

a consummation devoutly to be wished!

In this same year I wrote "Easter in Heaven".
Marie Mörl, that virgin so favoured by God,
 wrote to me with those hands which bore
 the sacred stigmata to express her joy and
 gratitude upon the reception of the book.

Christmas was drawing nigh, and I hasten-
 ed to Cincinnati, to celebrate that joyous
 festival, and witness the dying moments
 of another year.

1864

Politically considered this was a very memo-
 rable year. The election resulted in the
 choice of Lincoln to fill the presidential
 chair for a second term, and thus would
 for four more years the destinies of the great
 American nation. This was probably un-
 expected in Europe where the events of
 political life in the United States are glean-
 ed principally from the journals of the day,
 whose accounts are of course more or less
 influenced by party spirit, or prejudice.

Abroad, this election seemed almost impos-
 sible, yet the majority of the states, especi-
 ally in the West awarded to Mr. Lincoln the
 preference. God permitted this, and I firmly
 believe that it was for the welfare of the
 country and the termination of the war.

If I present my reason for thinking so it
 will only be to let my European readers
 know the plain truth, for generally
 speaking

with politics I have nothing to do.

446

I am interested in them only so far as the way in which they turn may indirectly promote or endanger the salvation of souls. The interests of religion will be favored by the termination of the war, and that will I think be effected earlier by this re-election than if the Democrats had elected either a peace or war candidate in his place.

They were loud in their cries for "Dr. Clellan", "Dr. Clellan and peace", Lincoln, and "four weary years of blood and tears" will ensue." I did not agree ^{with} these views because: This was a year of hardship for the South, already devastated by the conflict. She had ^{borne} for all the years of the war bravely borne the "heat and burden" of the battle, but her strength was well nigh exhausted, and many of her states seeing the hopelessness of the cause had given up. The South had not the means to go on, the North is well able to do so, through four additional years. The former therefore hoped that a President would be chosen from the Democratic ranks, which would ensure the sympathies of many influential statesmen in her regard. She would have put forth every effort, and by a few victories ^{she hoped} would have ^{to} ^{make} represented the cause of the North as so hopeless that ^{her} the citizens there would have rebelled against a new draft.

What then? We would have had two wars, ⁴⁴⁷
the one in the North, more destructive than
the other. But Lincoln, who had the army
on his side, was elected, and that hope was
dashed to the ground. The southern press, of
course, tried to represent everything in the
^{most favorable} best light possible, and sought to keep up
their courage to the last, but after the elec-
tion the clouds seemed to gather, darker
than ever, one defeat was only the prelude
of another, till the final one came.

To the honor of the American people be
it said that notwithstanding the feverish
excitement of the campaign, which follow-
ed so closely on the four years of rebellion,
there was not one political murder, and
the election passed off with scarce an
^{added} ripple on the troubled sea of affairs.

Missions in Ohio.

My first mission this year was given
at Sidney, to a mixed congregation. The
former church ^{which} had been seriously damaged
by the malice of certain parties who had
placed some explosive materials in it, was
replaced by a splendid gothic edifice. So well
does the Lord know how to turn evil to good
for his children. I then went to Hami-
son, near Cincinnati, a parish where
the Franciscans are in charge.

448

When I first saw the place sixteen years ago, a mission was out of the question. There were so few Catholics there, but now the congregation has been regularly organized, and is sufficiently numerous. How general has been ^{these} happy changes, and how I love to look back upon the many places where ^{they} it has come under my observation for the last seventeen years.

Pennsylvania.

Hollidaysburg was my next destination. It is situated amongst the mountains, and must be a delightful locality in Summer, but when I saw it, winter reigned supreme, and I suffered greatly from the intense cold. Not precisely that the temperature was so low, but I lodged in a frame house where the wind came in at every point, and those who have made recent investigations of the polar regions, say that it is the wind which produces such excessive frigidity. When the thermometer is ten or fifteen degrees below zero, if wind prevail, the cold will be more perceptible than in weather, severer but perfectly calm.

The wind blew with such severity round my frame tenement that the curtains at the windows waved with every gust.

