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## MARIA MADRE DEL BUON CONSIGLIO.

In me gratia omnis viæ et veritatis, in me omnis spes vitæ  
et virtutis, Tranfite ad me omnes. Eccl. XXIV. 25. 26.

THE VIRGIN MOTHER  
OF  
GOOD COUNSEL

A HISTORY

OF THE ANCIENT SANCTUARY  
OF OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL IN GENAZZANO,  
AND OF THE WONDERFUL APPARITION  
AND MIRACULOUS TRANSLATION OF HER SACRED IMAGE  
FROM SCUTARI IN ALBANIA TO GENAZZANO  
IN 1467

WITH AN APPENDIX  
ON THE MIRACULOUS CRUCIFIX,  
SAN PIO,  
ROMAN ECCLESIASTICAL EDUCATION ETC.

BY  
MONSIGNOR GEORGE F. DILLON D. D.  
MISSIONARY APOSTOLIC  
(A VISITOR FROM SYDNEY TO THE SHRINE)

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ROME

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## LETTER

OF HIS HOLINESS

## POPE LEO XIII

TO THE AUTHOR

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(Latin not Spell-Checked)

~~Revde Dñe Dñe Obme~~

~~Excepit SSmus Dñus Leo XIII. exemplar voluminis a Te oblatum, in quo historiam Anglico idiomate persecutus es veteris Sanctuarii Deiparae Virginis, quam in oppido Genestano Praenestinae Dioecesis summa fidelium religio, ac pia peregrinorum frequentia veneratur. Cum in hoc munere perspexerit Pater Sanctissimus non modo filialis obsequii tui testimonium, sed etiam religiosae pietatis affectum quo Deiparae honorem promovere studes, gratum ac iucundum habuit consilium et ofricium tuum, voluitque ut per meas hasce litteras paternae suae dilectionis atque commendationis pignus obtineres. Optat porro Summus Pontifex ut piae tuae voluntati ii salutare fructus respondeant qui maxime hoc tempore sunt expetendi, ac ii qui tuam scriptionem legent, ad implorandum Dei Matris patrocinium Ecclesiae excitentur, quae in tot adversitatibus quibus premitur, summam in Ipsa fiduciam collocavit. Tuis demum votis annuens SSmus Dñus, in testimonium paternae benevolentiae et in auspiciis omnium caelestium gratiarum, Apostolicam Benedictionem quam postulasti, Tibi peramanter in Domino impertivit.~~

~~Dum haec Tibi significare gaudeo, libenter oblata occasione utor ut meam sinceram existimationem Tibi profitear, qua sum ex animo~~

~~Tui Rde Dñe Dñe Obme~~

~~Romae die 29 Maii An. 1884~~

~~Devotus Famulus  
CAROLUS NOCELLA  
SSmi Dñi ab epistolis latinis.~~

~~Reverendo Dño Dño Obmo  
Dño Georgio Dillon  
e Dioecesi Sydneyensi~~

TRANSLATION

## LETTER

OF HIS HOLINESS

## POPE LEO XIII

TO THE AUTHOR

---

Our Most Holy Lord Leo XIII received the copy of the volume presented by you, in which you give, in the English language, the history of the ancient Sanctuary of the Virgin Mother of God, situated in the town of Genazzano in the diocese of Palestrina, and which is venerated with the greatest piety by the faithful and by the constant concourse of devout pilgrims. As, in this work, the Holy Father perceives not only the evidence of your filial duty but also the affection of religious piety by which you study to advance the honour of God's Mother, he deems your purpose and service acceptable and pleasing, and desires that, by this my letter, you should receive a pledge of his paternal love and commendation. The Supreme Pontiff moreover hopes that the salutary fruits which, at this time, are so much to be desired, may respond to **(live up to)** your wishes, and that those who read your writings may be moved to implore the protection of the Mother of God for the Church which, amidst the many adversities by which it is oppressed, places the utmost confidence in Her. Finally, granting your prayer, Our Most Holy Lord (Leo XIII), in testimony of his paternal benevolence and in presage of all celestial graces, most lovingly in the Lord imparts to you the Apostolic Benediction.

While I rejoice to convey to you these tidings, I willingly take the occasion offered me of professing to you the sincere esteem by which from my heart I am

Your devoted servant  
CHARLES NOCELLA  
Secretary for Latin Letters  
to Our Most Holy Lord Leo XIII

Rome May 27<sup>th</sup>. 1884.

The author has been honoured by the following letter from His Eminence Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide.

Roma 17 Maggio 1884

S. C. DE PROPAGANDA FIDE  
SEGRETERIA

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Reverendo Signore

(Latin not Spell-Checked)

~~Ho ricevuto con particolare soddisfazione il libro intitolato **The Virgin Mother Of Good Counsel**, etc. che Ella, costretta a riposare per qualche tempo onde ristabilire le sue forze dalle fatiche della sua Missione, ha composto durante il suo soggiorno in Roma.~~

~~E al tutto degno di un buon ecclesiastico e di un zelante missionario il coltivare l'amore verso Maria SSma e il propagarne la divozione; e poich Ella ha mirato a questo scopo nel fare la storia di uno dei più celebri Santuarii d' Italia, devo con Le rallegrarmene, ed augurarmi che le sue santeintenzioni siano coronate di un felice successo.~~

~~Ella ha poi aggiunto in appendice alla sua opera delle savie osservazioni sulla educazione romana del Clero, ed ha toccato opportunamente della istituzione di Propaganda e della salutare sua influenza sopra il mondo intiero. Anche questo mi ha dimostrato l'ottimo spirito dal quale Ella è penetrata, per cui sono d'avviso che i sentimenti che Ella manifesta serviranno a rendere sempre più stretto il vincolo che unisce i fedeli di tutti i paesi alla Sede Romana Madre e Maestra di tutte le Chiese.~~

~~Dopo tutto ciò La ringrazio del dono ch'Ella mi ha fatto di questo suo egregio lavoro, e prego il Signore che per intercessione della Beata Vergine, ch' Ella ha voluto con esso onorare, Le conceda le sue più elette benedizioni.~~

Di V. S.

Affmo

Giovanni Card. Simeoni Prefetto

Per Monsignor Segretario  
Ant. Agliardi Minutante

Rev. Sig. Giorgio F. Dillon D. D.  
Missionario Apostolico di Sydney



**TRANSLATION.**

Rome, May 17th 1884

OFFICE OF THE  
SACRED CONGREGATION  
OF THE  
PROPAGANDA FIDE

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I have received with particular satisfaction the book entitled, **The Virgin Mother of Good Counsel**, etc. which you, while constrained to repose for some time in order to reëstablish your health, impaired by your missionary labours, have written during your sojourn in Rome.

It is in every way worthy of a good ecclesiastic and of a zealous missionary to cultivate love for Most Holy Mary and to propagate devotion to Her; and as you have laboured for these ends by writing the history of one of the most celebrated Sanctuaries of Italy, I must rejoice with you in the result, and I hope that I shall have the pleasure of seeing your holy intentions happily crowned with success. You have also added, in an appendix to your work, wise observations upon the Roman education of the clergy, and have also referred opportunely to the Propaganda Fide and to its salutary influence over the entire world. This also has proved to me the excellent spirit with which you are animated, and I feel assured that the sentiments which you manifest will always serve to render yet closer the bonds which unite the faithful of all countries to the Roman See, the Mother and Mistress of all Churches.

Finally, I return you thanks for the gift which you have made me of this your admirable work, and I pray the Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Whom you have desired to honour by its means, to grant you His choicest benedictions.

Most Affectionately Yours  
John Cardinal Simeoni  
Prefect of the S. C. of the Propaganda.

For Monsignor the Secretary  
ANT. AGLIARDI Minutante

The Rev. George F. Dillon D.D.  
Missionary Apostolic of Sydney

TO THE MOST EMINENT  
AND MOST REVEREND  
THOMAS M. CARDINAL MARTINELLI,  
CARDINAL BISHOP OF SABINA,  
PREFECT OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF THE INDEX,  
ETC. ETC.

Most Eminent Prince,

The writer, with the deepest sense of gratitude, taking advantage of your kind permission, - a permission all the more valued because never accorded to any author before - most respectfully dedicates this book to Your Eminence.

The reason why Your Eminence has been pleased to grant this permission is not, in this particular instance, difficult to understand.

The work treats of a venerable Sanctuary of Our Lady confided to Fathers of the great Order of which you are Cardinal Protector. It aims, according to the humble ability of the writer, at extending the deep and tender devotion to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, so characteristic of the land of your birth, and so specially dear to you, to the people to whom the writer belongs (**English Speaking**), - a people whom you love, and whose widespread migrations have carried the Faith whose purity Your Eminence as Cardinal Prefect of the Index, guards so ably and so vigilantly, to many parts of the world.

Ever since your elevation to the sacred purple it has pleased Your Eminence to make your home in the Eternal City with representatives of that people. The young levites of your ancient institute destined to continue amongst them the ministrations of religion which the sons of St. Augustine never ceased to carry on through terrible and long continued trials, now happily passed away, have had the consolation and the advantage of your daily presence in their midst during the last ten years. It has been your delight to consecrate to their instruction and edification whatever moments you could spare from the weighty charges laid upon you by the Vicar of Christ, - to join with them in the long continued exercises of piety which usher in each day's holy labour, - to unite with them at night in the prayer and thanksgiving which precede repose, - to conduct for them during your short intervals of rest from the severe labours of your high office, the invaluable retreats and other

spiritual exercises which so well prepare them for the work they are to do for the Church in after years.

It has been the good fortune of the writer to participate largely (**significantly**) in these advantages during his stay in Rome. And now, as this stay draws to its close, he is indeed happy to be permitted to associate the venerated name of Your Eminence with this effort to make Mary in one of Her most beautiful prerogatives - that of Virgin Mother of Good Counsel - better known and better loved amongst that great section of God's people to which he belongs (**Italians**). He trusts his work may not be wanting in a blessing if for no other reason than that it was written under the same roof where the saintly and laborious life of Your Eminence edifies the inmates and manifests the latent strength, the real glory and identity of the Rome of our own day with the Rome of the past, in giving a true picture of the lives - lives so little understood by the world at large, lives so often misconceived and misrepresented by the enemies of Catholicity - of those who, nearest the sacred person of the Supreme Pastor, sustain with him the burden of the guidance, the guardianship, and the government of the Church of God.

Begging Your Eminence's blessing the writer remains with profound respect,

Your most grateful humble servant,

George F. Dillon

Santa Maria in Posterula, 143 Tordinona, Rome,  
Feast of the Immaculate Conception. 1883.

**PREFACE**  
**(Written in 1884)**

---

Italy is still preëminently a land of faith and fervour. Invasions, secret societies, revolutions, and persecutions have done their worst to make it otherwise during the past hundred years. Writers of books of travel, newspaper correspondents, and others who cater for the prevailing anti-Catholic prejudices of the majority of those who speak the English language, generally represent it as having grown at least indifferent, if not worse, under these trials. But the truth is that at no past period of its Christian history were the mass of the inhabitants of the country more attached to their religion, more firmly fixed in its principles, or more devoted to its practices than at the present moment.

The writer of the following pages upon one of the most beautiful and useful manifestations of the faith of Italy, has had ample opportunity of witnessing what he here asserts. He visited that country (**Italy**) for the first time early in the spring of the past year (**1883**); and he confesses that he was prepared to see everywhere a great decay of religion in a nation where the Church had been universally plundered, where the Supreme Pontiff was dethroned and imprisoned, where the religious orders were suppressed, where the public observance of the Lord's Day and of many Christian practices had been legally abolished, where the recognition of Catholicity by the State was made a cruel farce, and where, in fine (**in summary**), the most formidable atheism the world has ever seen was, with supreme political power in its hands, astutely planning the eradication of Christianity from the social, political, and even individual life of the people.

The aspect of some streets in several great cities on Sundays and festivals, the casual conversation of *employés* and others interested in the existing government, the language of journals circulating amongst the party in power, were calculated, at first, to confirm his worst fears. But fortunately for a more correct knowledge of Italy his stay was prolonged. Impaired in health after twenty years of missionary labour in Australia he was advised to try for a considerable period, the effects of change of air and locality, in the mild climate and varied scenery of that beautiful and historic land. This brought him gradually into communication with all classes of the people on the mainland and in Sicily. Their real condition, therefore, became thoroughly known to him. So far from being in sympathy with the wrongs done to their religion, or affected with the

infidelity of the ruling faction, he found them heart and soul with the Church, and as hostile as ever to the inroads of atheism and heresy. The masses in Italy are, in fact, as he everywhere witnessed, as sorely tried as their clergy, and bear in patience burdens which no other people in Europe so situated are called upon to sustain. At least nine tenths of them are earnest and practical Catholics, and therefore they suffer rather than become revolutionists. As a rule they keep out of political affairs - meaning, at present, the affairs of the Continental Freemasons. To all attempts upon their religion they oppose a passive but determined resistance, which no effort of the infidels has been able to shake. In general, family life amongst them equals the purity and innocence of the farm-homes of Ireland. They live, in truth, by faith. But above all, that which, in the eyes of the writer, most distinguishes them, and in which they are unsurpassed by any other people he has ever seen, is their intense and universal devotion to the Virgin Mother of God.

Every practice of this devotion, common to the most fervent Catholics, is general amongst them, while they have, besides, a hundred beautiful ways of manifesting it particular to themselves alone. It is shown in public, on the entrance gates, and streets, and squares of cities; on the fronts of houses and vineyards; on the road-sides; and to an unusual extent, in the churches and public edifices of the country. Then over the whole land, special sanctuaries of the Madonna are scattered with great profusion. To some of these, millions flock annually; and to the least frequented, thousands come. Pilgrimages, chantings, silent prayer, alms-deeds, and fervent reception of the sacraments, are everywhere called forth by these wonderful shrines. No one is ashamed to confess and to honour Mary. Her presence fills every home and is constantly before the minds of the inmates. In summary, devotion to Our Lady, so to speak, saturates the land. And it is not too much to say - indeed it is what the Catholics of Italy themselves thankfully proclaim - that this deep devotion has been the cause of saving their faith from so many open and secret foes during the past three generations.

It was only natural that the writer, when he became acquainted with a devotion to God's Mother so vivid and productive of good, should endeavour to have it adopted, so far as circumstances should permit, by his own race, by those who speak the same language (**English**) as he does, and above all by that portion of them to whose service he had devoted his life. Although he well knew the love which millions who speak the English language have for Mary, he could not be blind to the fact that they live in an atmosphere which everywhere out of Ireland is filled with hostility to the Catholic religion, and to no portion of it more than to the honour which is given to the Virgin Mother of God. This atmosphere and other influences are sometimes so strong as to lead to the

loss of the faith itself. But they never prevail where the love of Mary is real and abiding. Whatever, therefore, can enkindle or preserve devotion to Her is an inestimable advantage. The use of beads and scapulars, household altars, novenas, and other holy customs observed in private and public, are all good for the purpose wherever they are adopted. But something is required which may reach the many who cannot be got to practise so much; something more simple and more general; something which may be able to reach the heart at once, seize upon it, and retain it; something which, while capable of increasing the devotion of the most fervent, would at the same time attract the most indifferent; something which could enkindle amongst us the love which all classes of the Italian people have for Mary.

The writer believes that the devotion which he tries to make known in this volume supplies all the above conditions. Its nature, scope, and history will be found summarised in the introduction and given fully in the rest of the book. He is persuaded that to know that devotion is to love it, and therefore he believes that all who read what he has written upon it will endeavour to advance it. For this, everyone can do something. The Pastors of God's people can do much. There are at their disposal the means given by the Church, which are explained in separate chapters. The Feast, the Proper Mass and Office, the dedication of churches, oratories, and chapels, are all calculated to bring the devotion and its many indulgences under the notice of those committed to their keeping. But the simple spread of copies of the sacred Image, which have worked such wonders in Italy and elsewhere, is a powerful means within the reach of all, and which all can adopt to some extent.

