devoted lives, the priceless service and the splendid achievements of our sisters and brothers there are no imposing monuments to keep alive the gratitude of posterity, to challenge its admiration and inspire it with a spirit of emulation. No eloquent tongues proclaim the beauty of their lives; no gifted pens record their names on the world's roll of honor; no pæans of praise recite their worthy deeds. Silently they live and labor and silently they pass on to the reward of their many virtues. How applicable to them are the words of St. Paul: "For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. iii. 3.)

Yet they are not without memorials more enduring than those of perennial brass. They have erected their own monuments in the hearts of their charges which they have fired with a love divine; in the minds they have stored with high and holy principles; in the souls they have fixed in habits of virtue; in the noble characters they have molded in the impressionable and formative years of adolescence. Again, in the

sustaining hope and Christian resignation they have brought to the sick and the dying; in the fallen souls they have snatched like brands from the burning, to purify and uplift to better things; in the happiness and opportunities they have brought to the joyless souls of the foundling, the orphan, the homeless; in the peace and comfort they have given to the aged wrecks of humanity who have outlived filial affection and gratitude. These are your monuments, children of the lowly Christ, and they rise high above the vandalism of a material age and defy the iconoclasm of a fickle and cynical world. These are your monuments and they are more enduring than time itself, for in eternity also they will witness to God the sacred character of your service and the priceless value of your deeds. At the threshold of eternity the Son of the Eternal Father, whose good and faithful servants you have been, will pronounce the eulogy of your lives which will be your passport into the realms of eternal blessedness.

In the divine economy of the Catholic Church, after the priesthood and apart from the sacraments, there is no single agency more important to the success of her mission than her teaching sisters and brothers. To the anointed ambassador of heaven's high King, it is given to proclaim the eternal verities and essential obligations of religion. It is his to "preach the word

. . . reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine." But to you, His consecrated handmaids, He delegates the sacred task of making application of His preaching to the individual hearts and souls of the lambkins of His flock — to correct their evil tendencies, to check their vicious impulses, to neutralize their pernicious environment, to fill them with a desire of heavenly things, and in love and truth and patience to order all things sweetly unto God. You are the ploughmen of the soul who furrow its virgin soil and plant therein the seeds of Christian knowledge that, watered by sacramental streams and warmed by the sunshine of divine love, brings forth the rich harvest of Christian virtue. Yours is the sacred vocation of soul-culture. To you it is given to plant and weed and watch and prepare for the increase of God. And this glorious work of God our teaching communities have been carrying on from the earliest years of the Church's existence.

The religious state which made possible these long centuries of religious service, had for its founder none less than the Divine Architect, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Not indirectly, nor in a general way did He build unto Himself this temple of sanctity, but directly, personally and with marvelous detail. Not only did He sharply distinguish the religious life from the common life of the commandments, clearly point out the

sublime end of the former state and in a general way devise its plan, but with tender paternal solicitude He worked out with counsel and example many of its holy specifications. Not content to be its Master-Builder, the Son of God must needs identify Himself yet more intimately with this glorious temple of religion by becoming Himself the archetype of the religious life and the proto-religious.

Religious perfection — the object of the religious state — was the end He labored for and fully realized in His earthly career. Voluntary poverty, transcendent chastity, absolute obedience, were the virtues that shone resplendently in His life; and these were the means, reduced to the terms of the corresponding vows, He appointed for the attainment of the exalted end of the religious state. Hence Jesus Christ was not merely the architect but also the prototype of the religious state. How significant, therefore, to you religious are the words of your divine Exemplar: "I am the way and the truth and the life." (John xiv:16.)

Consequently, in the divine economy of the Church the religious state is not the result of ecclesiastical indulgence, nor merely a matter of religious expediency; but it is, as the Scriptures attest and the Church proclaims, a matter of divine right based not upon the commands but on the counsels of Jesus Christ. "It was born

with the Church," as Montalembert says, "and it has never ceased to co-exist with her."

It would seem that the first fervor of the apostolic Church found expression in its forms. It is incontestable that the Apostles lived in its spirit and bore its obligations as far as the necessities of their divine mission would permit. No less an authority than St. Thomas of Aquin, supported by the great Leander of Seville, asserts that the Apostles of the Lord not only observed the substance of the religious life, but they were believed actually to have bound themselves by vow to all the obligations that belonged to this state of perfection.

The Acts of the Apostles witness the fact that the spirit, the observances and much of the rule of life of the first Christians were those of the religious life as we know it to-day. They lived in community life. They sold all their individual possessions, and the proceeds thereof they held in common for their common needs. (Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 32, 34, 35, 37.) Both Eusebius and St. Jerome unite in saying that the first known religious were the first disciples of Jesus Christ. St. Ignatius of Antioch, an auditor of St. John, in his letter to Polycarp, tells us that in his day, religious virginity was in high esteem and the object of a vow. St. Cyprian, writing in the middle of the third century, speaks of these virgins, whom he calls

“The Blossoms on the Tree of the Church,” as having dedicated themselves to God in the religious state.

If the second and third centuries lost some of the fervor that characterized the apostolic age, they were not utterly wanting in heroic souls who, not content to brave martyrdom for their faith, lovingly embraced the spiritual martyrdom that came from their self-immolation on the altar of religious perfection.