There are no double windows in this region, and the single ones are so insecure as to afford little protection. There was a fire

it is true, but it succumbed to the cold, and⁴⁴
threw out no warmth in the room.

I retired, but rose in a very few minutes,
fearing actually to be frozen in bed, and
sat by the dying embers until morning.
As the hours of the night wore away, I begged
God to accept this discomfort as a penance,
joyfully endured for his sake, and mer-
cifully bless a project which I then had very
much at heart for the protection of the Church
in America. It had reference to the work writ-
ten to aid in the conversion of American
protestants, and to assist those who really
love the truth and try to discover it, to come
into the Church. I had a number of copies
elegantly bound, and, on Washington's birthday
sent the publisher, Mr. Walsh, to the seat of gov-
ernment to present them in my name to
the men who directed the affairs of the na-
tion. ^{I sent also a copy with} ~~the~~ a letter to the President who ac-
cepted the book most graciously and return-
ed the assurance that he would most certain-
ly read it. And this, although the tumult
of war was at its height. The senators, too,
tendered me their acknowledgments, the
offering made a good impression, and the
whole affair passed off more successfully
than I had hoped. The different govern-
ors, the secretaries, and the judges of the
supreme courts will each have a copy.

I was encouraged to recommend the work

through a circular to all the bishops and clergy⁴⁰ in order to diffuse it amongst the people. Finally, I sent copies to various hospitals and prisons. Of course this necessitated assistance from Europe, which I have every reason to expect from the munificence of King Louis I. who has already sent me one thousand florins, and a letter of appreciation ^{and encouragement} in regard to my work.

Pittsburgh.

From Hollidaysburg I went to Pittsburgh, the episcopal see. This is a populous place, and presents a different aspect from most American cities which, generally speaking, are very regularly laid out. Something like a fortress on a mountain it lies between two rivers, which, at some distance below, unite and form the world renowned Ohio. It is famous as a manufacturing town, and the dense smoke arising from the many emporiums of industry fills the air, penetrates the houses, and almost entirely obscures the rays of the sun. So patent ^{is} a fact is this that ^{Pittsburgh} it is also known as the "Smoky City". I gave the mission at Lawrenceville, in a Church directed by Capuchins from the Austrian province, but distance was nothing to the faithful, who regularly came to the services from the city. The cause proved ^{great service} very beneficial in this ^{instance}. The Bishop was present at the close, and imparted the papal benediction.

I next renewed the mission in St. Vincent's Church, a very large one, under the care of the Lazarist Fathers. The throng was immense. Not a foot of space in the roomy edifice was unoccupied, and the galleries, especially were well filled. St. Louis is a thickly populated city and has six large (German) Churches, nevertheless I find ^{as much} equal solace in laboring in a small chapel, in some abandoned country parish, as in a grand cathedral.

In cities there are priests sufficient to minister to souls, but in those forsaken stations it is indeed the lost sheep that the missionary seeks, and tenderly releases from the thorns, to place it in the arms of the Good Shepherd, the compassionate Savior.

I was so happy as to celebrate Easter in our own St. Joseph's Church, and to hear that the old edifice would soon give place to a new and more beautiful one. Not long after this I gave a mission in Caledonia opposite St. Louis. It was a memorable one, and attended with the happiest results, as indeed may be said of every one given by me to French congregations in America. They are too often in a condition very much to be deplored, but how can that be wondered at when their frivolous temperament, and lamentable reflect of the

452

Sacraments are considered? The French, here, are ^{so} excessively careless in the duty of supporting their pastors, that a priest ^{can} could not live upon what he receives at their hands.

They are at heart good Catholics, and become so renewed in spirit at a mission, that the priest has every reason to rejoice.

They excuse their neglect in various ways. "Mon père, Je suis bon catholique, mais Je n'aime pas me confesser". "Father I am a good Catholic, but I dislike going to confession." They say in Europe that a Frenchman confesses but three in his life... At his first (holy) Communion, at his marriage and at his death! It must be admitted however that if the duty is performed but seldom, it is done sincerely. How often in reply to my question. "Qu'est-ce que vous avez péché?" "Mon père, Je fis tout ce qu'un homme peut faire du mal, mais maintenant Je me mets à vos pieds, aidez moi, et sauvez moi." ("What sins have you committed?" "Father, every thing wicked that man can do. But now I cast myself at your feet: Aid me! Save me!")