In the course of his work the writer has sometimes digressed from his main subject to give the history and describe the physical features of the locality in which the venerable Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel is situated. His object in this has been to make the place itself, its antiquities, and scenery known to the many English Speaking visitors who come to Rome, as well as to manifest the design of Divine Providence in selecting it as the resting place of the miraculous Image. And as he knows that nothing connected with the wellbeing of the Church can be indifferent to those for whom he writes, he has added, in an Appendix, some matters of importance as well as of interest, which do not directly fall within the scope of his subject. He would call the reader's attention to what he has said upon the spoliation<sup>1</sup> of the Propaganda (Fide) at *page 357* and *page 383*, - a subject of the deepest

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<sup>1</sup> **Spoliation** - Example from dictionary - the action of taking goods or property from somewhere by violent means e.g. "the spoliation of the Church".



importance to Catholics everywhere, but especially to those in English Speaking countries.

He has had to treat largely of the supernatural; yet he desires to say that no one ever came to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel less inclined to be credulous than he was. But in the sight of miracles wrought before one's eyes and carefully examined and proved, one can only say that the Hand of God is not shortened, and that miracles wrought through the intercession of His Mother will never cease. The facts narrated will speak for themselves. With regard to these facts, the writer has endeavoured to be scrupulously accurate, and in this, at least, he believes he has succeeded. For the rest, he leaves the work in the hands of his readers, in the hope that, through the intercession of Mary, his efforts to advance Her honour, at a season when ill health rendered him incapable of other labour, may prove of some use to those for whom he writes, and to whose indulgence and prayers he commends himself. \*

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*\* Regarding some literal errors which could hardly be avoided in a work put in type by compositors unacquainted with English, the reader is referred to what is said in the last paragraph of **Chapter I - Introduction**.*

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See - [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_constitutions/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_apc\\_01011967\\_indulgentiarum-doctrina.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_p-vi_apc_01011967_indulgentiarum-doctrina.html)

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<sup>1</sup> New Holland - Old name for Australia



We the undersigned deputed by the Most Reverend the Master of the Sacred Apostolic Palace to examine the work entitled **“The Virgin Mother of Good Counsel”** written in the English language by the Very Revd. George F. Dillon D. D. of the Archdiocese of Sydney in Australia, hereby declare that not only have we not found anything therein contrary to faith and morals, but on the contrary, much calculated to edify the faithful and to promote amongst them devotion to the Mother of God.

Fr. SEBASTIAN MARTINELLI, O. S. A.  
Master in Sacred Theology, Regent of  
Sacred Studies in Santa Maria in  
Posterula.

Fr. JOSEPH J. M. CARBERY, O.P.  
Master in Sacred Theology, Provincial of  
Scotland, and Assistant to the Most Revd.  
the General of the Order of Friars  
Preachers.

Convent of Santa Maria sopra Minerva Rome, April 16th 1883.

### **IMPRIMATUR**

Fr. Augustinus Bausa Ord. Præd. S. Pal. Ap. Magister. .

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### **IMPRIMATUR**

Julius Lenti Archiep. Siden. Vicesgerens.

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### **PROTEST**

In obedience to the decrees of the Supreme Pontiffs and especially to that of Urban VIII, the author submits absolutely all that is written in this work, as well as whatever else he has already written or may hereafter write, to the judgment of the Holy See; and he likewise protests that in narrating miraculous occurrences, or in giving the name of “Saint” or “Blessed” to any person not canonised by the Church, he intends to do so solely according to the usage prevailing amongst the faithful.

## THE VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL

### Chapter I

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Object of the writer - Nature of devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.  
 - 2. Its rise. - 3. The locality. - 4. Translation<sup>1</sup> of the miraculous Image.  
 - 5. Advance of the devotion - St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Aloysius, etc. - 6. Present necessity. - 7. Proofs. - 8. The Madonna of Genazzano formidable against Islam - Scanderbeg, Mark Antony Colonna, Innocent XI, - Sobieski. - 9. The Islam of our days. - 10. The Madonna of Good Counsel destined to overcome it. - 11. Rewards.  
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 - 17. Chapters added on (i) the miraculous fresco of the Crucifixion - (ii) St. Pio - (iii) Roman Ecclesiastical Education - (iv) Irish Augustinians. - 18. Works consulted - Thanks to friends.

1. The object of the writer of the following pages is to make known to English Speaking readers a valuable and very beautiful devotion which has been practised in Italy for many generations, and which has made its way to several nations of Continental Europe without being, as yet, much heard of throughout that extensive dominion which the Church now possesses in English Speaking countries.

This devotion aims at obtaining all that the gift of Good Counsel gives through the intercession of Mary, the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, to Whom the Infallible Spouse of Christ (**The Church**) attributes the very words of the Holy Ghost "*In me is Counsel.*" While, therefore, the sincere believer instinctively recognises the pregnancy of meaning, and the promise of assistance, involved in a title so expressive as that of "*Virgin Mother of Good Counsel,*" it will console him to know that, close by the city of the Successors of St. Peter, it has pleased Divine Providence to cause a Sanctuary in honour of Mary to arise, whither thousands flock, as they have flocked for ages, to receive the blessings of Good Counsel at Her feet; and that this Sanctuary has been enriched with supernatural favours of a nature so extraordinary, that, except perhaps in the case of the Holy House of Loreto<sup>2</sup>, we can find no parallel for them in the history of the shrines of the Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Translation, in this context, means "Change of Location".

<sup>2</sup> Holy House of Loreto - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica\\_della\\_Santa\\_Casa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica_della_Santa_Casa)

2. Moreover, the devotion which is manifested with such extraordinary fervour at the Shrine itself is not confined there, but spreads its blessings by means of a **Pious Union** wherever it finds adherents.

The devotion sprang up, as will be seen, almost at the same time as the rise of Christianity upon the ruins of paganism in the Roman Empire. The very spot where the beautiful Image of Mary and Jesus now reposes, was once the scene of the foulest rites of idol worship in honour of Venus. There, every April for centuries, came from far and near the men and the women of Latium (**Lazio**) for the Robigal Games. There, year after year, they abandoned themselves to all the abominations not only tolerated, but prescribed by the pagan Jus Pontificium of the Romans. No civilised nation of antiquity, that we know of, had rites more demoralising (**older meaning - to corrupt or undermine morals**) than these proud masters of the world; and nowhere, not even in the Flavian Amphitheatre, do the same rites seem to have been carried to greater excess than near the site of the present temple of the Madonna in the borough of Genazzano, where, when the worship of idols had given place to that of the one true God, the statue of the foulest goddess of heathendom (**Venus**) fell to make way for the Shrine and the sway of the Purest of God's creatures, His Virgin Mother. It was meet (**appropriate**) and, no doubt, was so arranged by a merciful and wise Providence, that the mother and synonyme of a vice which, with order dark and sorrowful characters, has folly emphatically stamped upon it, should be succeeded, when faith shed its light upon Latium, by the Mother and Synonyme of purity and supernal wisdom, the Mother « *of fair love* » and of « *holy hope* », of consolation and of Counsel.

3. To make the contrast here indicated more clear, the writer has thought it of use to give **a sketch of the history and locality of Genazzano**. This cannot fail, from its classical as well as Christian recollections, to interest the English Speaking visitor to Rome, who can get but scant and, in a Catholic sense, almost no reliable information from the guidebooks published in his language; and also, it is necessary to give such a brief outline to enable the reader at a distance to realise the full meaning of the devotion. It will serve to show to all that, though confined to one locality, the devotion existed from a very early period.

When God willed the devotion's extension it was by means of a most striking and significant miracle. A beautiful Image of His Mother holding the Divine Infant in Her sacred arms, passed from a land just taken by the Turks to the very spot where the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel had (**already**) been honoured for over a thousand years. (**Tradition has it that**) The translation of this **Image** was effected without human interference and amidst many prodigies. This naturally created a widespread and deep impression at the time. On a particularly

relevant festival, it (**the Image**) appeared (**from the sky**) amidst a multitude in the public square, and rested near the wall of the church where it still remains. The fervour it created amongst the people of God, the graces, the consolations, and the miraculous favours obtained at its Shrine, continue to this day. It (**the Image**) has thus become the fountain of devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel for all the faithful of Christ, in all the lands which own the sway of His Vicar on earth.

4. The writer has, therefore, entered very fully into the history of this sacred Image; and the reader, to become convinced of a fact so extraordinary as its wonderful translation from Scutari in Albania to Genazzano in Italy, must have the patience to read what he has written herein about it. All that is said, is proved by facts as well authenticated as any other facts of past history<sup>1</sup>.

And here a possible thought (**or objection**) may be met. The reader may never have heard of the miracle before. He may deem such an occurrence strange and unaccountable. He may, perhaps, be somewhat influenced, although unconsciously, by that atmosphere of incredulity which surrounds Catholics in all English Speaking lands, and which is prone, while receiving scriptural miracles with a kind of passive acquiescence, to regard modern ones as impossible or absurd. And it thus happens that even Catholics who maintain the antecedent possibility of miracles reject as improbable, or explain away upon natural grounds, the phenomena held to be supernatural in Catholic countries. Miracles, however, do occur and will continue to occur till the end of time. They are facts just as ascertainable as other facts. In the Church, the Catholic has a sure guide as to what he may believe and what he must not believe in their regard. When she permits a devotion, when she herself shows that she does not doubt the miracles performed by its means, when she blesses it and rewards those who practise it, the devout Catholic has the best guarantee that in practising that devotion he does what is right. All this she does with regard to the sacred Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel and the devotion of which its Shrine in Genazzano is the centre and the spring<sup>2</sup>.

During the progress of this history it will be seen that, in its passage from Scutari to Genazzano, the Image was followed over land and sea by two trustworthy witnesses (**who venerated the Image both in**

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<sup>1</sup> Note added by Eugene Shannon - The writer, George Dillon, is stretching it a bit by saying that the "facts" about the miraculous translation of the Image are as good as any facts supporting any other historical event. They would not stand up in a Court. Almost all original documentation has been lost or destroyed (some accidentally, some deliberately). Dillon infers many things as **fact** from things said in the writings of some writers who were **not contemporaneous** with the alleged miraculous translation. However, it is The Devotion to Our Lady that is of primary importance.

<sup>2</sup> The Church does not assert that the story of the miraculous translation is true. We are at liberty to believe it or not believe it (**E.S.**).

**Scutari and subsequently in Genazzano and**) who afterwards lived and died in and whose families lived on in Latium after them. It will be seen that its appearance in Genazzano **(i)** occurred in broad daylight, and **(ii)** in the presence of thousands; that **(iii)** miraculous light and **(iv)** celestial chanting, **(v)** the ringing of church bells by no human hand, and **(vi)** other circumstances of an extraordinary kind accompanied its coming; and that innumerable miraculous cures which have never since ceased, were worked in favour of those who came piously to visit it.

5. A most important fact will be noticed in the inquiry which was instituted some **two months** after its appearance by the then reigning Pontiff, Pope Paul II, at the very period when, according to Coriolanus, all of Italy was going out in procession to visit it. The devotion of his immediate successor, Sixtus IV, the continued devotion of other Popes, as well as of monarchs, cardinals, and distinguished personages, which continues to this day, is also well worthy of notice. Amongst these we may mention the deep, tender, and life-long devotion of St. Alphonsus Liguori. It is a representation of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel that is usually painted with portraits of that saint. Many copies too of the sacred Image have proved miraculous. That picture of Our Lady which spoke so often and so lovingly to the angelic youth St. Aloysius Gonzaga, was a copy. Other copies have worked wonderful prodigies in Rome, Naples, Genoa, Lucca, Frosinone, San Benedetto Ullano and numbers of cities in Italy and Germany.

6. Thus the devotion has progressed to meet the increasing needs of Christendom, and the writer believes that now, more than ever, it is destined for an immense development.

His reasons for believing this are many. There are circumstances connected with the devotion itself, with the Sanctuary, and especially with the Pious Union, which manifest a providential preparation for a very wide extension. But the existence of a great necessity is the principal reason. Never before was there manifest more need of Good Counsel for all classes of Christians than at this hour (**1883**). For parents and for children, for pastors and for people, - for all in God's Church whether rulers or ruled, its value cannot be over-estimated.

7. We have only to look upon the state of Europe and of the world at large (**in 1883**) to realise this. The evils which threaten mankind socially and religiously were never before so formidable. A delirium of folly and crime has fallen upon the nations generally. Only supernatural power can save us. And where can we better look for that than where it was always found, - in Mary Whom God has established to be as Solomon saw Her, not only increasing in grandeur and power as time rolls on, to meet every emergency of man "*as the aurora advancing*"; not only "*fair as the moon*" to console us, and "*bright as the sun*" to give

us light, but “*formidable as an army set in battle array*” to defend us from the infernal designs of our enemy.

8. As She was in the past, so must She be in the present and in the future. When the miraculous translation of Her sacred Image occurred, the Eastern Church had well nigh disappeared before the advancing arms of Islam. In the progress of this history, it will be seen that the last stand made against that foe, was by the heroic **Scanderbeg**, - King George Castriota, of Albania, - who, because he received help and counsel at the Shrine of this very Image (**which was**) then in his country (**in Scutari, Albania**), was able to defeat again and again the whole power of **Amurat II**, and afterwards to drive with terrific slaughter the hundreds of thousands of **Mahomet II**, the captor of Constantinople, from the walls of Croja, his little Capital. For twenty years he saved his own country and Christendom. **He had but just passed to his reward, when Mary caused Her Miraculous Image to break away from the walls of Her temple in Scutari and to pass to Latium.** His ashes were not cold when the Turks, in unconquerable might, swept over the land and advanced west to the Adriatic. Italy, preserved anew by Mary, presented an impregnable barrier; and the Pontiffs ceased not to oppose the foe, until finally the new home of Mary produced a second Scanderbeg. At a moment of supreme danger, Pope St. Pius V, a most devout client of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, had called to the command of his fleet **Mark Antony Colonna**, Lord of Genazzano, and Protector, as Scanderbeg once was, of the sacred Image and Sanctuary of the Madonna of Good Counsel.

Like George Castriota, Colonna was a devoted son of God's Virgin Mother. Wonderfully did She aid him. The Turks, as omnipotent in the Mediterranean Sea as upon land, meditated new invasions. The Christians were in imminent peril in Italy and all along the European seaboard. But the client of Mary prevailed. At **Lepanto**<sup>1</sup>, the Pope's Admiral (**Colonna**) conjointly with **Don John of Austria**, gave a blow to the preëminence of the Turk upon water from which Islam has never since recovered.

And later, as upon water so upon land, it was the power of Good Counsel given by Mary that finally crushed this foe of the Christian name. **Innocent XI**, after many unsuccessful attempts to unite Christendom against the tremendous armaments of Moslem might (**which was then being**) launched against Austria, had no sooner ordered the Chapter of St. Peter's to crown with diadems the sacred Image of Our Lady at Genazzano, than his efforts were blessed with complete success. The army of **Sobieski** and the forces of **Charles of Lorraine**

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<sup>1</sup> Battle of Lepanto (1571) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Lepanto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Lepanto)



united, and a death-blow to the advance of the Turk upon land was dealt, within a year, at the walls of **Vienna**<sup>1</sup>. Slowly but surely the mighty tide of Turkish Mahomedan power has since receded, until we find it at the ebb which soon must tell that the Cross, after a contest of twelve hundred years, has obliterated all trace of the Crescent<sup>2</sup>. The Caliphs are passing to the oblivion and impotence of the Caesars, but the reign of Christ continues, and today His Vicar rules a wider domain than he ever ruled before. It is not too much to say that this is owing to the help - to the Counsel and strength - which Mary is powerful enough to obtain for God's people. To Her the Church attributes the victory. *“Be glad and rejoice, O Virgin Mary, for Thou Alone hast overcome all heresies throughout the whole world.”*

9. But now more than ever the power of Mary is required to meet a far more deadly foe than that symbolised by the Crescent. A new Islam has arisen upon the world, which, with more malignant hatred than that of the fanatics of Mahomet, and with a more subtle force than the astuteness of Greek or Roman persecutor could devise, seeks the life of Christ.