In the third century they again began to gather in communities and publicly make profession of solemn vows. In the fourth century St. Augustine drew up the first religious rule for their guidance. During the persecution of Diocletian there was at Nisibis of Mesopotamia, a convent of fifty of these heroic nuns, among whom was the glorious Febronia, destined to be numbered among the Church's saints and martyrs. In the West, St. Jerome became their counselor and historian. Towards the end of the fourth century St. Ambrose wrote his work on “The Virgins,” in which he declares that more young women yearly consecrate themselves to God in Alexandria, Africa and the East than there are men in all Milan. Towards the end of the sixth century Rome offered asylum to three thousand nuns, driven thither by the destruction of their convents in Italy. At the same time St. Florentina ruled over a community of one thou-

sand nuns in Spain. Neither were the daughters of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales less appreciative of the blessings of convent life than those of the older nations of Christendom. Scarcely was the faith implanted in their souls, when, in the fullness of their fervor, they gave themselves unreservedly to God. Reigning queens, as well as ransomed slaves, entered the convents of the Church on an equal footing. Sexburga, queen of Kent, and Ethelreda and Ermerilda, queens of Mercia, were English rulers who put aside the crown of state to win the aureola of a saint. The respect in which religious were held by the early Anglo-Saxon Christians was written into the law of the land. The law took them under its protection and bestowed upon them the beautiful and expressive titles, "The Brides of Christ" and "The Spouses of God." And so on down through the centuries, the fairest of the Church's daughters, radiant in the unsullied innocence of virginal purity, have flocked to her altars to consecrate the service of their unblemished lives to the glory of their divine Master.

But if the primary purpose of their consecration was the glory of God and the perfection of their own souls through charity, they were not indifferent to the needs of humanity. Theirs was not a self-centered fanaticism that sought only personal advantage, however supernatural.

It was a divine passion that in serving God acquired a goodness, which, after its nature, diffused itself to the profit of their fellow beings. If I here refer only to the intellectual pursuits and scholastic labors of our Catholic sisters, it is not because I undervalue the eleemosynary labors of our religious communities, but because the former are more appropriate to the present occasion.

From the very earliest years of Christianity history has associated religious communities with intellectual activities and academic pursuits. Every convent contained a school as well as a workshop. Every convent, therefore, was an educational institution. In the beginning this educational activity was chiefly in the interests of the community, but it soon widened its scope to extend the blessings of knowledge to the children of the neighborhood. For the transcription and illumination of manuscripts civilization owes them a debt of gratitude second only to that which it owes to the monks. In the liberal arts of those days they were deeply versed. They not only possessed a thorough familiarity with the text of the Scriptures, but in a few instances manifested an astonishing knowledge of its science. The Fathers of the Church were no strangers to their thought. Grammar was studied with avidity. Latin poetry of no mean order was written in abundance. The classic

authors were studied, imitated and committed to memory. As early as the fifth century St. Brigid established the famous school at Kildare. It was under the tutelage and inspiration of the great Abbess Hilda that the English language burst into verse on the lips of Cædmon in the middle of the seventh century. It was at her command that the same inspired cowherd translated the greater part of the Bible into Anglo-Saxon. When St. Boniface, with the clear vision and unerring judgment of a great apostle, determined to supplement his own apostolate of preaching with the apostolate of the classroom, he was not at a loss to know where to turn for teachers. Straight to the convent of Wimbourne he directed his cry for assistance. And these good religious, no less renowned for their learning than for their holiness, unhesitatingly enlisted in the work of winning a nation to God. The zealous Chumihilt and Berathgilt were the first to answer his call. In the year 748 Lioba, Thecla and Walburga, with twenty-seven others of their English sisters, braved the peril of the deep and the dangers of the wilderness to assist their fellow-countryman, St. Boniface, through the apostolate of teaching.

At the convent of Chelles, presided over by the Erudite Bertilla, scores of English girls were gathered in pursuit of an education. St. Adelaide of Gueldres, abbess of Cologne, in the tenth

century conducted a school for girls in which she and her entire community taught. In the eleventh century the convent of Boncerai, at Angers, was famous for the number of young princesses who were educated there. These are but a few conspicuous examples of cloistered schools whose work has been recorded in history. In a general way we know that the cathedral schools of the so-called "dark ages" from which sprang some of the great universities of the Middle Ages, were paralleled by convent schools no less efficient, if less famous, for the education of girls and young women.

In the Middle Ages they kept pace, within the restricted field of their opportunity, with the intellectual activity of that period. If the Homeric struggles between such intellectual Titans as Lafranc and Berengarius, Abelard and William of Champeaux, Albertus Magnus and Thomas of Aquin against the rationalists, overshadowed their modest but none the less efficient service, we know nevertheless that they were still faithful to the cause of popular education. The widening sphere of women's activity and the improved conditions of domestic life that began to appear about the middle of that period have been ascribed by historians to the wholesome influence of convent schools.

If the religious revolt of the sixteenth century interrupted their self-sacrificing work for Chris-

tian education, by the seizure and spoliation of convents, by the expulsion and exile of the nuns, it was, fortunately for humanity, but for the briefest time. Amidst the convulsions of that cataclysm of religious anarchy the increased need of the Church for the services of her consecrated daughters was in itself sufficient to increase the numbers of the old orders and to call into existence a number of new institutions. While the Church still trembled beneath the initial impact of that first blow St. Angela instituted her community of Ursulines to labor in the field of Christian education. The early part of the seventeenth century saw the institution of the Sisters of Charity by St. Vincent de Paul. Another half century has scarcely passed when the Sisters of St. Joseph are founded and enlisted in the cause of religious education. The eighteenth century witnessed the birth of the Sisters of the Presentation and their entrance upon the apostolate of teaching. The very last years of this century marked the foundation of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. From the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present they have sprung up in rapid succession, bearing testimony to the indestructible vitality and marvelous fertility of the one, true Church of God. All of these new companies, with the veteran armies of St. Dominic and St. Francis, valiantly and successfully combated the false

doctrines, the vicious principles and low standards with which the so-called reformation had flooded Europe.