Even at Easter the preceding year, but mine approached the Holy Table, whilst, as an instance of the wonderful change, during the mission 105 young men received the Blessed Eucharist, and I was engaged the whole night before their general Communion in the box.

How overjoyed was the good old Lazarus-father! It was most touching to see his delight - and his emotion when he thanked me beneath the mission-Cross for all that I had effected with his congregation. The ascetic appearance of this venerable man, over whose head the snows of seventy winters had fallen, made an impression that could not be ^{easily} forgotten. His words seemed to come from the brink of the grave, nay might I not say from the verge of the eternal shores? "Rev. Father", said he, "How can I sufficiently thank you? I was a shepherd, but alas, I had no flock: my people were as lost sheep. - Ils étaient tous des bœufs égarés", - and he pointed to the multitude before him - "but now, praise and thanks to God, through your efforts they have returned to the fold. I have once more a flock, and I hope to lead them to Jesus, the compassionate shepherd". How comforting these words to me! How they touched the hearts of his hearers! This was shown by the tears and sobs which prevailed on every side (of the Church.)

Missions in Missouri.

From thence I went to Jefferson City, the capital of Missouri, and gave missions there, and in the vicinity. The aspect was rather threatening. Missouri had been very sorely tried since the beginning of the war, for although the principal forces of the enemy had been

forced to evacuate, the guerrillas caused constant disturbance. Small bands of rebels, often no better than robbers swept over the country to plunder and take vengeance into their own hands. Several times, whilst giving missions, these guerrillas were in my immediate vicinity. I preached in Jefferson City to the prisoners, and heard the confessions of several Catholics of their number; then gave a mission in Lipton, during which on one occasion was heard "To arms!" the guerrillas have come!" But it was (merely) a false alarm. Here, too, I preached to the convicts in English, and heard the confessions of the Germans.

During the war these "raiders" often attacked isolated villages, broke into, and profaned churches, and even took the Blessed Eucharist away. This little church was in the suburbs, and, when the echoes of war from the city, penetrated there, my first thought was how to conceal that precious treasure from their unholy hands. I hastened from the place with the ciborium in my hands, and a lunette, in which was a consecrated particle for the monstrance. When I reached home I found that I had only the ciborium and monstrance in my ~~hand~~ room. Although I had put the lunette with the sacred particle in my ~~hand~~ bourse, and was considering where I could best conceal it in the apartment, it was no

where to be found. The lunette was unusually ⁴³³ heavy, and I could not have ^{dropped} lost it unknow-
ingly - I retraced my steps to the little Church,
and searched the path ^{carefully} thoroughly, examined
every ^{nook & corner of} spot on the altar, but ~~all~~ in vain. I
looked in my clothing, my pockets, my trunk,
over and over, - It was gone!

It was the sixth of May, the feast of St. John before
the Latin gate, the day when he was so cruel-
ly tortured, and for me too it was a day of
bitter martyrdom. A thousand times would I have
preferred to be plunged in boiling oil rather
than that the "Holy of Holies" should ^{have been} ~~be~~ lost; thus
through ^{my fault} ~~me~~ - I urged the Teacher to continue the
search, and promised him one hundred dol-
lars in case of success. When I reached the next
station, the raiders had preceded me, alas! a
too evident fact. The vestments were torn to
pieces, and they had even carried their
vandalism so far as to knock the head off
our Blessed Lady's statue. Having thus to use
my own vestments, during the three days of my
sojourn, I of course repaired daily to the com-
partment of my trunk devoted to their use,
and never failed to look for the lunette.

Had it been, *par hasard*, left there in, when
I took out the ^{vestments} robes, it would certainly have fall-
en to the floor. What days of agony were those!