More of the intellect than physical, this force aims not so much at the soul by killing the body, as at the soul direct. It aims also at the soul by the corruption of mind and body. It is banded by the powers of secrecy in one formidable phalanx, invisible and impalpable to outsiders; and that phalanx is everywhere. It is found in every language, amidst every colour, mixed up and asserting itself in every nation and people and tribe of men. It has obtained power - the power in every form of human government. It is filling itself with riches. It uses its position, its influence, its wealth, to win proselytes. It has paralysed the action of the Church in every country with more or less effect. It strikes off her armour and puts chains on her hands and feet. It deprives her of every human resource; and, day by day, weaves new webs to compass her destruction. It has succeeded in driving her from every public concern. In scarcely a single nation of the world is she permitted to control the education of her own children. And everywhere the new system of instruction, framed by her enemy, is made, as far as possible, first to exclude and then to ridicule God and his saints. Wherever this formidable power can do so, she is banished from the family, which, unhinged by a baneful divorce law, must be undirected by her voice and unassisted by her ministrations. And alas! both rulers and statesmen, terrified in the toils<sup>3</sup> of this secret foe of themselves as well as of the Church, live on deaf to her voice, until the hour comes when their people, demoralised (**older meaning - to corrupt or undermine**

<sup>1</sup> Battle of Vienna (1683) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Vienna](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Vienna)

<sup>2</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - History has proven that this view was over-optimistic.

<sup>3</sup> **Toil** - A net for trapping game.

**morals)** and lost without religion, fall victims to the attempts of the **Socialist.**<sup>1</sup>

This widespread conspiracy is determined and active in the propagandism of every species of immorality and of every species of **Atheism**. Atheism is astute and vigilant, subtle and intelligent, elaborate in its contrivances to deceive and to ruin men. Its great aim is to kill divine faith; and if not possible to kill it at a blow, then to weaken, decrease, and unnerve it in the minds and hearts of the people. For this purpose it forms alliance with every enemy of the Church; with the heretic and the schismatic; with the hypocrite and the traitor; with the abandoned ecclesiastic; with the disobedient and the nominal Catholic; with the fallen religious; with whomsoever may be found to speak or write against any principle, interest, or person of advantage to the cause of order and of God. The infernal cunning of the serpent who is in truth the master-spirit, the author of its vitality, of its enmity, of its strange unity and ubiquity, is everywhere manifested in dark designs against truth and religion.

**10.** All of this, to be thoroughly understood, need but be illustrated by what takes place in France before our eyes (**writing in 1883**), and what has already occurred in Italy and other once fervently Catholic nations. Its progress in all lands is terrible. But it must fail as all that went before it failed. The Cross must triumph over its power as surely as it does over expiring Islam. Thank Heaven! the Church of Christ cannot be destroyed. All this is true on the unerring assurance of God Himself. But, alas! how many millions will perish while the contest progresses. Great as the triumph of the Church must be, that triumph cannot cure the eternal despair of those who are lost in the contest.

For the sake then of millions of our fellow creatures in danger - for our own sake - we must have recourse more fervently than ever to that wisdom and power which God has used in the past to battle Islam, and which He has destined to be the destroyer of every form of seduction which the head of the infernal serpent has been able to invent for the deception and the destruction of our race. There is surely great force and meaning in every part of that prophecy which, in the darkest hour of our misfortune, gave the first hope to the fallen source of our earthly origin, but especially in that part which says that the woman, "*the second Eve*," the real "*mother of (all) the living*," should crush the serpent's very head;

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - I would ask the reader to think for a while about how the historical context in which Msgr. Dillon was writing, in or about 1883, differs from today's context. Things like the Russian Revolution and the Great War were many years away. While there were newspapers and telegraph, there were no Radio, Television, Internet, United Nations etc. Europe had gone through many political and military conflicts. When you continue reading this book you will see that Dillon and many others would have seen Atheists, Socialists and Freemasons as the roots of the problems.

that is to say, should bring to naught all the machinations his (**Satan's**) perverted intelligence could frame for the ruin of man. This certainly is best done by the force of that wisdom with which Mary, as the Church is never weary of telling us, is preëminently endowed. And this will be done for nations and individuals by the gift of Good Counsel so characteristic of the Virgin Mother of God, and which She is specially empowered<sup>1</sup> to grant by the inscrutable and merciful designs of Him, Who wills, as many holy doctors distinctly teach, that all grace and salvation should come to us through Mary.

**11.** The writer, therefore, feels that by bringing devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel - a devotion which he knows to have effected much already in Italy - under the notice of his brethren who speak the English language<sup>2</sup>, he will do a work *beneficial to them*, and, he humbly trusts, *acceptable to Her*, Whom he knows they love tenderly. She "*loves them that love Her*." His own reward and, he trusts, the reward of many who may read this humble effort and by it be disposed not only to love the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, but also to extend devotion by means of Her beautiful Image and(**or**) the Pious Union, will be - for our Mother in heaven cannot deceive us - that promised in the words "*Qui elucidant me vitam aeternam habebunt*" **They who explain me shall have life everlasting (Eccles. 24.31).**

**12.** In addition to the millions of Catholics who live in comparative spiritual security in faithful Ireland (**1883.!**), and the millions of Catholics now in Great Britain, this writer has special reasons to think most of all about those other millions who leave Catholic homes for a life among strangers, the majority of whom differ from them in religion, in distant lands such as America and the principal English Speaking colonies. Twenty years experience in Australia has convinced him that a greater

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - Since the Fall of Adam (on our behalf, unfortunately) things have been in balance **in this Universe** between God and Satan. This is by God's Choice. We can empower one or the other through Our Will. If we conform our will to God's Will, then we empower Him. If we conform our will to Satan's Desires for us, then we empower him. We empower them through our thoughts and actions. God has also given us "Super-Mechanisms" for conforming our will to His. These are the Holy Mass and the Seven Sacraments, coupled with public and private prayer and devotion. All Graces and Benefits from God come to us through Our Lady. Prayer and devotion to Her are most efficient means of re-empowering God.

<sup>2</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - This is a pivotal statement in this book. In this statement Msgr. Dillon is saying why he was writing this book - to help spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, especially under Her title of Virgin Mother of Good Counsel (also referred to as Our Lady of Good Counsel). Msgr. Dillon was obviously fired with great enthusiasm for promoting this devotion. Subsequent to writing this book he was posted to the Augustinian Priory at Johns Lane in Dublin, Ireland. He was there while a new church, designed by Pugin, was being built. He pressed for the incorporation of a Shrine to Our Lady of Good Counsel in the church. After some initial resistance, it was included. It is one of the most striking shrines in all of Ireland and is worth a visit. It occupies a large area to the right of the main altar. At the time of writing this note (2015), the No. 123 bus would be the best bus to get there. This route goes from west to east and a very large number of other bus routes either cross its route or come very close to it. Get off the bus on Thomas Street; the entrance to the church is on Thomas Street.

and more constant devotion to Mary is now more than ever needed to keep the faith alive in themselves and in their children. They have to encounter all the perils which come from the infidel movements now supreme over the vital question of primary education in the United States, in Australia, and almost everywhere in English Speaking countries. In England, and even in Ireland, a strong effort is being made to go with the universal current against religion upon this and other most important points. **(Catholicism (GOD'S PLAN FOR A RELATIONSHIP WITH US) also needs to be taught, both at home and in schools. - E.S.)**

Then in new countries, more so than in old ones, the tendency is very great to contract mixed marriages, to frequent dangerous associations and reunions, and to lose the ring and vigour of sound faith by concession to the prevailing spirit of a worldliness invariably anti-Catholic. The « *fullness of bread* » unaccompanied by the wholesome restraints of religion, proves perilous to the old and still more so to the young. So it happens that faith, even in cases where we should be least prepared to expect such a catastrophe, becomes debilitated; and the sons and daughters of men - and even the very men themselves - who have suffered much for their faith, become victims of infidel movements. They are sometimes found not only deprived of Catholicity, but in the very camp of its enemies. The consequences to themselves and to others here and hereafter can easily be imagined. Some cannot see this, because they are deprived of the spirit of Good Counsel.

The wisdom of the fiend has, in their case, supplanted the wisdom of the Cross. A shriek of despair from a deathbed is often the only sign we receive of the knowledge of their loss. That shriek dies away without effect upon others. It is heard and forgotten. The folly continues, and thousands are lost to the Church and to heaven.

An infallible remedy for all these evils, the writer believes, would be found in such devotion as is practised amongst the clients of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. If families and individuals would adopt it, the spirit of wisdom from on high would reign. Souls otherwise likely to be ruined would be saved. Catholic principles would be preserved and strengthened; and the enemy of God and man (**Satan again**) would be deprived of his triumph, through Mary.

**13.** Moreover, this devotion is, for all, one of particular help and consolation. Many, very many, will read with pleasure and thanksgiving such experience of Mary's assistance as that given in the seventeenth chapter (**XVII**) of this work by **Canon Bacci** a great apostle of the devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel in Rome. For all the wounds of the spirit, those who have devout recourse to Her, will, like him, find a certain, consolatory, and efficacious remedy. Never has it been known that sufferers from loss of friends or position, estate or honour, went to

Mary's Shrine at Genazzano and returned unconsolated, unhelped, unsatisfied. The miracles of bodily health restored are numerous and continual. In chapter the thirteenth (XIII), in that on the Pious Union (XXI), and elsewhere throughout this book, it will be seen that this help is infallibly extended to those who faithfully practise devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel at a distance, as well as to those favoured by the happy opportunity of visiting Her Sanctuary.

14. There is another important matter which the devotion has brought under the writer's notice and to which he refers. It is this.

While employed in the very grateful task of making the observations and researches necessary for the present work, he was, of course, obliged to mix much with the Italian people, and especially with those of the (former)<sup>1</sup> Pontifical States in which Latium lies. Seeking for health, he travelled over nearly every portion of the Pope's territory, and many parts of Italy besides. He met with the Italian people in every condition of life. He studied to ascertain their most intimate feelings and convictions, especially on two very interesting points.

The first was with regard to religion, and the next with regard to the Pope, not only as spiritual chief but also as temporal sovereign. He found that, upon both points, the people have been continually and shamefully misrepresented by almost every secular and Protestant English writer. He found that no people on this earth could be more devoted to their religion than the mass of the people of Italy; and that they had kept their faith under trials well calculated to subvert it. And as to the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, he found that, so far from being opposed to it, the bulk of the people in the Roman States would gladly receive back the temporal government of their beloved Pontiff tomorrow. They have abundant reason, and they know it well.

The new regime has brought upon them an intolerable burden of taxation. It brings the *leva* or conscription (**a compulsory contribution of money to a government during a time of war**) to desolate many a happy home. The regime gives liberty to sin, to desecrate the Sabbath, to insult religion and ruin morals; but it forges chains for the Church, for the ministers of the altar, and in a hundred ways harasses both the religion and the religious sentiments of the people. It makes continual efforts by means of hired mobs and newspaper correspondents, to blind public opinion in England and France, which - and not the Italian people as a whole - created united Italy. Therefore the false stories from Rome about popular hatred for religion, and the sad episodes of insults to pilgrims,

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<sup>1</sup> **Papal States** - Even as Mons. Dillon was writing this book, the Papal States had been taken over by the Italian Government, largely through foreign intervention. The Church had definitely not accepted this situation and Mons. Dillon, therefore, refers here to the "Pontifical States" as if they were still in existence. See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papal\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papal_States)

and outrages such as that which was offered to the remains of the late venerated Pontiff Pius IX.

**15.** The nature of the trials through which the Catholic people of Italy have passed in this generation is known to all (**in 1884**). No people on this earth have experienced to a greater extent the dark, insidious, and long continued efforts of the infidel, secret-societies. But neither persecution nor seduction has been able to destroy or even to weaken their faith. So far as the great bulk of the population is concerned, that faith is today stronger and more fervent than ever. The writer believes this to be owing to their intense devotion to the Virgin Mother of God and to the Good Counsel which She in return, has obtained for them. He has given his reasons for this belief at length. The same devotion is powerful enough to save the rest of the world from the same dangers through which Italy has passed, and which not only threaten but assail Catholicity at this moment, in every English-speaking country. To prove this - to excite devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel by showing Her power and goodness in the past - is the chief object of this work, the plan of which is arranged as follows :-

*Note added by Eugene Shannon :- The outline of the contents of this book given by Msgr. Dillon is somewhat confusing so I have taken the liberty of re-doing it as follows :-*

## **Chapter I**

Introduction

## **Chapters II, III and IV**

The transition of Genazzano and its festivals from Pagan to Christian.

## **Chapters V, VI and VII**

Apparition and Miraculous Translation of Image.  
(25th April 1467)

## **Chapters VIII (Parts 1 and 2)**

Involvement of Islam (**Turkish Ottomans**) in the story.

## **Chapters IX and X**

Proofs of the Apparition and of the Translation of the Image.

## **Chapter XI**

The Albania Connection

**Chapters XII and XIII**

Miracles associated with the Shrine and with the Image.

**Chapters XIV, XV, XVI, XVII and XVIII**

Value placed on Devotion by Popes and Other Illustrious Persons.  
(Including, **Chapter XV** - The Nature of Popular Devotion,  
but especially also, **Chapter XVII** - Letter of Canon Bacci)

**Chapters XIX and XX**

Spiritual Treasures of the Shrine.  
(e.g. Mass, Office and Indulgences)

**Chapters XXI, XXII and XXIII**

Miscellaneous Matters Relating to the Shrine and the Devotion.

**Chapter XXIV**

Explanation of Catholic Devotion To Our Lady.

**Chapters XXV, XXVI, XXVII and XXVIII**

(Described as an **APPENDIX**)

Miscellaneous Matters of Interest to the Writer.

*You can still read Msgr. Dillon's version as follows :-*

~~The victory of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel over Paganism, and over the foul worship of Venus especially, is treated of in the first three chapters, which also include a description of Latium and of the town of Genazzano.~~

~~Her power over Mahomedanism, the most formidable of the opponents of the Church after Paganism, is shown in the following chapters which treat of the miraculous translation of Her sacred Image from Scutari to Her Shrine in Latium, and also treat of Scanderbeg and Albania.~~

~~The proofs of the wonderful apparition and translation, are critically examined in three chapters.~~

~~Two chapters are then devoted to the legally authenticated miracles, — for those not so authenticated are innumerable, — wrought both in the Sanctuary and by means of copies of the sacred Image.~~

~~16. The writer would here call the reader's special attention to the first of these latter referred to chapters (viz. Chapter XII), where a miraculous cure witnessed by himself and many others, and afterwards duly attested by the Archpriest and by the official physician of the city of~~

Zagarolo. It was a case of incurable blindness combined with severe epilepsy which had brought the sufferer to the brink of the grave.

To show the value that Popes and illustrious persons, ecclesiastical and secular, have placed upon the devotion, and the zeal of those who may be called its apostles, the three following chapters have been written. And in these, the reader's attention is again specially directed to the letter of Canon Bacci (Chapter XVII), where he speaks of **the miraculous power of Our Lady of Good Counsel, manifested both in Her sacred Image of Genazzano and in copies of it in other places.** The nature of popular devotion at the Sanctuary is treated at length in Chapter XV, where special prominence is given to the public pilgrimages made by people living at great distances. The spiritual treasures of the Shrine, the proper Mass and Office, the indulgences, plenary and partial, are treated of in Chapters XIX and XX. The Pious Union of Genazzano, a league which the devout clients of Mary established to preserve the remembrance of Her goodness, and the first member of which was the celebrated Pontiff Benedict XIV, is described in Chapter XXI. The fortunes of the church in which the holy Chapel is found are given in Chapter XXII. Chapter XXIII is devoted to a description of the religious condition of the Italian people and of the means they employ to honour Our Lady. And finally, in Chapter XXIV a popular explanation is given of the Catholic doctrine of the worship and invocation of Mary, given for the benefit of Protestants especially.