All of these institutions of European origin sooner or later took root on American soil. And well and gloriously have they wrought for God and humanity. The monuments of their zeal for religion and of their devotion to Christian education dot the land from coast to coast and from gulf to lakes. While not abating one jot or tittle of their ancient law, they added to the spirit of their respective rules the American characteristics of energy, originality, intrepidity and resourcefulness. Loyal to the aims and ideals of their founders, with equal fidelity to their mission they adapted themselves to the needs of their adopted country. And so their names are high in honor in the annals of American education.

But if in its infancy the Church in America gratefully accepted the assistance of these institutes, born in the ancient haunts of Catholicity, in its infancy, too, it proved its own vitality and fruitfulness by giving to religion an institution indigenous to the soil, instinct with the truest spirit of Catholicity and consecrated to the holy cause of Christian education. This was the institute of the Friends of Mary at the Foot of the Cross. Here on the frontier of American civilization, a century ago, amid primeval

forests and conditions as primitive as ever faced the dauntless pioneer, the Sisters of Loretto began their glorious career of service for God and country. Viewed through the perspective of a hundred years, what an inspiring fact that is! How eloquently it foretold the future power and glory of the nascent Church in America.

One then might have thought that it was enough for those zealous and self-sacrificing missionaries who followed the pioneers into the wilderness to build their rude churches in the untamed wild and to administer the sacraments to their little flock, scattered over hundreds of square miles. The hardships they had to endure, the obstacles they had to overcome, the manifold dangers that confronted them in the discharge of these fundamental duties, might have suggested to them that the crowning work of religious education be left to their successors and to times less primitive and more propitious. Even had there been at hand trained, experienced and devoted religious to inaugurate the work and guarantee its permanence and success, it had been a sufficiently arduous and audacious undertaking. But when they were neither at hand nor within call the sublime faith and holy audacity of Father Nerinckx can be clearly understood and appreciated.

The few poor families scattered over that bewildering expanse of territory who had given so

generously of their slender means for the maintenance of divine worship, must now give a thousand times more generously that their children may enjoy the blessings of religious education. They must give the fairest flowers of their families, fresh with the dew of the morning of life, fragrant with the odor of sanctity, comely in the radiant beauty of unblemished innocence — these, their daughters, they must give to God and to Holy Church. These lilies of the valley, of the wood and the mountain, must be gathered from near and far to lay broad and deep the foundations of an institute destined to play so conspicuous a part in the religious development of Kentucky and the West; to perpetuate here in our beloved America the glorious traditions of consecrated virginity that in other lands had shed undying luster upon the Church of Christ; to add to the records of religious education a chapter of which we are all supremely proud. The Church had laboriously tilled the virgin soil of this newborn nation, had planted with generous hand the seed of faith and virtue, and these devoted daughters of Loretto were the first fruits of her labor and her prayer.

Even as the Savior chose from among the humblest of the people the Apostles who were to proclaim the message of salvation to the ends of the earth; to confute the sophistries of the Athe-

nian philosophers; to defy the power of the Roman Empire; and to lay strong and broad the foundations of an indestructible Church — so in like manner He chose as the first members of this institute the least exalted of His children, buried in the wilderness, the vanguard of civilization, engrossed in the arduous task of wresting a bare living from the untamed forces of nature. And, humanly speaking, what worthier subjects could He have chosen for the beginning of this work than the strong, energetic, courageous and pious children of the frontier? Surrounded by elemental conditions, confronted with disheartening difficulties and weighted down with a poverty that would have wrecked any enterprise not blessed by God, the intrepid and unspoiled young women, as simple and unostentatious as the homespun garments they wore, were admirable material for a work that called for heroic sacrifice, unflinching patience and steadfast courage. Even as solid but rough hewn rocks constitute the foundation of the beautiful edifice that rises in lines of airy grace through arch and angle to the towering glory of its cross-crowned spire, so these simple, solid, wholesome and saintly daughters of the pioneers constitute the enduring foundation of this magnificent institute, now possessed of every grace of art, science and religion, imparting to it stability and

strength and the pledge of perpetuity and ever-increasing efficiency in the cause of truth, natural and divine.

And even as the spiritual and intellectual deficiencies of the Apostles were supplemented by the Pentecostal gifts of the Holy Spirit, so these proto-sisters of Loretto received from on high those priceless gifts of grace that supplied their natural deficiencies, enflamed them with zeal for the glory of God and made their lives a source of inspiration to their successors which can never fail of its influence as long as the Sisters of Loretto remain true to their traditions and their primitive spirit.

But the time came when these first Loretines, with their modest store of knowledge, their limited teaching experience and their crude methods, were succeeded by others who were intellectually their superiors; and these by others even more nobly endowed by nature and opportunity. Finally they could boast among them those for whom they could claim great intellectual and educational distinction; who had scaled the heights of knowledge and from their lofty eminence viewed with unobstructed vision the entire field of academic truth; who had mastered the science of education and taken fast hold upon its immutable principles; who had brought within these convent walls the ancient lore and modern thought of the great universities and

harmonized them with the eternal truths of religion. And so Loretto came in time into the full possession of her intellectual birthright.

But in the comparison and contrast of these antipodal conditions of past and present, the humble circumstances of the beginnings and the splendid achievements of the present, let no one depreciate the former nor view them with indulgent smile. If their simple pedagogical methods, their elementary curriculum and their modest academic standards appear poor, crude and inefficient when viewed in the light of present day requirements and through the perspective of a hundred years, viewed on the other hand in the environment of a wilderness, in the light of the deficiencies of those primitive times, and in the knowledge of the restrictions imposed upon them by an inexorable poverty — viewed against the background of these unfavorable conditions, their methods, their standards — yes, their very accomplishments — assume an importance and a value that compel our unfeigned admiration and unstinted applause. The splendid actualities of to-day are only the rich fulfillment of the promise of a hundred years ago. Let us hope that when the cycle of another century has been completed that the accumulation of its progressive merit will make the achievements of the present appear as relatively modest as the work of the beginnings appear to us this day.