I thought constantly of the sorrowful Mother
and her grief when, at Jerusalem, she lost
her beloved child. If, however, I shared her

486
sorrow I was destined to participate in her
joy. I called on the dear saint who had so
frequently come to my assistance, and prom-
ised to say three hundred masses in honor of
St. Anthony if he only would hasten to my
aid. The sacristy had been assigned to me
as a sleeping apartment. I was alone, and
engaged in prayer. When the quietude of the
room (it was ten o'clock at night) ~~then~~
was disturbed by a loud knocking which ap-
parently came from the direction of my
trunk. I hastened thither, opened it, and be-
hold! the lunette⁺ was in my hand!

O! what inexpressibly fervent thanks I of-
fered to our Lord, and St. Anthony! In the
course of my life many wonderful things
have come under my observation, instan-
taneous cures, miraculous appearances, and the
like, but this, in my opinion surpasses them
all.

When, later on, I went still further into the Ger-
illa region to give several additional mis-
sions, I passed a small town, Florence, a
"deserted village" in truth, for of all its in-
habitants there remained but one old man,
a German. The cause of this utter depopu-
lation is a sad proof of the extent to which
party spirit can reach.

These raiders made a descent on the town,
and, forcing the men of the place to stand
in rank in the open street - O! what then! -

with the Santissimo

456

Taking their rifles they mercilessly shot the hapless beings down, one after the other, in full view of their terrified children and heart-broken wives. O! what agony and horror rent the souls of those poor women and children! What weeping and wailing filled the air when those whom they loved so dearly were thus cruelly slaughtered.

I next gave missions at Stonecreek, Washington, St. Gertrude, St. Joseph, and New Westphalia, and then left Missouri without any very great regret. It was my intention to go to Kansas and if God spare my life, I will still do so, but whilst the war is in progress, and matters are so insecure it cannot be thought of.

The burden of the war being heaviest at the South, those sorely tried states are not in a condition to appreciate the exercises of a mission. The North, of course, suffers from the frequent levying of troops, but as the regiments depart for the field of action, again go on in the ordinary way.

From the far Western region I hastened to the East. From the Missouri river to the Atlantic Ocean. The Bishop of Newark had invited me to give the annual retreat to his clergy - the English one. I had received a similar invitation from his Lordship twice before, but previous engagements compelled me to decline

on both occasions. Over forty priests assembled, ⁴⁵⁷
with the Bishop, who performed the exercises
also, to the great edification of them all.
I enjoined absolute silence, and can say
with truth that it was observed with a rigid-
ity, which neither Carthusians nor Trappists
could ^{surpass} exceed. I was somewhat surprised as the
priests were almost all English, and in for-
mer retreats such a ^{degree of} taciturnity was not ex-
acted from them. Honor to whom honor is due.
Such self-denial merits commendation, and
surely a retreat where not a word disturbs
the holy quietude leaves a far more devout
impression than one, where even a few
who do not believe that "silence is golden"
attend.

Two missions immediately followed this. One in St. Mary's Church, Newark, where the Benedictine fathers are in charge, and the other in St. George's, Dunkirk. St. Mary's has been recently completed. St. George's is under the guidance of the Passionists. Both congregations are German. These fathers have a large English congregation at Dunkirk. Their order is doing active work in America, and is becoming more widely spread every year. They are even now engaged in the erection of a large "Retreat", of a most imposing appearance on Hoboken heights opposite New York. I preached on the feast of the Assumption in their Church, in English, and then went to

During this year I ^{traveled} went not once, but twice over America, from the Western states to the Atlantic Ocean, and for this "rapid transit" my thanks are due to steam! How tedious would not traveling be without its aid, how swiftly it enables me to fly from place to place. Without the railroad I could not have accomplished as much in a thousand years as I have so happily done! *thus far*

WISCONSIN.

I began my missions at Lawrenceville, and continued without intermission for some time in the neighboring parishes. This spiritual lake in which I cast the net of the Prince of the Apostles, was almost entirely Catholic. There are similar places in Indiana and Minnesota. I gave fifteen missions in uninterrupted succession. — One day sufficed for each. Four zealous priests accompanied me, and assisted me in hearing confessions. The places were as follows: — Lawrenceville, Shlesinger, St. Peter, Hartford, Reosho, St. Bartholomäus, St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Anton, Benton, West Bend, Newburgh, Kiwasnee, St. John, St. Michael, and St. Augustin. All these were in the same county. It requires but a few min=