17. A few chapters have been added on some matters of particular interest connected with the Sanctuary. The first is upon a miraculous fresco of the Crucifixion, which bled on being struck by an enraged soldier in the reign of Pope Paul III. The second is upon the venerable convent of San Pio, occupying the site of the ancient Imperial or Antonine Villa near Genazzano, and which, after having been taken from the Conventual Franciscans by the revolutionary Government, was regained for religion under remarkable circumstances by the zeal and good fortune of the Very Reverend P. J. Glynn, Prior of the Irish Augustinian Convent in Rome. He wished, in addition to the blessings of a Roman education for the members of his Order, to train them at the feet of the Miraculous Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. The value of a Roman education for ecclesiastics has appeared to the writer to be so great, that he has written the next chapter upon it. And finally, as he composed this work chiefly in the beautiful convent of the Irish Augustinians, overlooking the Sanctuary of Mary, he has ended the book with a chapter about that remarkable division of the sons of Saint Augustine who battled so nobly for Irish faith in the dark days of persecution.



18. It is almost needless to say that, in writing such a book as this, **the author** had to make the freest use of the labours of those who had gone before him. He (**the author**) is indebted for valuable documents to the now rare work of **De Orgio**, published in the last century (1756)<sup>1</sup> at the instance of Canon Bacci. He has availed himself of the historical memoirs of the learned **Archpriest Senni**, but with such allowance for the *amor patriae* of a foremost citizen of Genazzano as circumstances required<sup>2</sup>. It will be seen that he has quoted, here and there, from the excellent work of the accomplished and erudite **Luigi Vannutelli**, who held the position of Notary under the Pontifical government<sup>3</sup>. The work of **Father Buonanno** of the Neapolitan Oratory is perhaps the largest that has yet appeared on the Madonna of Genazzano in Italy<sup>4</sup>. It has been of considerable help to the writer. That of **Father Belgrano** is large but mostly of a devotional cast<sup>5</sup>. He has used it also. He has besides consulted the works of **Coriolanus** and of the **Archaeologists Caetano and Calisto Marini**<sup>6</sup>; and verified in most instances such extracts from rare and learned works, as were given by previous writers.

The documents relative to Scutari, he obtained in **the archives of the convent at Genazzano**. Some of these have never before appeared in print, even in any Italian treatise on the Sanctuary. In cases where original documents appear for the first time, the original is given as well as the translation. The translations, in order to preserve their value as evidence, have, in nearly every instance, been given literally.

As this work may be required for reference, he has further attempted an innovation on the custom of English writers. He has not only divided the book into chapters, but the chapters into sections; and he has numbered these sections according to the custom of many Italian authors. This has been suggested to him by the venerable and saintly Rector of the Irish College of St. Agatha in Rome, the Right Rev. Monsgr. (Tobias) Kirby, Bishop of Lita, who has taken the greatest interest in the work and encouraged the writer by every means in his power. His Lordship is a zealous member of the Pious Union, and is most devoted to the Madonna of Good Counsel. He has venerated Her

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<sup>1</sup> "Istoriche notizie della prodigiosa apparizione dell'immagine di Maria Santissima del Buon Consiglio nella chiesa dei Padri Agostiniani di Genazzano opera del P. M. Fr. Angelo M. **De Orgio** dello stesso Istituto, consagrada alla grande Imperatrice de' Cieli, In Firenze 1756"

<sup>2</sup> "Memorie di Genazzano e dei vicini paesi, dell' arciprete Girolamo **Senni**."

<sup>3</sup> "Cenni storici sul Santuario di Maria Santissima del Buon Consiglio di Genazzano. Roma 1839."

<sup>4</sup> "Della immagine di Maria Santissima del Buon Consiglio che si venera in Genazzano, memorie storiche per Raffaele **Buonanno** prete dell' Oratorio napoletano." Napoli 1880.

<sup>5</sup> "La Madre del Buon Consiglio, manuale di letture e di preghiere per i devoti di Maria Santissima del Buon Consiglio, la cui prodigiosa immagine si venera in Genazzano nella chiesa dei religiosi Agostiniani, compilato dal P. M. Pietro **Belgrano** agostiniano." Roma 1880.

<sup>6</sup> "Esame critico di alcuni monumenti spettanti all' apparizione della Madonna del Buon Consiglio, fatto d'ordine della Sacra Congregazione de' Riti dai Custodi degli archivi segreti .Pontificii." 1779.

beautiful Image at the Shrine in Genazzano, and, in order to extend a devotion he loves so much, endeavours to influence the many Prelates and other distinguished personages he meets with in Rome to follow his example. He well knows the graces that will surely follow for the benefit of themselves and of their people.

Here, the writer desires to return his thanks to Mons. Kirby, and also to the very many other friends in Rome who have given, with much courtesy and zeal, all the assistance in their power. In this way he is under special obligations to his Eminence **Cardinal Martinelli**, Prefect of the Index; to his brother **Dr. Martinelli**, Regent of Studies of the Irish Augustinians in Rome, and Postulator for the causes of the saints of the Augustinian Order and for the saints of Ireland; to the Most Rev. **Doctor Neno**, Commissary General of the Augustinian Order; to **Father Lanteri**, its learned historian; to the Very Rev. Prior and community of Posterula; to the Very Rev. Prior and community of Santa Maria in Genazzano, the Guardians of the Sanctuary; and specially to the venerable **Father Berio**, the Sub-Prior and oldest of the Fathers in that Convent, who has been indefatigable in providing documents and every other information; to the Very Rev. **Father Pifferi** Sub-Sacristan to His Holiness at the Vatican; to the Very Rev. **Father Belgrano**, Chaplain to the Dowager Empress of Austria at Prague, who has sent most valuable, and hitherto unpublished information to the writer; to **Mgr. Carbery**, Bishop of Hamilton, late Assistant General of the Dominicans; to the Very Rev. **Dr. Walsh**, President of St. Patricks College Maynooth, Ireland, who this year visited the Sanctuary during the festival of the Wonderful Apparition, and, in consequence of what he there witnessed, took as deep an interest as the writer in this, the first work in English which treats at any length of the devotion; to **Mgr. (Martin) Crane**, Bishop of Sandhurst, Victoria, an old and most devoted client of Our Lady of Good Counsel, whose earnest desire to spread the devotion in Australia, is the chief reason why this work appears at all; to the Very Rev. Don **Filippo Vannutelli**, Vicar Forane at Genazzano; to the Advocate **Cavaliere Manzella**; to the Very Rev. **Father Carey** O.S.F. Guardian, of St. Isidore's; to the Very Rev. **Father O'Callaghan** O.P. Prior of San Clemente, and to all who have kindly given information, or other assistance, during the progress of the work.

Lastly, the writer has to ask the reader's indulgence for errors unavoidable in a work put in type by compositors unacquainted with the language in which it is written. The proof sheets, moreover, had to be corrected by the author himself at a distance from Rome, and this, sometimes, while travelling through Italy and France. It was, therefore, morally (**truly**) impossible that some errors should not remain through

oversight on his part. These, however, **he hopes** will be found to be comparatively few and unimportant; and of these few, (**he also hopes that**) the greater number are noticed in the list of errata at the end of the volume<sup>1</sup>. That errors should appear at all, must be his own fault, for notwithstanding the difficulties of a strange language, nothing has been left undone by the **Cavaliere Melandri**, the able director of the extensive *Stamperia* of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda and his efficient staff, to bring out the work as perfect as possible. For this the writer is indebted to His Eminence **Cardinal Simeoni**, the Prefect of that Sacred Congregation, who with great kindness has given him every facility for the completion of the work in the magnificent Catholic institution over which His Eminence presides.

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - Having checked this book **in greatest detail** I can say that fewer than half of the original errors are listed in the List of Errata. All errors are corrected in this version.

## Chapter II

### LATIUM

1. Its original inhabitants. - 2. Rome formed and ruled by them. - 3. Physical features, mountains, cities, memories connected with the country. - 4. General beauty of the scenery - Dreariness of the Campagna. - 5. Malaria of the Campagna - Calumny on the Pontifical Government - Real cause. - 6. The Revolutionists promise much and perform little. - 7. Hope comes from Australia and the persecuted monks of Italy. - 8. Beauty of the rest of Latium - The way to see it. - 9. Habit of the agricultural population to live in towns. - 10. The reason. - 11. Ruins in Latium. - 12. Its capital, Palestrina - Injustice of a guide-book writer to its modern inhabitants. - 13. The ancient city - Its fortunes. - 14. Palestrina Christian - First view of Rome taken by St. Peter's from its citadel. - 15. Dome of St. Peter's. - 16. Latium a Christian Land.

1. There is not in Europe, nor, if we except Palestine, in the world, a locality more full of interest for the scholar, the antiquary, and the Christian, than that little tract of country which lies between the Tiber and the Volscian mountains, and is bounded by the Sabine Ranges and the sea. From time immemorial it was called Latium (**Lazio**). It would little serve our present purpose to inquire into the origin of its primitive population. That they were not Etruscans, as some state, that they were of a more intellectual and aesthetic build, though not of a less practical nature than the Etruscans, is now fairly established. But whether they came from Greece or from the other side of the Hellespont (**The Dardanelles**), whetherneas found there a population upon his arrival, or whether he and his Trojans ever went there at all, are questions which to use Lord Macaulay's celebrated phrase, are likely to remain "*lost in the twilight of fable.*"

2. One thing alone is certain. The country was already well inhabited : It had its Kings and its wars and its politics, when upon a cluster of green hills about midway on its river boundary, there arose a city, **Rome**, which gradually but surely advanced in strength until, by a rare blending of policy and force, it made itself supreme over the rival factions of Latium. It then spread its dominion over all the states of Italy; and finally, never ceased to advance in its conquering career until the world, as known to the ancients, submitted with a docility as perfect as that of its own inhabitants to the omnipotence of its sway. That city was Rome. And it is the glory of the little territory we speak of that, whatever may have been the splendour and the power reached by Rome's citizens, it is beyond doubt that, for the most part, they were formed of the tribes,

Albans, Volscians, or Sabines, as they may have been, who blended with the Latins proper, and formed the little province to which Latium gave its name.

We may, perhaps, admit the Ernici at the other side of the narrow Sacco to a share in this distinction. With this addition, the country continued to be, and still remains, the peculiar territory, the nursery of Rome, the recruiting ground of her master-spirits. For, not only did the Sabines give the first mothers to the young colony of Romulus, but the Imperial City has never ceased to welcome a ruler born within the borders described, from the days that saw Numa Pompilius called from Sabina to be its second king right up to our own days, when the most real and extended dominion Rome ever possessed is governed by the Supreme Pontiff Leo XIII<sup>1</sup>, born at Carpineto in the country of the Ernici, near the opposite Volscian heights<sup>2</sup>.

3. Three noble masses of mountains rise from the general level of this territory. In the centre, facing Rome on the North, are the Alban Hills, those long-silent volcanoes whose craters are now filled with the beautiful, still water of the lakes of Albano and Nemi, and whose lava forms the pozzolana and tufo employed in all the buildings of Rome, and whose soft but withal adhesive nature has made the excavation of the catacombs possible. On each side of these isolated hills, arise the Volscian and the Sabine Ranges. The former, facing the sea, roll on towards Gaeta; and the latter sweep off in splendid file until they blend with the distant Apennines.

4. All this expanse of country may be seen on a clear day from the Tiber's bank outside Rome, or better, from the dome of St. Peters. Thrilling memories of the past are connected with almost every spot of it. Taking a central stand, say, on the summit of Mount Artimisio, a hundred scenes of world-wide celebrity at once come under view. In Velletri at your feet, Augustus, the first Roman Emperor was born. Near it is Civita Lavinia, the ancient Lanuvium, the site of the great temple of Juno, the birthplace of Milo, of Antoninus Pius, of Marcus Aurelius, of Commodus, and in more modern times, of Mark Antony Colonna, the hero of Lepanto. Far in the opposite direction is seen Anagni, the ancient capital of the Ernici, which gave to the Christian world four Popes, amongst whom towers the majestic figure of Innocent III. Between these

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<sup>1</sup> The practical political reality, at the time this book was written (c.1884), was that Italy was ruled by the Italian Government and not by the Pope. The Catholic Church did not recognise the legitimacy of the situation and asserted that the Pope was still the temporal ruler. It was not until the signing of the **Latern Pacts** on 11th February 1929 that the situation was resolved.

<sup>2</sup> **Carpineto** - Mons. Dillon has included in this book some very lengthy footnotes. I found them disruptive of the flow of reading the book. Some are, in fact, complete documents in themselves. I have placed all of the "lengthy footnotes", consecutively, at the end of the book. This footnote is now **Endnote 1**.

two points, the eye passes over Cori, Segni, Sacro Porto, the valley of the Sacco — the Latin valley —, Artena, and other places famous in the early warfare of the Latin tribes. In front, the long sea coast is visible, from the Circaean Promontory still protecting Antium, at present *Porto d'Anzio*, from the miasma of the Pontine Marshes, to Ostia at the Tiber's mouth. Dotting the dark bosom of the hills beneath are seen Genzano (**di Roma**), Ariccia, Albano, Castel Gandolfo, Frascati, and other celebrated suburban retreats of the Rome of today as well as of the Rome of antiquity.

Turning to the Sabines, Palestrina, the ancient Praeneste, is seen standing out upon the mid-declivity (**downward sloping**) of its mountain. Near it are Zagarolo, Galliciano, and then a wide plain encircling the hills which run towards Tivoli. Higher up than even Artemisio is the summit of the Alban range, Monte Cavo, where stood that great altar of Jupiter to which all Latium yearly repaired for sacrifice and prayer. A monastery in the keeping of the Passionist Fathers now takes the place of the Pagan temple and altar. It was built, strange to say, by the Cardinal of York<sup>1</sup> the last of the Stuart Princes, who had much love for the fine scenery of these hills upon which his (**titular**) bishopric was situated.

5. The memories connected with almost every mile of this territory make it one of the most interesting places in the world. But there is much more to be said of it. There is not on the earth a country, of the same extent, more beautiful to look upon. The traveller leaving Rome does not at first realise this. The flat Campagna which expands before him on leaving any of the southern gates of the city, looks dreary and uninviting enough when not diversified by some interesting ruin. This dreariness becomes all the more intense, when the imagination travels back to the earlier period when the vast plain bloomed like a garden under the assiduous care of the husbandman.

6. Amongst other calumnies so common in English-speaking countries against the Papal Government, it is blamed for the miasma and consequent desolate appearance of this Campagna. Nothing could be more unjust. Long before the period of the Empire, the wealth of both Roman patricians and people had bought out the industrious agriculturists, whose farms overspread the vast plain. Villas with a wide expanse of grassland, upon which slaves tended the flocks and herds belonging to their masters, took the place of the vineyards and grain-plots of a teeming population. The chestnut, the green-oak, the almond, the olive, the walnut, the alder, and the various fruit trees of the small proprietor, which now make so many portions of the cultivated districts beautiful, had then diversified the Campagna. They were removed. The

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Benedict Stuart (1725-1807) - Cardinal of York -

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_Benedict\\_Stuart](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Benedict_Stuart)

plough and the spade no longer pulverised the soil. Crops and trees ceased to drain it. The vast pasturages filled the city with prime meat and made the best return to the great capitalist, but they could not absorb the rainfall. The rain either percolated through fissures between the layers of pozzolana and tufo beneath and corrupted there; or it remained upon the surface to nourish the poisonous alga, the putrefying animalculae of which are supposed, by some scientists, to be the most fruitful source of malaria. From both causes probably, the poisonous exhalation arises as it has arisen for two thousand years, at the bidding of the fierce Summer sun each day, again to descend at night in fever-giving vapour.

That dread malaria came thus upon the plain, and hung heavily too over the city. And remedy there was none. Augustus with all his desire to free Rome from this bad air, its worst enemy, could do nothing. Other emperors emulated his example, but in vain. Pope after Pope essayed (**did their best**) to cure the evil with as little success. Pius VI drained the Pontine Marshes, but even he could not purify the air of the Campagna.

Just as the Revolutionists were about to take the Papal dominions (**circa 1869-70**), the world was assured by them that, amongst the multitude of good things that were to take place the moment they had control over Rome, the drainage and purification of the infected soil about the city was to be the first. They have now had twelve years of opportunity, vast resources, the confiscated estates of ecclesiastical corporations in the Campagna itself but, notwithstanding this and after such loud promising, they have effected, indeed they have attempted, nothing. Immense sums went into the national exchequer from the sale of the (**confiscated**) property of helpless monks and nuns. No conditions were made with the purchasers. No attempt has been made at drainage. No governmental efforts have been made to plant the **Eucalyptus**. A small reward offered to proprietors for doing so is all that we have heard of as having been effected by the grasping "*liberators of Italy*"<sup>1</sup>.