May it be given to you to win in your day and generation the same abundant tokens of divine approval that were visited upon those who under God inaugurated this blessed work and who, we fondly believe, are to-day gazing down from the parapets of heaven upon this scene of joy and gladness. Your history is an inspiring one and bears the unmistakable stamp of God's blessing. Be faithful to its inspiration; hold fast to your splendid traditions; uphold the high standards of your founders; abide in their spirit, and the coming centuries shall not fail to proclaim your praises as the present proclaims the magnificent service and solid virtue of the first Sisters of Loretto who built so wisely and well to the glory of God, the honor of Holy Church and the advantage of their native land.

LITTLE LORETTO — HOLY GROUND

June 29, 1812 — June 30, 1912.

REVEREND MARK MOESLEIN, C. P., ST. CHARLES
CHURCH, KY., JUNE 30, 1912, BEFORE
THE SISTER-PILGRIMS FROM LORETTO
MOTHER HOUSE AND A LARGE
CONGREGATION.

“And He said: Come not nigh hither, put off the shoes from thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”—Exodus, iii. 5.

Catholic reverence and love for God's Holy Book, do not suffer us lightly to depart from the practice of beginning a sermon without a text from the Holy Bible. Man's words and man's ideas by themselves, are not good enough for us Catholics; for we are trained in a higher and better school. Our teacher is God Himself. The speech of other teachers does not satisfy our soul, unless their thoughts and words cluster about God's word, and draw in some way from His word, inspiration and guidance. Realizing Catholic sentiment in this matter, I wondered whether an occasion like the one we are here to celebrate, could possibly be without incidents and corresponding words recorded in the Bible,

which would fitly introduce whatever I may have to say on this blessed day of final Loretto Centennial Celebration. As I studied, it occurred to me that the events from which I have chosen the text, are most appropriate. I do not wish to insinuate that the events themselves or the chosen text refer to the occasion of this Loretto celebration. At best, they merely suggest the line of reflections and the structure of meditations which we are allowed to build around incidents of Loretto life of one hundred years ago.

Over four thousand years ago, there lived a people of intense individuality,—an exiled people, far away from home and kindred. For a time, they lived in the luxuries of abundance, enjoying the best which the land of their pilgrimage could offer them. Pharaoh, the grateful king whom Joseph served so faithfully, had made Joseph governor over all Egypt; and he had made Jacob and his sons with their families to dwell in the land of Gessen, the best place of all Egypt. This Pharaoh, the friend of Israel, was no more. He had been succeeded by another king, “who knew not Joseph.” He hated the strangers who dwelt in his realm. He oppressed them and would have exterminated them. “He set over them overseers to afflict them with burdens and to make their life bitter with hard works in clay and bricks, and with all

manner of service." The new king who knew not Joseph, would wipe out the very name of Israel from among his people, and ordained: "Whatsoever shall be born of the male sex, ye shall cast into the river: whatsoever of the female, ye shall save alive."

Among this down-trodden people, foreigners in Egypt, was a man not like other men. Though of the same flesh and blood, he was bigger in mind, immensely greater in heart than his fellows in exile. He was mighty in thought, but mightier in compassion for the afflictions of his crushed brethren. But like all truly great men, he was unconscious of his greatness, and rated himself as the least among the men of Israel, and but little able to do aught for them in their great trials. His soul was heavy and sorrowful over the afflictions of his people. Their many and dire miseries moved him to intense pity. He pleaded with the God of his fathers for relief. He offered himself a victim, that the God of Abraham would deign to reach out a helping hand to His exiled people. After forty years, a wanderer, even away from his own brethren, and thus doubly an exile, whilst herding the flocks of his father-in-law, he drew nigh unto Mt. Sinai. As he herded the dumb beasts, his soul was far away dreaming those deep thoughts of great minds,—great with the greatness of God's light shining in on them. He looked out over the

desert towards the Mount, and there a wonderful sight met his gaze. A bush in a flame of fire; yet the fire did not destroy the bush; a flame of fire leaping among the branches, running among the leaves, to and fro as a spark among reeds;—the intense glow, not of an earthly fire. Moses said: “I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.” He went; and as he came near, there spoke to him out of the burning bush a voice, saying: “Come not nigh hither, put off the shoes from thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. . . . I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Moses hid his face: for he durst not look at God. And the Lord said to him: I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry because of the rigor of them that are over the works: And knowing their sorrow, I am come down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians. . . . But come, and I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people, the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said to God: Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?”

This, Brethren, is the series of incidents, and these are words of the long ago, which, it occurred to me, might offer points of contact for reflections on the events of one hundred years

ago, which we are here to honor to-day, on the very site of their happening. In place of the desert at the foot of Mt. Sinai, we have the wilderness round about the Hardin's Creek of those early days. Substitute for Egypt the Kentucky of those times, with all the frontier territory then opening up to Catholic wanderers from persecution for conscience' sake. In place of the Moses of olden time, we are confronted by another giant among men. Not indeed a giant in body, but a giant in the thoughts for souls which he revolved in his mind; a greater giant because of the mighty heart which throbbed in his bosom. He too was an exile. Driven from his own country and kindred by men who hated not him, but his religion,—who persecuted him, not because of aught he had done to them, but because of his profession; for he was a fearless and self-sacrificing priest of Jesus Christ. He fled from the wicked who would not suffer him to spend himself in the labors of priestly charity among his own. He came to this favored land of ours, then, very largely a wilderness. The only Bishop who then ruled this vast country in the name of Christ, sent the ardent missionary pastor to hunt up the children of God — your ancestors — whom persecution for the faith of Christ Jesus had driven from the centers of civilization. Whilst these hardy pioneers struggled with the primeval forests, to transform

them into fields of future richest harvest, Father Nerinckx ministered, as best he might, to their spiritual needs. These settlers were scattered a few here, a few there, and a few elsewhere, laboring to subdue not only the wilderness, but to create new conditions of living. They had sacrificed what men cherish most to strengthen the foundations of social liberty, to make possible what is greater — religious liberty, to encourage and promote what is best and greatest — the spiritual liberty of the children of God. But they were weighed down by material hardships, which were many and trying, and by the yet greater hardships of soul; for they were Catholics. They professed the same faith which guides us. The same fire of divine charity which burns in our souls, burned in their hearts, and made them faithful to Christ under so much greater trial. They yearned for the worship, for the sacraments, and for the most holy sacrifice of the Spotless Lamb of God, which sustain us; but of all these treasures which are measured out to us so abundantly, they could share at best only very little, and often not at all. Only when a few of those unusual men who do not honor the world often enough by their presence and labors, were goaded on by the spirit of God to leave home, the comforts of civilization, yes, and self too, in order to sacrifice themselves on the altar of self-im-

molation for their brethren, only then did an occasional faint ray of sunshine come into the soul-life of those early settlers. Kentucky and the farther western country was honored and blessed by the priestly visits of men of the type of Father Badin and of Father Nerinckx. Not only like Moses of old did they sacrifice themselves for the spiritual advantage of those early pioneers; but their souls were grievously distressed over their inability to do all that their hearts yearned to do, to relieve their brethren in the faith. They prayed. They labored without ceasing. They made little of hardships. They welcomed every manner of sacrifice, prepared to lay down life even in order that the children of God scattered about in the wilderness might have some of the comforts of religion to sustain them,—that in the midst of their afflictions and privations there might be a few drops of the heavenly dew which makes men strong when trials weigh heavily. Father Nerinckx sustained by incredible might of body, and mightier generosity of soul, not only prayed for blessings upon the people confided to his care, but he forgot self to such an extent that he seemed to have lost sight of the fact that, after all, his endurance could not be any more than human. Foregoing comforts of all kinds, his night-watches in prayer were many and long; his travels by night and day for the purpose of

hunting up isolated Catholics and ministering to them, were almost continuous.

Notwithstanding the unceasing efforts of Father Nerinckx, the weight upon his great heart continued to grow heavier and heavier; for the divine vineyard kept on expanding and reaching off farther into the wilderness, but the number of laborers did not grow correspondingly. Only the very few are heroes like Father Nerinckx! What grieved him most and caused him most anxiety, was not so much the spiritual needs of the fathers and mothers, not even the spiritual needs of the old men and women who were near the grave; for he knew the strength and endurance of their faith, because not even persecution had been able to deprive them of that priceless treasure. But he grieved most for the children, the chosen ones of the heavenly Father's household, those whom Christ took to His bosom and of whom He said: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." He realized that these little ones must grow up in the ignorance which is worse than death,—the ignorance of God's revelation through Christ Jesus,—unless efficient helpers came to the assistance of the hard pressed missionaries. With dread did he look forward to the day, when those who were mere babes then, would be confronted by spiritual dangers. He

dreaded what might happen to these little ones, grown to man's and woman's estate, unsustained by thorough religious instruction and safeguards. Their privations tortured him exceedingly. He did penance more severely. He sacrificed himself more completely. But all the while his prayer was, that God would raise up laborers from among the children of the settlers themselves, that God would cast a spark into the souls of maidens of Kentucky, setting their hearts afire with that flame of charity which spreads and runs to and fro among generous souls and self-sacrificing souls, like a spark among reeds, and which enkindles whatever comes into contact with it. Father Nerinckx understood that the upbuilding of the kingdom of God in the new world as elsewhere, must be done largely by the coöperation of woman. Catholic women of the right type must be found, who would consecrate themselves to the service of the Christ with an undivided love. He realized more clearly day by day, that to do God's work here upon earth thoroughly and completely, even most zealous apostles need the cooperation of generous, self-sacrificing and even heroic woman. Did not the infinitely Almighty Creator declare: "It is not good for a man to be alone: let Us make him a help like unto himself." From then until now, women in whom the love of God was strong, have proven them-

selves worthy of their divinely given mission to be helpers in a much higher sense than the vulgar world understands. Surely the Catholic women of even pioneer America would not let themselves be outdone by their sisters of other times and of other climes! The lonely missionary looked to the generous Catholic young womanhood of Kentucky for assistance, and they did not fail him!

He had prayed long that the Lord would start a flame of fire in the bosom of some fervid souls. His prayer was heard. At last, he too saw a flaming bush in the wilderness, and the bush was not burned. The bush which he saw, was not such as met the gaze of Moses, not such as grow in fields or along the wayside; but it was that marvelous creation of God, a human being with a soul all ablaze with the fire of spiritual enthusiasm to work for Christ and the brethren redeemed by Him,—to work for the Divine Lover of the children of men, in the midst of all manner of hardships. Such souls are the product, not of the forces of nature even at its best, but they are special creations — products in a most particular manner of the Almighty Hand of God. They are triumphs of grace, lifting nature into closer intimacy and greater likeness with the Only Begotten of the Father. The soul of an American young woman,—born in

America, reared in America, breathing the rugged force of early American life,— was the living human bush aflame with the fire of charity. The spirit of personal sacrifice which transformed the old world, was beginning its glorious work of transformation in the new world. Mary Rhodes is the name of her who offered neither gold nor other treasures to her God; but who offered her own self to be spent in the service of Christ Jesus and of His Church. The fire which God had kindled in her soul, was the determination to go to the assistance of the sorely tried missionary pastor, and help him care for the little ones of the flock.