7. The only hope for the salubrity (**welfare**) of Rome comes, the writer is happy to say, from Australia. A company of those poor monks whom the present Italian government are so sedulously employed in exterminating, have been devoted enough to brave the polluted air of the worst part of the Campagna<sup>2</sup>. They have essayed (**done their best**) to plant on the long poisoned soil the Australian Eucalyptus, which has done so much to purify the infected marshes of Algeria, Egypt, and India. And, so far, their experiment has succeeded. The far-reaching roots of the Eucalyptus act as a pump upon the water, held in suspense between the

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - At the time that Mons. Dillon was writing this book (circa 1883), the Unification of Italy, the seizing of the Papal States and the confiscation of the Church's property and assets were very live political issues.

<sup>2</sup> **Campagna** - See Endnote 2

varied strata beneath the surface, while its leaves deodorise the air above, filling the atmosphere with pungent fragrance. The vine and the fig tree, and ground crops of every kind, come to flourish in the neighbourhood of this inestimable tree. They help its work of desiccation of the soil. So it happens that, already, criminals hired from the government by the monks, enjoy good health. Fevers of the malignant type are unknown; and as these pages are being written, the journals of Rome are full of hope that the long deserted "*Agro Romano*" will again bloom as it did in the days of the Horatii and Curatii.

If so, it will be but one of the many blessings which Australia has conferred on the old world; and it will be return to that Eternal City, to which, in common with America and the rest of the world, the newest of continents, owes its faith.

8. But the moment the flat fringe of the Campagna is crossed, the beauty of Latium opens with a thousand charms of valley and undulating plain, of glen and highland, of sweeping lowland and lofty, diversified mountain range.

The traveller who journeys by rail meets only a portion of this scenic beauty. The old carriageways (**roads**) are the best to give a proper idea of the country. The railway, after leaving the Campagna, skirts the Western extremity of the Alban mountains, then the Eastern fringe of the Volscians; and so passes to the country of the Ernici on its way to Naples.

But besides the rapidity and the inconvenience for sightseeing, inseparable from railway travelling, many interesting localities are not seen at all upon this route. The heart of Latium may be reached by any of the famous old ways, which still leave the Porta Maggiore directly, or the Porta San Giovanni by way of Frascati, to Palestrina. By either way you approach that city through a land of indescribable luxuriance. The rich soil appears everywhere kept in the highest state of cultivation. The macadamised road which takes the place of the old Roman one still visible, passes sometimes between stately rows of venerable chestnuts. Generally, the view is unimpeded. Only a slight hedge protects the vineyards and orchards on either side. The land is too precious to be occupied with walls or heavy fences and, it is to be supposed, the inhabitants are too honest to need them.

The scene changes continually. Now and then the traveller passes through lofty, romantic ravines, cut out ages ago by the torrents from the mountains, and clothed so as to completely exclude all sight of rock or soil with a thick mantle of dark green foliage. This is often observed on the roads leading to Cori and Valmontone. Ancient chestnuts too, line the ways to Lugnano and to the railway station of Segni, near which stood the celebrated Porto Sacro where Sylla gave the death blow to the party of Marius.



9. In all this expanse of cultivated ground there are, strange to say, few dwellings, and these few not always inhabited. There are no farm houses in the open country, such as we see in English-speaking countries. The owner and the labourer alike live in towns invariably built upon some commanding eminence, often on a height very difficult for access. Thence the cultivator descends at daybreak and returns not until sunset warns him, as it has warned his fathers since Latium became inhabited, that his day's toil is over. The necessity for self-defence both in pagan and medieval times, made this course the only one; and security is not as yet so great as to warrant the rejection of an old system which, with many draw-backs, has much to recommend itself. For thus, a large space is spared for cultivation in a country where every foot of soil has its value, mutual protection is afforded, and families are gathered around church and school.

10. It is evident that, from the beginning, every city and village of Latium was erected with the main objective that it should serve as a fortress. To this day, in many instances, the Cyclopean walls which protected the most ancient inhabitants, the masonry of the days of the Republic, the brickwork, reticulated and plain, of the period of the Empire, underlie the medieval ramparts and bastions which withstood and yielded to many a foe in the interminable struggles of the Colonna family, the great lords of Latium, with their baronial enemies, and not infrequently with the hosts of their Sovereign Lord, the Pope. For this reason the ruined defences of Segni, Cori, and Palestrina, are well worthy of the attention of the tourist, while their streets and environs are full of historic recollections.

11. The ruins of ancient temples, palaces, and fortresses are found in strange abundance everywhere. The modern Palestrina stands on the extensive site of the vast temple once dedicated to Fortune which still displays its massive substructions (**dictionary - foundations or substructures**) for the examination by the antiquary. Around it, on every side, are interesting ruins from which art treasures of great value are continually being collected. Amongst these may be mentioned the magnificent mosaic representing the Nile, now preserved in the palace of Prince Barberini. Other temples, still more ancient yet, send their columns high into the air like that of Hercules at Cori, and with a grace not inferior to those of the famous temple of the Sybil in Tivoli. And here and there over the plains, the shattered turrets of medieval watch-towers tell of troubled times not so long passed away.

Scenes of great beauty may now be viewed from a hundred points easy to access through this delightful region. Painters, amateur and professional, flock to Olevano to luxuriate in the splendid panorama, and to catch the ever varying tints which float over mountain and plain, as

seen from that point of vantage. Segni is sought after to command the bold, broken lines of the Sabines, the rich variegated valley of the Sacco, and the country of the Ernici, bristling with its fortress towns, like some great city which throws up from its irregular mass of roofs the domes and spires of churches.

12. But perhaps to the unprofessional tourist, the best view of Latium is from Palestrina itself, where also the historic interest is strongest. The compilers of guide-books fall into rapture upon the varied magnificence which is here presented to the gaze of the tourist, and which increases and becomes diversified at almost every step of the ascent from the city to the site of its lofty citadel.

We cannot, however, say that some at least of these writers are as complimentary to the modern inhabitants as they might be. One gentleman has recorded an experience which is very difficult for those who know the people intimately to realise, and which makes one suspect that his imagination was unusually active on the day of his visit to the native city of Pierluigi the Composer, and of so many other distinguished men of modern times. His description of the savageness, voracity, and uncouth barbarity which he alleges to have been manifested by those he met with, is such as to cause astonishment to persons who, like the writer of this book, have had occasion to visit the locality frequently. It is the chosen home, because of its healthy situation and its ancient and modern attractions, of many foreigners including some distinguished Englishmen. It contains the villeggiatura (**dictionary - holiday home**) of Prince Barberini, of the Cardinal Bishop, and of several families of note. Its inhabitants are, as a rule, as much above want as those of any other European town of its size. They are also just as much to be trusted. They may, like other people, if excited with wine, quarrel amongst themselves. But neither there, nor elsewhere in Latium, is there any record of a foreigner having been molested by them. While the writer referred to has been unjust to the inhabitants, he has, however, given an excellent idea of the scenery. The rich plain, the Campagna beyond, the lofty ranges around, the sea blending with the horizon in the distance, in conclusion, all that can be seen from the summit of the mountain of Palestrina, are well and amply described in his book.

13. But, as will be seen in the next chapter, it is the ancient city that most concerns the object of this work. It was amongst the oldest, if not the very oldest, of the cities of Italy. It saw the rise and the fall of Alba Longa and of Veii. It was already venerable when oxen were depastured on the hills of Rome. Like all other ancient cities, it was proud of its high antiquity, and held with great tenacity to its traditions, religious and national. It became the recognised capital of Latium. It never yielded its religious superiority. That continued while paganism

had vitality. It could not brook even the secular superiority of Rome. It became the centre of the Latin League against the Republic, and led in every effort which the rest of Italy made against the growing fortunes of the Mistress of the World<sup>1</sup>. It saw with a jealous eye the outspreading limits of its rival, or rather offspring, as Rome may be called. From the ramparts of its lofty citadel, its defenders could see the Capitol piercing the haze by the distant river bank. They believed themselves as equal, at least, to preserve the freedom of their city from its power. When the hour of conflict came, therefore, **Palestrina**, confident in its mighty walls and in the chivalry of its ancient race, hurled defiance at its ambitious offspring. It held with stubborn determination to its freedom for many a year. But, at length, it had to submit. Up its terraced heights came the heroes of Camillus. Over those Cyclopean walls, which are yet so strong, they passed on even to the almost inaccessible citadel on the lofty summit of the mountain upon the declivity of which the city stood and still stands. Citadel and city fell together, and with them may be said to have passed away the last vestige of Latin insubordination to Rome. So fell what a Latin historian of our own day lovingly calls the Lady of Latium — Signora del Latio — but only to rise all the grander with the advancing fortunes of the Empire to which Latium gave birth.

Palestrina afterwards became great enough to lead in the Social Wars, and to sustain against Sylla the fallen fortunes of Marius. Terribly her sons suffered for their fidelity. Sylla took the city and put to the sword all the adult male inhabitants. He parcelled out their lands to his veterans, to whose mercy he further consigned the widows and orphans of the slain.

These were sad days for Latium. But when the fortunes of Caesar enabled him to crush for ever the power of the Patricians, the children of the slaughtered men of Palestrina entered into a favour which became intensified when Augustus, one, it may be said, of themselves, became absolute master of the Empire. He embellished Palestrina anew, and settled its children upon the soil.

**14.** Thenceforward it continued to prosper. It was amongst the first of the cities of Italy to receive the Gospel. Tradition has it that, from the summit of its mountain, where the church and village of Castel San Pietro now stand, the Prince of the Apostles (**St. Peter**) took his first view of Rome, then a mighty city stretching far over the plain and in the fullness of its pride and power. Little could those who might have then seen that wayworn traveller from distant Judea, have imagined that the city he looked upon was given to him and to his successors by a power which no Caesar could gainsay (**contradict**). Yet, in time, his line made Rome

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<sup>1</sup> **Mistress of the World** refers to Ancient Rome.

more mighty in real greatness than it had ever been under King or Consul or Emperor. The name of that Fisherman from Galilee (**St. Peter**) is its glory, the fountain of its power. The spot where he stood and viewed his inheritance is called after him. A beautiful church containing his statue and a valuable painting of the reception of his commission from God Incarnate (**Jesus**) graces the locality.

**15.** From no other point can a better idea be obtained of the vastness of the dome of that glorious fabric, which “*of temples old, or altars new, stands alone with none like to it,*” and dedicated by a world to the one true God, under the invocation of the Prince of the Apostles. The distance — over twenty miles — dwarfs all the other towers and domes of Rome. The city seems like an incrustation of shells upon some low-lying sea rock. But from its cloudy midst (**from the middle of this**) arises, graceful, majestic, and peerless, the mighty conception of Michael Angelo, realising to the full his promise to “*suspend the Pantheon in the air*”.

**16.** In Latium there is also a number of modern towns and villages which have an interesting Christian history<sup>1</sup>. But it is, essentially, an ancient land. Its inhabitants today, whose features are often so like the antique Roman busts seen in museums, love old ways, and seem not to care much to be abreast of modern improvements. Their agriculture is very like what it was when Virgil wrote his Eclogues.

In Pagan times, none surpassed them in the fervour of their idolatry. Since they became Christian, none have excelled them in the depth of their faith. The traces of great Christian saints are in all the land. The monasteries of St Benedict and St Gregory are scattered over the mountains. The mendicant orders are in all the towns. In the territory, there are placed the sees of five of the six Cardinal Bishops, and there are other sees besides. In every town there are sanctuaries filled with holy memories and constantly frequented. But the crowning glory of Latium is that **Sanctuary** in its midst, which was selected by the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel for one of the most wonderful manifestations of Her power, and which now forms, for the devout visitor from other lands to the Eternal City, **the chief attraction of Latium**.

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<sup>1</sup> Valmontone - See Endnote 3

### Chapter III

#### PRE-CHRISTIAN GENAZZANO

1. Latium a great centre of idolatry - Its celebrated temples. - 2. Practice of the Romans to blend religion with public amusements (**festivities**) - 3. Increase of Pagan practices in Latium during the Imperial period - The Floral Games - Place of such celebration near Palestrina - Its beauty and adaptability - Consequences, cruel and immoral. - 4. That same place destined to be a scene of the triumph of the Cross through the Virgin Mother of Jesus. - 5. Our means of knowing this - 6. The Calendar of Verius Flaccus found in Palestrina. - 7. Its order for the celebration of the Floral Games in April - The inscription - The place. - 8. Proofs of the locality being the modern Genazzano - Licentiousness undoubted - Name of Genazzano derived from the **ludi ginnici?** - 9. Other suggested derivations of the name. - 10. Increase of vice in the games when the neighbouring Claudian Villa became an Imperial residence - How this happened - Claudius Nero and his wife Livia. - 11. Augustus besieges Livia in Palestrina - Augustus forces Claudius to divorce Livia and marries her - Gets the villa and the sons of Claudius, Tiberius and Drusus, on the death of their father. - 12. Vices of the locality increase under his successors. - 13. These continue until the conversion of Emperor Constantine - He gives the grounds to St. Sylvester - Record of the grant. - 14. Pope St. Mark, successor of St. Sylvester makes the place Christian - Builds its first church, dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel - Changes the popular, heathen celebrations into Christian ones - His memory in Genazzano. - 15. Reflections of Father Buonanno on the change effected and its consequences. - 16. Their truth (?**relevance/validity?**) in view of the evils of our day and the remedy for them in the devotion that Pope St Mark established to **Our Lady of Good Counsel**.

1. In the previous chapter we have attempted to give some idea of the country and its capital, in which the famous Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel was, in God's good time, destined to be formed. We shall now see that a very special reason existed for its being formed there. It was this. Of all parts of the Roman Empire, Latium was the most devoted to the practices of idolatry. Its gods, rural and urban, were innumerable. The vast temple of Fortune in its chief city, was one of the largest and most famous in the world. At Monte Cavo, arose the great Latin altar to Jupiter. Civita Lavinia possessed the celebrated temple of Juno the Saviouress. There was another fane (**temple or shrine**) equally grand, and almost equally frequented, in Antium. The modern cathedral of Velletri stands upon the ruins of an extensive temple of Mars. Every city possessed its particular deity, and had its festivals, its rites, and its altars. When Christianity appeared, there was not a hill, or grove, or stream in Latium without its god, or goddess.

2. At that time the Romans had a peculiar way of combining public pleasures with the public practices of religion. Festivals were seldom complete without games, shows, and sports. The circus and the theatre went hand in hand with the altar and the sanctuary. The pontifex and the flamen, the priestess and the augur, were never far distant from the charioteer and the gladiator, the comedian, and the athlete. It was one of the masterly strokes of the policy of the Caesars to concentrate in their own hands the management of the whole of this astute blending of religion with pleasure. The Emperor, thereby, in his quality (**rôle**) of Pontifex Maximus, became the centre and the source of all that could hold a pagan people most in subjection (**under his rule**). Therefore, not only in Rome, but wherever the Imperial Court sojourned, altars sprang up, and with them, all the practices common to the Circus Maximus and to the Flavian Amphitheatre. Hence we find the ruins of so many temples, theatres, amphitheatres, baths, and coursing grounds, amongst the still magnificent remains of the Villa of Hadrian at Tivoli, and of all the other Imperial residences of which we have any knowledge.