Here in sight of this very church of St. Charles, she began what was to be her life-work. She opened a school for the children of the settlers. She taught them the elements of useful knowledge; but she taught them chiefly the best and the highest science which is the knowledge of God and of how to do His Holy Will. The work was begun in God's familiar way of doing great things. "The weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong." There came first one, and then another, and yet another, and another, until they numbered six,— all maidens of Kentucky. In the soul of every one of these, burned the same divine flame which does not destroy, but imparts

added spiritual beauty and vitality, and starts aburning the same heavenly flame in other generous hearts.

Mary Rhodes first thought of sacrificing herself for the work of Christ, when, as she lived in her brother's log-cabin, she saw his little ones growing up without schooling of any kind, and what was worse in her estimation, growing up with entirely too little religious instruction. She taught them. Then she reached out for the children of the neighborhood, and taught them in like manner. With the consent and blessing of Father Nerinckx, she opened her first school in a log cabin, which was much the worse for neglect and decay. The log cabin school stood not far from here,—yonder on the hill above Hardin's Creek. What Father Badin and Father Nerinckx had failed to accomplish, this young woman was realizing single-handed: "that no flesh should glory in His sight." After a time came another, Christina Stuart by name. She too was goaded on by the earnest longing of doing something for Christ, by helping the missionaries to lessen the blight of ignorance about religion. Father Nerinckx brought together these young souls who were thinking sublime thoughts. What a privilege to be instrumental in the establishment of such friendships! Mary Rhodes and Christina Stuart exchanged thoughts. They unlocked their hearts to one

another, and revealed heavenly secrets, which had, until then, been closely guarded. They discussed plans of taking up their abode in an abandoned and dilapidated log cabin, trusting to Divine Providence for all else. God was leading them, without their knowing it, to open the first Loretto Convent. The missionary who had prayed so long, who had labored so long alone, was gladdened, that these weak ones should realize so quietly and so unostentatiously what he and Father Badin had failed to accomplish. He blessed these fervent lovers of Jesus Christ, and he encouraged them. His blessing was confirmed by the Lord; for scarcely had the work been begun, when Nancy Havern offered herself to share in their labors and their self-immolation. One hundred years ago, on the 25th of April, 1812, in old St. Charles' Church, the log cabin church of those days, knelt the three young women, who were the burning flame out of which came the divine promise of relief from many of the afflictions of God's people in the wilderness. At the altar, stood the missionary who had hoped so intensely for an occasion like this one. He, more than any other, understood its import; for to him these maidens were for the western missions what the promises spoken out of the burning bush were to Moses. The flame of fire which burned in the souls of these women, made them ex-

ceedingly great among women, with a greatness which is from above. There they knelt before God's altar, giving up all that they had, and what is more, renouncing all that they might have, and offering themselves. To whom? And for what? Offering themselves to the priest who stood before them? Yes! Ah, but not to him for his sake or for his gain! Then, as to-day, on God's altar there was the little tabernacle door, and back of that door the throne of mercy and of love of Him, whose delight is to be with the children of men. They offered themselves to Jesus Christ, voluntary victims of the self-immolation of charity. In the person of these Kentucky young women, the Great Good Shepherd was coming to relieve His people from many of their privations. On that memorable 25th of April, 1812, in old St. Charles' Church, Father Nerinckx vested and veiled the first Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross.

Two months and four days later, the settlers of that time again met in their log cabin church, to witness a like ceremony. This time, they saw before them the three Sisters who had already consecrated themselves to Jesus Christ, and kneeling at the altar were two others, sisters according to the flesh of two of the three who had given themselves to the service of charity on the previous 25th April. Anna Rhodes and Sarah Havern were the candidates for the privi-

leged honor of the veil, the symbol of woman's consecration to the undivided apostolate of charity for souls. It was the 29th of June, 1812, that they knelt before the altar, and made known their longing for that closest union of intense souls with Christ, cutting loose from all purely earthly ties, and pledging themselves to Him who laid down His very life for them, as also for us. At the same time, Nellie Morgan was accepted as a postulant for the same coveted prize, which was to be hers on the 12th of August following. We are assembled in this new St. Charles Church, to commemorate what your forefathers witnessed one hundred years ago,—and to join our voices with their voices, in praising and thanking God for the mercies which He bestowed on His people in this very place, made holy by the presence of Father Nerinckx and of those six Kentucky women who offered themselves so unreservedly on the altar of charity. Truly the ground whereon we stand is holy ground, even though it be less holy than that whereon stood the burning bush seen by Moses.

On that same memorable day, June 29, 1812, the first community of the Sisters of Loretto retired from the Church to their very poor and comfortless log convent to take up the campaign for the first election of a Mother-Superior. This is the second centennial event for the honoring of which we are here to-day. The first

Loretto campaign for office was not conducted along the lines of our political campaigns for public office; for self-seeking of every form was far from the souls of these electors, one of whom must be made Mother-Superior. They trampled under foot all selfish considerations and worldly theories, and chose as their ruler the youngest and one of the last of their number. Mary Rhodes and Christina Stuart with their first companion, Nancy Havern, generously stepped aside, and deliberately elected another to guide them and the destinies of the work begun by them. They pledged themselves to obey the youngest and the frailest of their number; not that this frailest flower first to be plucked by the Bridegroom (she died Dec. 11, 1812), sought the honor and responsibility of position; but because the electors judged her to be "the most virtuous." She did not judge herself to be so and fittest for the place; but others did.