3. As the most magnificent and numerous villas of the Emperors were situated in Latium, the pagan practices of the country, already so greatly developed, increased significantly during the Imperial period. The gods of conquered provinces swelled the number of the native deities. **Superstition was needed** there more than elsewhere, to help in keeping in satisfied subjection the immense slave population which ministered to the wants and luxuries of the Conquerors of the World. Its aid was not less useful for the legionaries and guards of the Sovereign. Enormous wealth was spent upon the rural retreats of the patricians, whose luxurious gardens and summer palaces covered the territory from the sea coast to the mountain slopes. The vices and extravagances of public worship increased with riches. The excesses indulged in, to honour the Sabine goddess Flora, were increased a hundred-fold when Flora developed into Venus. These rites, abominable and demoralising (**older meaning - to corrupt or undermine morals**) to a shocking degree as practised in Rome, were much worse as carried on in Latium. There was a special spot set aside for their celebration in the city-territory of Palestrina. This spot also adjoined, or belonged to, the first villa which the first Emperor possessed after the last of his rivals disappeared. It lay about five miles from Palestrina, in a locality where nature and art combined to produce a scene fitted in every way for the inappropriate practices of the Floral festivities. There, in baths of every kind, in groves laid out upon undulating mounds and steep hill-sides, in gardens where the famous Praenestine roses bloomed and purling streams meandered, the population of Latium assembled yearly for unholy rites, destined to preserve unholy and cruel practices. There, slavery with its attendant

degradation of woman, was consecrated as one of the institutions of the people. There, lust was encouraged by the very sanctions of religion. There, decency and modesty were destroyed, and youth debauched and brutalised.

4. It was on this very spot, then, that Providence decreed that a great triumph of the Cross of Christ should take place. Idolatry was destined to fall before the purest worship of the true and living God. The statue of the she-devil (**Venus**) was to be broken, and the Unity and Trinity of the Deity alone adored with supreme worship. And finally, Jesus the Incarnate Son of God decreed that, on that spot, once so soiled by sin and evil example, the people of Latium and people far beyond its borders, should be able to contemplate the peerless purity of His own sweet Virgin Mother, in all Her immaculate sinlessness, in all the dignity and power which it has pleased His Divine Majesty to confer upon Her. Her example, Her influence with God, Her immense maternal charity, Her heavenly wisdom, all were destined by Him to be employed on that spot, as a healing means for all, to crush in an especial manner the power of lust and cruelty and crime of every kind, to disconcert the machinations and the malignancy of the fiend (**Satan**), and to pour into every heart the blessings of heavenly wisdom and of consoling relief.

5. It will be not a little interesting to see how we come to know this. No scholar denies that somewhere in Latium, and probably near its capital, the excesses we speak of in honour of Venus (or Flora), took place annually in Pagan times. We shall see further on in this book, that the worship (**veneration**) of Our Lady of Good Counsel existed from the earliest Christian times in Genazzano (circa A.D.336), and that it developed in an extraordinary manner after the coming of the miraculous Image in A.D.1467. But the matters to be settled are, (i) were the games, the perverse nature of which every student of Roman history knows, carried out yearly in or about Palestrina? and (ii) if so, was this locality that upon which the modern Genazzano now stands?

6. These two questions may have been more or less in doubt up to the finding of the celebrated Calendar of Palestrina, which may now be inspected at the Vidoni palace in Rome. It was engraved on marble and placed, for the purpose of general information, in the most public place of the ancient Praeneste. Its composer was the celebrated Verius Flaccus, a native of that city, who held, under Augustus, an office which we may call that of his Vicar General or Minister for Pagan worship. Nibby, Senni, and several antiquarians have written largely (**a lot**) and learnedly upon the nature and historic value of this singular and now celebrated Calendar. It will suffice for our present purpose to remark that there cannot be the slightest doubt as to its authenticity. It regulated, during the

whole period of the Pagan Empire, the rites, and games, and festivals which took place in Palestrina and its immediate territory.

7. Under the date April 25th, we have the following ordinance.

FERIAE · ROBIGO · VIA · CLAVDIA · AD · MILLIARIVM · V.  
NE · ROBIGO  
FRUMENTIS · NOCEAT · SACRIFICII · ET · LVDI.  
CVRSORIBVS  
MAIORIBVS · MINORIBVSQ · FIVNT · FESTVS  
EST · PVERORVM  
LINIORVM · QVIA · PROXIMVS · SVPERIOR  
MERETRICVM · EST.

The games here referred to, and ordered to take place yearly, within five Roman miles of Palestrina, — the exact distance to Genazzano — were such a type of games as could not take place within or very near a city. They were also instituted for a purpose which would intensely interest a superstitious agricultural population such as that of Latium, « *lest the rust may injure the corn* ». Robigo, the deity of Rust, was to be propitiated at the precise season of the year when his services were most required; and the way to gain his good will was by sacrifices and games and chariot races.

8. The historian, Archpriest Senni proves, we believe, beyond question, that the locality indicated was the modern Genazzano. And he is borne out in this, not only by its five miles distance, but also by the extensive ruins of baths which yet (**still**) exist in that locality. These never could have been erected by any private individual; and in Pagan times, it is quite certain that no town existed nearer to them than Palestrina. The pillars which yet remain are massive, and are beautifully carved. Sea shells are found as an ornamentation wherever it was possible for the architect to place them. The niches (**small shrines**) for Venus and Cupid and other deities still remain. In front of the ruins is the excavation where the water of the baths was stored. The splendid and powerful embankment which retained it, still remains. There are evidences of ascending terraces on each side for spectators; whilst around, is a country well adapted for groves and gardens, containing ruins also of a small temple, such as the Flamens used for Robigal sacrifices. Near at hand, is a large plain where the chariot races and the *ludi ginnici* could take place. The festival and games in honour of Robigo, were, as the calendar indicates, followed immediately by those of Flora (or Venus), the most shameless and impure of all the celebrations of a shameless and impure religion. Ovid in his *Fasti* IV, 139, gives some idea of them, but is far



from describing them as they were in reality, and as they are described by other authors<sup>1</sup>.

It would be out of place, here, to go farther into detail regarding them; but it will be sufficient to say that, though Cato is represented as leaving the place of their celebration in Rome so that his presence may not impede them, yet they were reprehended (**criticised**) by the more sober-minded amongst the Pagans. Some efforts were made to stop or, at least, to lessen their enormity. But, as Senni observes, « *nevertheless these games prevailed in all the cities and country places* ». He proves further, that the « *Via Claudia* » of the Calendar, could be no other than the one passing by the Claudian Villa, built near the ruins of these baths, and which belonged afterwards to the Emperors. He points out, with considerable accuracy, that all the circumstances of the Palestrinian games show Genazzano to be the theatre of their performance. He believes that the very name of his native city comes from the *ludi ginnici* which once took place upon its site. « *Much I fear* » he says « *that thence is derived the name Genazzano, and would to heaven* » he adds, pathetically, « *that my fears were not well founded* ».

9. It is but just, also, to mention that others believe the name « *Genazzano* » to be derived from a family called Genucia, which seems to have come into possession of the Claudian Villa in Christian times. Others again derive it from the plant ginestra or broom, which grows upon many of the adjacent hill-sides. It is, of course, impossible to determine the real derivation, now, with any accuracy. But we can well conceive how the people of the place would prefer to have any other source for the name of their township than that which Senni believes, with such reluctance, to have been its origin (**a place of Pagan rites**).

10. The games, which at the period of the Republic were bad enough, became worse after Augustus obtained possession of the Claudian Villa, and made it an Imperial residence. We may mention that this occurred in the following manner.

In the time of the Triumvirate (**when there were three rulers of Rome**), the Villa and its lands were the property of Claudius Nero, a descendant of both branches of the ancient and powerful patrician family of the Claudii. This nobleman seems to have been greatly tried in the stormy and uncertain period which followed the death of Julius Caesar. When the heads of foremost Romans were falling like leaves in Vallambrosa to appease the wrath or jealousy of Augustus or Mark Antony or Lepidus (**The Triumvirate**), it was a difficult thing for one in his position to know whom to follow. He decided at last to favour

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<sup>1</sup> Note added by Eugene Shannon - Since this verse added nothing to the points that Mons. Dillon was making, I have omitted it.

Mark Antony; and accordingly, upon the quarrel between Mark Antony and Augustus becoming serious, he was forced to take up arms against the latter. His possessions, backed by the party of Antony, made him very powerful. Palestrina and Perugia had declared for him and for his friend, and were both besieged by Augustus. **Claudius himself** undertook the defence of the more distant city, while the ancient one of Latium and the nearest to his celebrated villa, was held by **his wife Livia**, a very beautiful but masculine minded Roman lady, whose fame in history is almost equal to that of the young Emperor himself.

**11.** Augustus besieged Palestrina in person, and, after an obstinate defence, took it. We are told that he, at first, determined to treat its inhabitants with all the severity which Sylla had inflicted upon their fathers in the previous generation. But he suddenly relented. Livia, who could not defeat his legions, completely captivated his affections. And Claudius, her husband, purchased peace for his family by consenting that she should be divorced from himself, in order to become the wife of the conqueror.

She was, at the time, the mother of **Tiberius Nero**, the immediate successor of Augustus, and was about to bring forth the celebrated **Drusus**. In a very short time Claudius died; and so his villa and vast patrimony passed to his rival, as the guardian and adopted father of the two young Claudii, his orphan sons.

**12.** We cannot be surprised that the already magnificent villa of the unfortunate Claudius Nero, became still more magnificent under the Caesars. Senni shows that the presence of the court drew the first families of Rome around the locality; and that thus, the games and religious festivals increased in number and in splendour and also in excess. All this was bad enough under Augustus and worse under Tiberius; but vice increased in the locality to an alarming extent under the Antonines.

Palestrina, and this imperial residence especially, became the favourite retreat of Lucius Verus, the colleague of Marcus Aurelius, another Tiberius in vice and in every unbridled excess. Through him, the villa advanced still further in voluptuousness. Marcus Aurelius, though a pronounced philosopher of the most austere school, also visited it; in order, it is said, to restrain, by his presence, the excesses of his colleague. He lost a child there, during one of these sojourns. Both princes must have contributed equally to the embellishment of the palace, for it was ever afterward known as the *Villa Antonina* (from the name of their adopted father Antoninus Pius), and as the *locum marmoreum* (from the splendour of its marble buildings).

**13.** It is certain that the foul but popular celebrations continued in the baths and grounds adjoining the villa during the whole Imperial-Pagan period. The hill-sides smoked with sacrifices. The

votaries of Flora and of Robigo carried on their gymnic and other nameless practices each year, as April came round. Slave, freedman and master, patrician and plebeian, soldier and merchant, came to the locality from Palestrina and all the cities of Latium. And this continued until it pleased Providence that Emperor Constantine should triumph over his rival Maxentius.

The vast empire of the Caesars passed completely into the hands of the first Emperor who confessed Christ. With it passed the wide patrimonial domains belonging to the imperial family. The Antonine villa, like that of Hadrian and the other villas, became the personal property of Constantine. His policy, as well as his inclination, led him to leave nothing to favour the religion (**Pagan**) of his rival. He therefore, at first, withdrew the Antonine villa and its grounds from the purposes of Paganism; and then, since he did not require them for his own purposes, he handed them over to Pope St. Sylvester, as a perpetual endowment for the churches he founded in such number and splendour in Rome. Thus the land where the she-devil of Latium (**Venus a.k.a. Flora**) reigned so long became the patrimony of the Church of Christ.

In the records of the gifts of Constantine we find the following donation to the church of St. Sylvester. « *Fundum, Caesareanum situm, Via Prenestina distans ab urbe millia XXX* » and « *Fundum thermulas in territorio Praenestino praestantem solid. XXXV* ». This *fundum Caesareanum* being upon the Prenestine Way, and being 30 miles from Rome, can be no other than the site of the present Genazzano, which is exactly that distance from the Eternal City. It is at least equally likely that the warm baths mentioned, were those where the Floral games took place; and where nymphs and satyrs had revelled, for at least a thousand years.

**14.** It was, however, not St. Sylvester, but his immediate successor Pope St. Mark<sup>1</sup>, who purged the locality of its pagan abominations, and established instead the worship of the true and living God. He drew off the waters from the lake. He cut down the groves. He planted upon the soil a Christian population, and, in his time, there was built near the ruins of the temples and statues of Venus, the first church which we know to have been dedicated to the Virgin Mother of God, under the title of the Madonna of Good Counsel.

Furthermore, with that profound wisdom which the apostles of Christianity have always displayed in the conversion of heathen nations, he took care not to destroy, but to Christianise whatever might be found innocent in popular celebrations. It was necessary that the corn should be preserved from rust, and that the people should have supernatural help for

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon:**— Pope St. Mark had a very short period in office — from 18th January 336 to 7th October 336. His feast is on 7th October.

this and for all their temporal necessities. And so, they were taught, when the season came round, to have recourse not to senseless carved stones, or to demons who could only deceive them, but to the intercession of God's Virgin Mother, Who could both hear and help them. Therefore, instead of the *ludi ginici*, the 25th April saw, as every year brought it round, the crowds of Latium gather to worship the Virgin Mother of God. So the day remained, as it always was, the principal festival celebrated in Genazzano. But it was now a Christian festival, where Mary, through Her influence with God, Her Son Jesus, continued for ages to show Her wisdom, Her power, and Her goodness to all who came to pray for Good Counsel and seasonable help at Her feet.

Pope St. Mark passed to his reward, and, in love for his beneficence to Genazzano, the holy Evangelist Mark, his patron saint, remains to this day one of the favourite heavenly protectors of the locality; and a name, like that of local Apostles elsewhere, commonly given in every numerous family to one of its male members.

**15.** In no better words can the change wrought at this time in Genazzano be expressed than in those of the pious and learned Father Buonanno of the Oratory « *The ways of the Lord* » he writes « *are mysteries of profound wisdom and goodness. Foolish is he who attributes to chance whatever he sees happen in the long chain of events which occur in this world. God alone can be and is the regulator of these things, and directs all with admirable strength and sweetness to his greater extrinsic glory, not less than to the immortal and only good of man. Genazzano in idolatrous times, by the frequent and varied pagan feasts which took place where it stands, was a milieu of scandals and crimes. Now, what prevents us from believing that the first little church erected by its people after their conversion, was dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel, precisely to give us to understand that this their action was a wise counsel of Providence, inspired to purify that hill from Gentile abominations and to preserve that people in the service of the true God? But even, should this thought, or rather probable supposition, be not admitted, facts prove clearly that the most wise Deity willed to create Genazzano as the centre of tender and special devotion to Her, Who alone among the children of men is the type (**model**) of immaculate virginal purity. For in as much as, in that place arose or rather was cradled that affectionate devotion (God planning things thus) which was destined not to confine itself within the narrow limits of a small territory, but to extend and to propagate itself from one hemisphere of the earth to the other, the inhabitants of Genazzano were not the only people who should kneel before the Mother of God and invoke Her under the name of Mary of Good Counsel, but the whole of Christendom was destined to magnify the glory of the Virgin under this most sweet title. In summary,*

*God willed that in that town should appear the first spark, which afterwards should rapidly inflame the whole Catholic world with tenderness and love for the Mother of Good Counsel. And if (**while**) that people were the first worshippers and admirers at the same time, of the celestial grandeur of this most wonderful title of Mary, a day was to come when uniting themselves with sincerity of heart with all the peoples of the earth, they should form one people, as the great family of Jesus Christ are one, in exalting and praising the Blessed amongst Women, under the most sublime and sweet name of Mother of Good Counsel. »*

**16.** We can add nothing to this admirable reflection of Father Buonanno, further than to say that the whole history of that devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, which sprang up upon the ruins of vice and crime in Genazzano, is an illustration of the triumph of Christianity over cruelty, lust and pride, through the powerful influence of the example and intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God. With greater force the same adverse agencies war against the soul, at the present moment, all the world over (1883).

These agencies are more astutely led by the increased cunning of the infernal serpent (**Satan**) who brings the experience of all past ages to assist his perverted intelligence. He appears everywhere, and everywhere has assistance from the votaries of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. He must be, therefore, met everywhere by the supernal wisdom of « **THE WOMAN** » who is also destined everywhere, to crush his head, as She did so efficaciously in Genazzano by the spirit of purity and of Good Counsel<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> St. Agapitus - See Endnote 4

## Chapter IV

### GENAZZANO CHRISTIAN

**1.** Situation. - **2.** Climate and soil. - **3.** Growth. - Churches. - Convents. - **4.** Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio. - **5.** The Colonnas. - **6.** Their rise. - In Genazzano - Their religions and party leanings - Their attitude to the Popes, their sovereigns. - **7.** Odo Colonna, Pope Martin V, Fabrizio and Victoria his daughter. - **8.** Possessions and dignities of the house. - **9.** Present position. - **10.** Their connection with the sacred Image. - **11.** Gift of the ancient church of Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio, by Giordan Colonna to the Augustinians in 1356 - Document of transfer. - **12.** Good produced. - **13.** Dilapidated condition of the structure - difficulty of repairing it. - **14.** John di Nocera and his wife Petruccia.