What these mere beginners in the religious life did on that ever memorable 29th of June, 1812, their saintly Father, the great Nerinckx, did even more heroically a few years later. When there grew up antagonism to the manner of his work among the members of the first religious congregation of distinctively American origin and history,—when another undertook to build up a superstructure different from that which the builders of the foundation had

planned, and to undo in large measure what had been so laboriously accomplished, rather than that there should be so much as a suspicion of a scandalous contest among the laborers in the Lord's vineyard, he broke relentlessly asunder the tenderest bonds which bound him so closely to Little Loretto and to his spiritual daughters. He gave up to another the direction of the Sisterhood whose foundation owes so very much to him. He gave over to the guidance of others, the generous band of women, whom he loved as only they can love, who love in Christ and for Christ Jesus. He exiled himself from Little Loretto. He left all that his soul cherished. He went among strangers, to labor for them during the few remaining days of mortal life, and to die away from his dear ones, a pilgrim without a home!

Is it a divine reward for these noble acts of self-effacement whereby Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart, Anne Havern, lost sight of the fact of their being the first and of having started the work, that God has kept far from among their spiritual daughters the spirit of schism and of disruption? Is God rewarding the Father-Founder of Loretto, for having effaced himself even more completely, by preserving among the Sisters at the Foot of the Cross, unity and concord and harmony? Ah, dear people, the first native community, the Sisters of Loretto at the

Foot of the Cross, a native flower planted in American soil, cultivated and made to grow in native soil even unto perfection, and unaffiliated with flower of foreign growth, has ever since those early days been a community wherein self-effacement crushed the ambition for self-glorification and self-exaltation,—a community wherein the spirit of self-sacrificing lowliness compelled as it even now compels, preference for the example of self-forgetting so gloriously given one hundred years ago by Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart, Anne Havern and Father Nerinckx! To this day, this first native community entirely of American origin, has maintained its unity. The provocations for schism were neither few nor slight; for other builders undertook to erect on the foundation laid by Father Nerinckx and the early Loretines, cloistral edifices other than those planned by the Founders. One builder after the other would make the Rule for the Companions of Mary at the Foot of the Cross, conform more and more to his views of what it should be. Yet the community remained one, strong in the strength of unity, doing the work for which they organized one hundred years ago. United they withstood the evils of harmful reorganization from without. United they stand to-day at the Foot of the Cross, an undivided and harmonious body, joyously ready to begin another century of generous service for Christ

and for country, guiding and instructing youth.

Is it thus, that the God of peace and of harmony and of permanence, blessed those first generous community acts of self-effacement of June 29, 1812? Is it thus, that God blessed the effacement of self on the part of Father Nerinckx, when twelve years later, June 16, 1824, he left blessed Little Loretto in the dale beyond, and his dearest daughters in Christ, to begin again his homeless wanderings in preparation for the death which was even then at the door; for he died August 12, 1824? Is it in consideration of such profound and entire self-abasement and self-forgetting in the early days of Loretine existence, that God rewarded the Sisterhood by giving to the Sisters of Loretto the stability of methods, of organization, and of spirit, which is assured by the final approval of the Holy Rule by Christ's Master-architect and Master-builder on earth for the time, Pius X, by name? Why may we not so believe? Is it not God's way to exalt them who humble themselves? Is it not his way never to forsake them who do not forsake Him? Father Nerinckx never grew tired repeating to his spiritual daughters: "Do not forsake Providence and He will not forsake you." See the glorious reward for their trust in Him alone, as it is recorded in the Annals for the Century: "The examination to which the

Rule and Constitution were subjected resulted practically in the elimination of the modifications that had been introduced without warrant during the past, and restored them as near to the original Rule drawn up by the founder and approved by the Holy See, 1816, as the changes in conditions of life wrought by the vicissitudes of time will permit. The Decree of Confirmation was placed in the hand of the Mother-General May 18, 1904. The long years of waiting, the trials patiently borne, were rewarded in God's own time and way, and Loretto, on the eve of her centennial, attained her rightful place among the religious Congregations of the Church. With hearts swelling with gratitude to Divine Providence, the Mother-General and her companion hastened on their homeward journey. Never did holy joy reign more completely at Loretto . . . than on the tenth of June, when glad Te Deums welcomed the travelers home." — The Lord's reward for lowliness, for self-forgetting, for self-effacement, is never insignificant; for He loves the humble and makes their cause His own. In the desert, Moses answered the God of his fathers, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" In a somewhat similar manner did the Founders of Little Loretto behave. From the lips of one after the other came the exclamation: "Who am I that

I should fancy for a moment that the doing of this great work of God is dependent on me? Others are better qualified and are holier than I am." They did yield to others; but God made their cause His, and prospered their work as only He can. "I will be with thee; and this shalt thou have for a sign, that I have sent thee: When thou shalt have brought my people out of Egypt, thou shalt offer sacrifice to God upon this mountain." To-day this large gathering of daughters of the Founders of Little Loretto, returns to the cradle of their Sisterhood to offer to God a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for having been with their community during all the years of trial. They are here in the very place of the self-effacement of their Founders to glorify God for having honored so singularly the lowliness of the humble and for having blest their work with the privilege of Final Pontifical Approval!