**1.** That little village which sprang up around the church erected in honour of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano, stood upon the site of a famous rose garden formed to supply flowers for the festivities of Venus. It overlooked the baths wherein the worst orgies in honour of that goddess took place.

No better or more beautiful site for a city could be selected even in Latium. It consisted of a jutting tongue of land which arose in the midst of a long valley between the lofty heights which extended to Palestrina, on the one hand, and an agreeably depressed elongation of the mountain spur of San Vito, on the other. A steep narrow glen was thus formed upon either side so as to render its drainage perfect; while the elevations further off protected it from the wintry winds of the Apennines clustering close around.

These form, at its rear, a barrier of bold mountain scenery most picturesque in Winter, when the crests of the loftier ridges covered with snow roll off to an interminable distance like a veritable polar region.

**2.** Nestling thus and thus protected, Genazzano looks out upon the rich and variegated valley of the Sacco, which, after sweeping on for several miles, has its course bounded by the Volscian heights on the one side, and by the Alban Hills just perceptible on the other. A passage between both opening in the far distance, fronts the little town towards the sea, causing the fresh breezes of the Mediterranean to reach it, and tempering agreeably both the heat of Summer and the cold mountain air of Winter. The soil on the hill-sides, and the adjacent plain, is rich and so diversified that, with the climate of Latium to help and abundance of water from hill-streams and wells at hand, the skill of the gardener could with ease make it such a place as even Roman Emperors might love to

dwell in; and where pagan priests could have all the groves and baths and gardens their hearts desired.

It was therefore, perhaps, that the Villa of the Antonines crowned the best portion of the elevation, and that the games of Palestrina and its perverse Floral and Robigal celebrations were ordered to be held in the locality.

3. When such a soil in such a position was opened to cultivation, it was no wonder that a village grew apace. In time its population needed several churches; and so, when it became of sufficient importance to be fortified, four parishes were formed instead of one, each with its own temple (**church**) and all of which still subsist.

After many centuries, the religious orders came. Outside the walls, at one end, the Conventual Franciscans established themselves exactly upon the ruins of the Imperial Villa; and, at the other end, the Augustinians erected a modest convent and a little chapel in the locality called the Pescara overlooking the lake where stand to this day the ruins of the baths.

4. The secular clergy held the churches within the walls. But, unfortunately, in the course of centuries, that of Our Lady of Good Counsel, though the oldest and the one for which the whole of Latium had most devotion, became for some reason very much neglected by its guardians. Perhaps its primitive architecture, constructed as it had been so early and so rudely, and its original diminutive size, caused it not to be so much appreciated by the inhabitants, when the newer and more splendidly decorated edifices dedicated to St. John, St. Paul, and St. Nicholas came to be erected. While these latter, through the care of Pope Martin V and others of his house, advanced in grandeur, nothing of its original preëminence remained to the church of St. Mary (**Our Lady of Good Counsel**) but its name and a most beautifully carved bass-relief in marble of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, to which crowds came from far and near, and came not, we are assured, in vain for graces and favours.

5. Meanwhile, the celebrated Colonna family had, by marriage, become the feudal lords of Genazzano. It was, in all probability, their first, and it remained for many ages their principal stronghold. They fortified it on every side, embellished it, and crowned it with a castle which remains to this day; and which, though abandoned by its ancient masters, still tells of its former power and greatness. The Colonnas held the *jus patronatus* (**a duty to protect and maintain**) of *Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio*; and, since they are intimately connected with the history of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, it will not be amiss for the reader to know what manner of people they were.

6. They were, at that time, in truth, a wonderful old house. Springing, in all probability, from some ancient Roman family who dwelt near the column of Trajan or near some other ancient Roman column from which they took their name; they made their way through the turbulent times succeeding the desolation of the Western Empire, until by the end of the middle ages, they became the most considerable family in the Pontifical States, and amongst the very foremost in Italy. Without being sovereign princes, they exercised, nevertheless, an immense influence in all the affairs of the Italian Peninsula. With great shrewdness, they nearly always managed to keep one foot planted in the kingdom of Naples, while the other rested in Latium. What they lost, therefore, in one state for a season, they were sure to regain in time, through being strong in the other.

7. They were, on the whole, a religious family, carefully providing for the spiritual as well as the temporal wants of their liegemen. Yet sometimes, they could make up their minds, even when Cardinals were of their blood, to fight, and fight with terrible desperation, against the Church. Though the subjects of the Pope, they were more often against him than for him in the stormy and long continued conflicts of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines<sup>1</sup>.

The **Colonnas** may indeed be regarded as the leaders of the **Ghibelline** or Imperial faction, in the same way as the **Orsinis** may be looked upon as the leaders of the **Guelphs**. The Holy See was invariably with the latter or national party; and being so, preserved the independence of Italy — a service for which the present (1883) self-called patriots of the country show scant gratitude. But for all their short comings, the Colonnas, on the whole, **cannot** be regarded as perpetual enemies of the Popes who were, in effect, their Suzerains (**Overlords**). Somehow it always happened that if one Pope was against them, his successor was sure to be for them. If one Colonna attacked the Eternal City, or made off with its treasures, his son as a rule proved to be a benefactor to religion and a loyal child of the Holy See. In one reign, we see the chiefs of the Colonnas, to the number of twelve, as “*sons of iniquity*” driven from every foot of land they held in Latium. And then, in a decade, we again see the whole family, “*sons of iniquity*” as they were, called back, and the Chief so far restored to favour as to get in marriage the niece of the Pope.

In the Pontificate of Clement VII, the Colonnas were certainly responsible for calling in the Imperialists, who, under Bourbon, the renegade Constable of France, dealt the worst blow ever inflicted on Rome, even by Gaul or Vandal; and who forced the Pope himself, in peril of his life, to take refuge in the castle of Sant Angelo. Not very long after,

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<sup>1</sup> Guelphs and the Ghibellines - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guelphs\\_and\\_Ghibellines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guelphs_and_Ghibellines)



however, in the pontificate of St. Pius V, we see the Chief of the family, Mark Antony Colonna, leading the Papal forces at sea, and giving a significant blow to the naval forces of the Ottoman Empire on the waters of Lepanto<sup>1</sup>.

8. Genazzano, as their first fortress, has a grand place in the history of the Colonnas. There, the greatest Pope of the family, — for they count four of their blood and had certainly more than one —, Martin V was born. He extinguished the Schism of the West, and by other deeds proved himself one of the worthiest of the Successors of St. Peter. All his life he dearly loved his native township, and did much to improve and embellish it. In Genazzano, lived the mightiest princes of the house, amongst whom may be mentioned Fabrizio Colonna, whom Machiavelli calls the greatest Captain of his age. For a long time also, his remarkable daughter Victoria Colonna, the first poetess of Italy and indeed of Europe, lived there. She was, besides being a genius of the first order, the model of wives and of widows; and, it may be said, one of the purest and noblest female characters not actually canonised, that any country ever produced.

9. The castellated feudal towns of the family were thirty six in number. The head of its oldest branch was, for some centuries, hereditary Grand Constable, that is, Field Marshal, of the armies of Naples. Another member was Prince of Palestrina. Though this principality was sold in a season of necessity, nevertheless, a descendant of the vendor, Prince Colonna Barberini, now (1883) holds it. The dignities possessed by other members of the family, were innumerable. Quite a crowd of Cardinals were Colonnas. And it may be said that, for nearly a thousand years, no remarkable event has happened in Italy, in which a Colonna, in some manner or another, was not mixed up.

10. At present, the Chief of the house enjoys, with the Chief of the Orsini family, the premier post among the Roman nobility. During the existing revolutionary persecution of the Pontiff; both the one and the other have shown themselves inflexibly devoted to the Holy Father. We hope that their heirs will have courage to imitate them. The wealth of the family, once so great, is not, at present, on a level with that of houses of more recent formation. But it is ample. Further on, it will be seen, that a Chief of the Colonna family, as late as 1630, was able to honour the visit of the Pope by meeting him with a well equipped army of eight thousand men, infantry, cavalry, and artillery. It may further be added, that the Colonnas were the first feudal family of the States of the Church who, at the request of Pius VII, relinquished, for the good of the state, their feudal rights, and passed into the condition of simple honorary princes, in no better political position than the nobles of more modern creation.

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<sup>1</sup> Battle of Lepanto (1571) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Lepanto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Lepanto)

11. Such is the history of this strange, but withal, most princely family. It attained to many honours, but the chief and the most enduring will be its connection with the church of *Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio* in Genazzano, and its never failing devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel — a devotion which saved it, we believe, from a hundred threatened destructions in its long and eventful career.

12. **That connection commenced in this way.** As early as 1356, Pier Giordan Colonna, a wise and pious prince, unconsciously but providentially prepared the way for the coming, a century later, of the most wonderful event in the history of his house. In that year (1356), by the exercise of his *jus patronatus*, he called upon the Augustinian Fathers, who were already resident, as we have seen, in a small convent outside the walls, to take charge of the church and parish (within the walls) of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, then sadly neglected. In the legal instrument conferring this benefice, the church is distinctly referred to, according to immemorial usage, by its title of “*Holy Mary of Good Counsel.*” The following is a translation of the document.

*“To the honour and reverence of the Omnipotent God, and of His most glorious Virgin Mother Mary. The magnificent man, Peter Giordan Colonna, Lord of Genazzano, considering the faith and devotion which he and his predecessors have had and have for the brethren and Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, and which the friars themselves have for the house of Colonna . . . . As the church of Holy Mary of Good Counsel in the town of Genazzano is at present vacant and, on account of the inattention of the secular clergy, fallen away in spirituals and temporals, so as to be in a manner destitute, he, so far as it appertains to him and to his successors, hands over to Brother Dominic, Prior of the church of St. Francis in Genazzano, acting for and in the name of the said brethren and of his Order, devoutly praying the Lord Cardinal Bishop of Palestrina, and the Most Revd. Father Br. Daniel, Bishop of Tivoli, Vice-Gerent of the said Lord Cardinal, that it may please them to hand over to the said Br. Dominic, acting in the stead and name of the abovementioned Order, the aforesaid church with all its jurisdictions and appurtenances, together with its perpetual care and general administration in spirituals and temporals, as was the custom with the secular clergy to govern. etc.*

*Done in the said church of St. Mary etc.  
I the Notary Deputy being present.*

*D. JAMES OF GENAZZANO, PRIEST  
of the Church of Mary etc.*

**This instrument of concession was drawn up and attested by the Notary, Peter James Jacobilli, on the 27th of December 1356<sup>1</sup>.** In accordance with its terms, the Augustinians took possession of the church and parochial dwelling in the year of the concession. Their old convent and its garden remained long in their possession, until at last both were recently confiscated with the rest of the goods of the community by revolutionary rapacity.

*(Note added by Eugene Shannon:- We in the 21st Century would not, generally speaking, be familiar with the political “goings on” in Italy at the time that Msgr. Dillon was writing this book unless we have studied the European History of the period. There is currently a useful article in this regard on wikipedia -*

*[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom\\_of\\_Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Italy)*

*from which I quote the following -*

*« On September 20, 1870, the military forces of the King of Italy overthrew what little was left of the Papal States, capturing in particular the city of Rome. The following year, the capital was moved from Florence to Rome. For the next 59 years after 1870, the Church denied the legitimacy of the Italian king's rule of Rome, which, it claimed, rightfully belonged to the Papal States. In 1929, the dispute was settled by the Lateran Treaty, in which the king recognised Vatican City as an independent state and paid a large sum of money to compensate the Church for the loss of the Papal States.*

*Liberal governments generally followed a policy of limiting the role of the Catholic Church and its clergy; the state confiscated church lands. Similar policies were supported by such anticlerical and secular movements as republicanism, socialism, anarchism, Freemasonry, Lazzarettism and Protestantism. »)*

**13.** The transfer of the Augustinians to the Church of Santa Maria (**in 1356**), was, however, productive, at the time, of the greatest possible good, not only to the people immediately confided to the care of the Fathers, but to the whole of Genazzano and to its princes. The fame of St. Augustine is well known to the Italians, and consequently, numbers of citizens, both men and women, and of every rank became Augustinian tertiaries (**lay members**).

**14.** Despite all this, the good religious found themselves, nevertheless, unable to do much for the material well-being of the ancient and crumbling edifice given them. Their revenues were very

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<sup>1</sup> This would be a Julian Calendar date. The equivalent Gregorian Calendar date is 4th Jan. 1357.

circumscribed. Their parishioners were few and poor. The rest of the people of Genazzano, rejoicing in abundant and splendid church accommodation, were little zealous to concern themselves in the great expense of erecting, as it required to be erected, anew the holy and traditional, but withal to them unnecessary church of Santa Maria.

**15.** Undoubtedly, there would have been many faithful hearts who felt keenly that something should be done to improve the church, many who prayed fervently that some means might be found to place the building in a better situation. Amongst the latter were the caretaker, or proctor, of the Augustinians, John di Nocera, and his wife, a holy woman named **Petruccia**.

This good proctor died in about the year 1436, leaving his little all to his widow, then aged some 50 years; and she, thus freed from human cares, made it her delight to spend her days in the neglected church of the Madonna of Good Counsel, praying, and labouring for the needs of its vestments and its other wants.

**16.** If it was a sorrow for others to see the beloved temple threatening daily to become a ruin, unable from its size to accommodate the crowds that flocked to the feet of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel for graces and to the good fathers for spiritual ministrations, it was, to Petruccia, a positive torment. Her most earnest supplications went, therefore, unceasingly to Heaven, but apparently in vain, for help. At last, not finding any hand stretched forth to assist, she generously determined to give her all — all that her husband had left her — to the work of enlargement and restoration. She communicated this intention to the fathers, who approved of it, and no doubt obtained from the ecclesiastical authorities, the necessary permission to commence the enterprise. Thus began the attempt at restoration.

The church of Santa Maria, it may be here noted, as built originally, did not lie as it does now (**in 1883**). Its main entrance looked down upon the locality of the baths, and its Western side partly faced the piazza of Santa Maria. Near it, where at present the principal street of the town runs, Petruccia had her dwelling. This she abandoned for the enlargement of the new edifice. All else she had she willingly expended upon the building of its walls. She was, at this time, decrepit, being at least eighty years of age; and naturally, she must have thought that others would at least assist in that to which she gave in such a season her all.

**17.** But for a wise purpose that Providence had in view, no one volunteered to help her. She had, consequently, to abandon the undertaking for the simple want of means. But such souls as Petruccia do not work for God without supernal light, especially when their works are, as in this instance, extraordinary, considering the means and strength of the undertaker. Petruccia had an internal assurance, whether by revelation

or otherwise, that the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel and St. Augustine would do for her beloved temple that which she herself should be unable to do. Her design too was well conceived. It was to commence to repair at first the chapel of St. Biagio which threatened to fall; then, after enlarging it by adding the site of her house, to advance step by step with the rest of the church, until finally the whole of her purpose should be effected. But at the moment when her means failed, even the walls of the chapel of St. Biagio were both rough and unfinished. They were in fact little better than six feet above ground, and there was no prospect, humanly speaking, of completing them.

**18.** The good tertiary (**Petruccia**) had now to bear the brunt of the world's mockery and abuse. Her friends, who thought she had consumed the means to which they had a right after her death, were violent. Those who wished to give nothing towards her undertaking and who felt a secret reproach at her generosity, were jubilant. That “*Didn't I tell you so,*” the invariable accompaniment of uncharitable stricture, no doubt, she had often to hear. Some said she was vain, some, that she was ambitious, some, that she was crazy, and others finally carried their want of kindness so far as publicly to jeer at her.