The centennial commemoration of Organization Day, is a time of manifold rejoicing, not for the Sisters of Loretto alone. It is also a day of joyous commemoration for the parish of St. Charles. On this day one hundred years ago, the early settlers of this neighborhood, your forefathers, would not suffer that generous service to Jesus Christ should be offered by six Kentucky maids alone. The faith and charity which were strong in their Catholic souls, would

not permit your fathers to stand by listless on-lookers. They determined to give tangible evidence of their sympathy for the work of God which was being done in their midst. They too would be generous. Their generosity took the shape of the resolve to build for the Sisters of the new Congregation, a series of suitable convent buildings, even though nothing better than log cabins. June 29th is the centennial anniversary of the cutting of the first logs for the new convent. It is the centennial anniversary, not of a corner stone-laying, but of the Log-Corner-Laying of the ancient Convent of Little Loretto. Thanks to the very courteous thoughtfulness of the Mother General, a souvenir folder enables us to look at an inspiring picture, which calls up before the mind images of what those convent buildings were, and which points clearly to the source of the enthusiasm which animated then, as it animates to-day, the Sisterhood of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross:— a group of Lorettones sheltered under Sorrowful Mary's mantle. Treasure this souvenir; for it is worth keeping as a reminder of a glorious past.

Brethren, is there not ample cause for rejoicing? Should not you, the descendants of those early settlers, rejoice, because your fathers built a house for the first native Sisterhood? Should you not be glad to see in your midst to-day, so many of the spiritual daughters of those first

Sisters of Loretto for whom your ancestors erected a dwelling? What more fitting than that they should come back to you (though it be only for a day), to you the children of those men and women who built for them the cradle-convent of their community! Ah, it is a blessed day no less for you than for the Sisters, that such a large delegation of Sisters (56) should celebrate Organization Day, Log-Corner-Laying, and the self-effacement of the Founders, on the very site where it all transpired. Surely, the place whereon we stand is holy ground!

How changed conditions are now from what they were then! The fire of charity once started in the souls of Mother Anne Rhodes, of the co-foundresses Mary Rhodes and Christina Stuart, and of their earliest companions Anne Havern, Sarah Havern and Nellie Morgan, never burnt low. Day by day, it gathered new force, sending forth bright sparks into like souls, until thousands upon thousands of angel-maids of mercy were inflamed with the same fire of Christ's charity. Generation after generation, their numbers increased. He, who hung from the cross bleeding, reached out His pierced hands and extended arms, to the East and to the West, to the South and to the North, pleading with fervid Catholic young womanhood of America to come to Him, to join His Sorrowful Mother at the Foot of the Cross. They heard

the voice. They saw the vision of self-immolation in such divinely blessed company. They flew to the Cross and to the sheltering mantle of the Mother of Sorrows, longing to carry part of the burden of mercy which weighed so heavily upon the Crucified One. Multitude after multitude was enrolled under the leadership of those first six Loretto Sisters. All, as their Mothers in Christ before them, gave up whatever is prized by worldlings, in order to be better able to quench somewhat the thirst of Jesus for souls. They did not aspire to the intimacies of contemplation, sitting at His feet; but they would labor to lift from His heart the burden of sorrow over the privations of the little ones whom the dangers of religious ignorance encompassed. During one hundred years have they been bringing these chosen ones to the Master, to be enfolded in His arms, snatching them out of the snares prepared for them by the evil one. During these many years, were they contented with the place prepared for them at the foot of the cross. There in company of the Sorrowful Mother, whether in cities or in the wild-wood, they offered themselves victims of self-immolation to the service of Him who died for all on the Cross.

But enough of the praises of the past. Brethren, a word for you and your own. No more than your forefathers, should you be will-

ing to stand by to-day, merely admiring the great work done by the Sisters of Loretto. There is a work for you too, as there was work to be done by those early settlers. The ministrations of God among men need self-sacrificing souls to-day, as they were needed in former times. If aught, there is a much greater demand for them now than there was then. Be not of the number of those whose generosity in the cause of Christ is measured only by the amount of money which they give. What good is money, if there be not laborers in the Master's vineyard? By all means give whatever money you can to the cause of God, to repay in part His goodness to you; for money is necessary even to God's work among men. But do not stop there. Personal service is needed. It is live men and women who are needed much more than money. Who amongst you is unable to do something towards the advancement of God's kingdom among men? Yes, and may it not be, that even now the Spirit of God is whispering to the heart of some of the young here assembled, to do what others have done and are doing. He may be scattering the fire of vocation, here and now at this very time, as He did in the past and does elsewhere constantly. Should you discover such sparks of heavenly fire in the souls of your sons and daughters, foster the spark until it bursts out into the flame of charity which finds its fullest expression

in the entire oblation of self to Jesus Christ and to His service. Be glad to give (and consider yourselves privileged to be allowed to make the gift), the most beautiful, the most talented, and the most generous of your boys and girls, either to the self-immolation of the cloister, or to the zealous self-sacrifice of the service of the altar. Judge yourselves blessed indeed, when a favorite child confides to you the cherished secret,—the wish to be a priest of God, or a bride of Christ. Encourage such souls to be true to the call. Help them in every way you can, to devote their life to the undivided service of the Crucified Christ!

And do Thou, O Lord God of superabundant mercies, bless these Sisters of Loretto, and all the members of the religious Congregation whom this large delegation represents on this glorious day of Jubilee! May their numbers grow day by day! Do Thou, Our Father, call other hundreds and more numerous hundreds of generous young souls, that they too may unite with Thy chosen daughters at the Foot of the Cross, to uphold the weary arms and the pierced bleeding hands of Thy Crucified Son, thus to lighten the burdens which weigh on Him so heavily! Do Thou, furnace of eternal charity, add fuel to the fire of self-immolation, of self-forgetting, of self-abasement, of self-effacement, and of burning zeal for souls, that they whom Thou hast

chosen for Thyself, may hourly burn more brightly and more intensely as entire holocausts of charity! O God, Thou intensest fire of everlasting love, enkindle in the souls of all of us who unite with Thy daughters in their jubilee rejoicing, a like flame of charity for the salvation of our brethren! Amen.