She, however, bore all with patience, and in reply to jest and abuse only answered “*Don't, my children, take such notice of this apparent misfortune, for I assure you that, before I die, the Most Blessed Virgin and the Holy Father St. Augustine will complete the church commenced by me*”. This did not stay them. The mockery continued all the more. Petruccia was helpless from age, and the disappointment and ridicule ought in the natural order of things to have killed her. But her prophecy nevertheless came true; and that too in a most wonderful manner, for the benefit of the Church, and Genazzano, and the world<sup>1</sup>. We shall see, in the next chapter, how this occurred.

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<sup>1</sup> Father Buonanno has many pages of his excellent “*Memorie storiche*” devoted to a critical inquiry into all the circumstances here related regarding Petruccia. From the will of her husband John de Nocera, dated the 2nd of November 1426 and executed by the Notary of Genazzano, Vincent di Nicola Landolfo, and in which is a legacy of 60 florins for a bell, it appears that his wife was constituted absolute heiress of all his real and personal estate. Petruccia must have been then forty years of age, and consequently would have been eighty at the time she commenced the church.

Several documents exist which show that both John de Nocera, and after his death, Petruccia, had charge of the most valuable property of the convent of Santa Maria. Her husband died in 1436. In 1451, Petruccia, by an instrument executed by the Notary, Giovanni di Giovanni Vincenzo of Paliano, gave her house in the Piazza to the Augustinian Fathers *per l'esaltazione e rialzamento della chiesa di Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio*, reserving to herself only a life use of it. In 1461, another document executed by the Notary De Veronibus, shows that she left all her goods for the same purpose with the same reservation only. She appears to have been, at this time, involved in a lawsuit with another Petruccia, the widow of one Jenco, and committed the defence of her cause to Father Nicholas Caruti, the Prior of Santa Maria at that time. Finally in 1466, she resolved to see what a heroic effort could do. Without any further reservation she sacrificed her all to restore the falling church of Our Lady of Good Counsel. She was a native of Genazzano whereas her husband, as his name implies, came from Nocera.

## Chapter V

### THE WONDERFUL APPARITION

1. The 25th of April, the feast of Genazzano. - 2. Its celebration in 1467 - Condition of the Church of Santa Maria on that day. - 3. Petruccia. - 4. Her triumph complete. - 5. The people hear music in the air. - The white cloud appears. - Rests on the unfinished walls. - 6. An Image is disclosed to all. - The words. - The excitement. - The miracles. - 7. The bells rung by supernatural agency. - 8. The coming of “*all Italy*” to the Sanctuary. - Completion of the church and convent. - 9. Death of Petruccia. - Her burial. - Monument. - 10. Proofs placed after narration.

1. As we have already seen, the 25th of April each year continued in Christian times to be the principal feastday of Genazzano, a day upon which it was visited by people from all the cities of Latium. The Pagans had two distinct celebrations, the one following the other immediately. The Christians had a twofold object in their worship. In common with the whole Church they also commemorated St. Mark the Evangelist because 25th April is his feastday. And then their first church and parish having been dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel, it was natural that on the same day — the day of the worst excesses in the past, — they should manifest more than ordinary devotion at Her Shrine.

Indeed, as Senni, Buonanno, and Vannutelli tell us, such was the case. Moreover, from time immemorial, the civil and ecclesiastical authorities combined to make the festival an imposing one. Accordingly, when the morning devotions in the Church of the Madonna of Good Counsel were over, a fair was held and such amusements as could take place innocently were permitted. In this way, the season, at one time so demoralising (**damaging to morals**), was converted into an occasion of practising true piety, while not excluding harmless recreation and while giving distant neighbours the opportunity of meeting each other and of doing something for their temporal affairs.

2. During the Christian festival the piazza of Santa Maria adjoining the church was always the most frequented. Some attended its stalls and booths and others its amusements, while all were at the same time within easy reach of the church and its ministers. Somehow, as an ancient tradition has it, it happened that the crowd was very dense which waited for the vespers service on **the afternoon of April 25th 1467, falling that year upon a Saturday**<sup>1</sup>. One possible reason for the large crowd may be

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - While this was a Julian Calendar date, it is retained by the Church as the Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist under the Gregorian Calendar; the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel is 26th April so as not to clash with the Feast of St. Mark.

that from the piazza they had a full view, and no doubt they did view, with various feelings, the sad spectacle presented by the abandoned attempt of Petruccia to enlarge the ancient and crumbling edifice so dear to them all. Her house had stood at the corner of the street and the piazza and blocked the view of the chapel of St. Biagio. Now it was pulled down and its site, and that of the chapel itself, were enclosed with a wall not six feet over ground. The ambitious proportions of the planned edifice only served to make the prospect of its being finished all the more ridiculous. The old Church, patched up to serve its purpose as best it could, while the improvements were being made, stood there as if in despair.

3. Petruccia, according to her wont, was present at all the services; and more than at any time before, had to hear and to bear the mockery and raillery of the many assembled. Still all could see that, nevertheless, the great-hearted woman, looked brighter and more confident than ever. She had no encouragement from any one amongst the multitude, not even from the pilgrims to Mary's Shrine. She had attempted, so thought even the most charitable, **(to accomplish)** far too much; and now, no one cared to be involved in the consequences of her folly.

4. At, say, about two o'clock on that day, we may imagine her, tottering over the stones within the walls she had erected; and while all eyes followed her, and some voices continued their uncomplimentary language to her, we may further imagine her, kneeling meekly on the site of the altar of the chapel of Saint Biagio, within view of everyone. She had suffered much; but she, and perhaps she alone, knew that her troubles were soon to be over; and that a triumph singular (**extraordinary**) for her, even in the singular annals of the faith in Italy, was near at hand. That which justifies us in imagining this, is a historical truth capable of standing every test of criticism. It was as follows.

5. **About the 21st hour of the Italian day, or, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon according to our computation**, the dense multitude assembled in the piazza of Santa Maria were astonished to hear, high in the clear atmosphere of their country, strains of celestial harmony. Never had they heard such sounds before. It seemed as if the portals of paradise were flung open, and that the choirs of angels were permitted to give to mortals some knowledge of the joys of the blessed. With eyes upturned, in breathless attention, and ravished by such exquisite melody, they anxiously sought to find out from whence the sounds came. Soon, far above the highest houses, above the church spires and the lofty castle turrets, they beheld a beautiful white cloud darting forth vivid rays of light in every direction, amidst the music of heaven and a splendour that obscured the sun. It gradually descended and, to their amazement, finally

rested upon the farthest portion of the unfinished wall of the chapel of Saint Biagio.

6. Suddenly, the bells of the high campanile, which stood before their eyes, began to peal, though they could see and knew that no human hand touched them. And then, in unison, every church bell in the town began to answer in peals as festive. The crowd were spell-bound, ravished, and yet full of holy feeling. With eager haste they filled the enclosure. They pressed around the spot where the cloud remained. Gradually, the rays of light ceased to dart, the cloud began to clear gently away; and then, to their astonishment, there remained disclosed a most beautiful object. It was an Image of Our Lady, holding the divine Child Jesus in Her arms, and She seemed to smile upon them and to say, "*Fear not I am your mother, and you are and shall be my beloved children.*"

It is much easier to imagine than to describe the commotion that ensued amongst such a people, so situated, and at such a time. The business of the fair was abandoned. The amusements were no longer thought of. With one voice they cried out, as their descendants on the recurrence of the anniversary of the apparition may be heard to cry out today; *Evviva Maria!, Evviva Maria!, Evviva la Madre nostra del Buon Consiglio!* Others exclaimed, *a miracle!, a miracle!* With an instinct of perfect confidence arising out of the wonderful occurrence, the sick, the blind, the lame, and the afflicted of every condition, flocked from all parts of the town, and from places far beyond its borders, to obtain healing graces from Our Lady: graces, which, as we shall see, were granted in an abundance, "*with a measure pressed down, and shaken together, and flowing over,*" which has not ceased from that day to this.

7. Senni tells us that the unusual chiming of the church bells was also heard by numbers who, having satisfied their devotion and disposed of their temporal affairs, were on their way home; and that, fearing that the bells were a warning of dangers too common from marauding enemies in those days of disturbance, they returned to Genazzano. All these to their astonishment saw the beautiful Image of Our Lady still suspended in the air without any visible support whatever; and heard from those present of the miraculous circumstances that accompanied its coming. The princes of the house of Colonna, the captains of their forces, the magnates of the town, the Augustinian Fathers, and the secular clergy, all flocked to admire the wonder. And throughout that night, on bended knees, an immense multitude remained in presence of their blessed treasure, filled with most intense feelings of love and gratitude to God's Virgin Mother of Good Counsel Who thus had honoured their land.

8. The news spread soon far and wide in Latium, and beyond Latium to Rome and throughout Italy; and then beyond Italy to the whole



extent of the Church of God on earth. The crowds became all the greater when the multitude of the miracles performed in the presence of the sacred Image became known. So great indeed was the fervour which this new, unexpected, and singular manifestation of Our Lady's love created, that whole towns were emptied of their inhabitants, who came in solemn procession with hymns and prayer to honour Her in Her new Sanctuary.

They came not empty handed. Generosity is an unfailing characteristic of Catholic devotion. It is the expression, and no small part of the proof, of love and gratitude. Never, never is it wanting where God's Virgin Mother is concerned. She had selected the decaying temple where first She had been honoured on earth as the Giver of Good Counsel, as the abiding place of that Image which, of all that have been ever painted, is likely the most perfect resemblance of Herself. No doubt Her reason for this was to show men, then commencing so much to need, and since then everywhere so needing, the virtue of Good Counsel that, if they desire to have it, they must come to Her, Who, by Her example and intercession, overcame upon that spot (**Genazzano**) the demon of lust, debauchery and pride, — the evils, the real folly, which everywhere seduce mortals from the possession of an eternity of happiness, in these more recent times.

But while this wider view, destined in time, and to the end of time, to be carried out for the benefit of the world, was in no sense lost sight of, the internal assurance which Mary had given to Petruccia, was realised. In this too, there was a meaning. While the world was forgetful of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, the temple of God (**the Church in Genazzano**) became a ruin. As soon as Our Lady had taught the world to look to Her, and to receive from Her, Good Counsel, that temple put on a new and majestic glory. In Genazzano then, fervour became so enlivened before the beautiful picture of Mary that, instantly, "*alms unspeakable*" (**a lot of donations**) flowed in upon Petruccia.

As soon as loving hands, and hearts, and heads could accomplish it, a noble marble tribune<sup>1</sup>, which remains to this day, arose over the sacred Image. The rough, unfinished wall, near which it took its miraculous position, was soon removed from sight by an altar and covering of precious stone. Pillars of Nero Antico sustained the canopy. Twenty solid silver lamps burned night and day, and night and day they burn still before it. The crumbling ruin soon disappeared, and the church projected by Petruccia was erected in its place in all the magnificence which her heart desired. An extensive convent took the place of the old parochial dwelling. Ample subsistence was provided for a numerous community of the Hermits of St. Augustine destined to serve the Sanctuary and to minister to the spiritual wants of the innumerable

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<sup>1</sup> **Tribune** - Typically, a raised area in a church with seats.

streams of pilgrims who then came in thousands, and have not ceased to come for over four hundred years. (**The writing of this book was completed in 1883.**)

**9.** Petruccia happily saw the completion of the work she undertook. The whole of Genazzano saw that her prophecy was more than fulfilled. In the fullness of days she sank to rest, honoured by all. The Augustinian Fathers, who owed their good tertiary so much, laid her body at the feet of her beloved Madonna. In the church, near the gospel side of the high altar, they placed an inscription recording her good deeds, which will be given later on in this book, amongst other memorials of this holy and remarkable woman.

**10.** In order not to break the thread of our narrative so far, we have not dealt in this chapter with the proofs for the facts stated. We shall deal firstly (in the next three chapters - Chapters VI, VII and VIII) with the remaining portion of the history of the sacred Image. After these three chapters, we shall deal with the proofs; we shall consider the proofs critically, and at full length.

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## Chapter VI

### THE SACRED IMAGE

1. Did it come from Paradise. - Its beauty. - 2. Notice of it by the Church.- 3. Its nature, size, colours, and art value. - 4. Position of the figures. - The Mother. - The Child. - 5. Expression melancholy. - Reason. - 6. Picture agrees with traditional account of Mary's appearance and likeness to Jesus. - 7. Notice of miraculous changes in colour. - Experience of the writer. - 8. Testimony of Vasquez, Bacci, Rodotà. - 9. Formal statement of Luigi Tosi and others.

1. We cannot be surprised that the good people of Genazzano who saw the sacred Image descend so visibly from on high, and amidst circumstances so extraordinary, should have thought that it came to them direct from heaven. A tradition which they knew, had it that the Madonna now venerated at Santa Maria in Portico at Rome, was sent by God's Holy Mother from Paradise, under circumstances exactly similar. Therefore, in the fullness of their joy, the first appellation they gave to the wonderful Image was that of Our Lady of Paradise. It retained this title for many years. And though the truth became known after only a few days, and it was believed by Petruccia and by the intelligent portion of the community, the generation that saw the Apparition in Genazzano, and many a generation after, would have no other name for their beloved Image, but « *The Madonna of Paradise* ».

We shall presently see that, though not coming directly from heaven, its appearance upon the unfinished walls of the church of Santa Maria was as miraculous as if it did. But meanwhile, given the multitudes that then and for so many centuries since, have been ravished by its more than mortal loveliness, and have been consoled at its feet, it may not be out of place for us to contemplate what manner of gift it was that thus came from Mary to her children.

2. In the first place we may state that, according to the testimony of the Church, it stands unique, and in a manner supreme, amidst all the existing images of Our Lady, while it has been honoured by Herself with a miraculous care not inferior to that with which She guards Her Holy House of Nazareth (**in Loreto, Italy**)<sup>1</sup>. In the Proper Office of its feast, — that of Our Lady of Good Counsel —, the following notice both of the Image and of its wonderful apparition is read; « *And that nothing that was not sublime,* » it says « *should be connected with the Most Holy Virgin, Whom the Angel saluted as full of grace, it has not happened without*

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<sup>1</sup> Basilica della Santa Casa - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica\\_della\\_Santa\\_Casa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica_della_Santa_Casa)

*divine counsel that even Her images should be held in the highest honour, and should be made resplendent by prodigies and miracles. Amongst which, that which three centuries ago, in the pontificate of Paul II, miraculously appeared upon the wall of the Church of the Fathers of the Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, in the town of Genazzano, in the diocese of Palestrina, is worshipped with principal honour, as appears from pontifical diplomas and coeval monuments. Moved by which things, Pope Pius the Sixth, conceded to the cenobites of the said town, a proper office, to be recited on the seventh of the kalends of May (**seems to be a reference to the Roman, pre-Julian, Calendar**), that is to say, upon the day itself of the Apparition (**Julian Calendar 25th April**); and then, having assigned the day immediately following for its recital ever after, he extended it, under the rite of a double major, to the whole of the aforesaid Order ».*

3. Let us then contemplate this wonderful Image. As it appears in the Shrine, it is not more than eighteen inches square. Furthermore, those who approach near may see that it is a fresco, painted — if ever human hands did paint it — long ages ago; when, and in what country, the best judges cannot tell.

The sole support of such a treasure, is a thin crust of common plaster, not much thicker than strong paper. Yet, it has remained in the spot where it may be viewed today for four hundred and sixteen years (**as of 1883**); and how many centuries it existed before, none can tell. Its colours and its delineations are as fresh as ever. While it remains there, so fragile yet so secure, the great walls of the church about it have had to be renewed three times over. Colours laid on canvass by great masters have dimmed, though preserved jealously in protected places, or painted on walls strong as art could make them. The very existence of this fragile Image seems a miracle. The preservation of its colours appears to be another. But there is a third, greatest of all. It remains, as it was when it first came, not against, nor in any way fastened to, but distant from the wall, without having behind it, any material support whatever.

As a work, according to the rules of high art, the writer cannot judge it. But this is certain, that no human hand has yet been able to copy it. Beautiful pictures, distantly like it, have been produced by the artists of twelve generations. Some of these copies have proved themselves miraculous, as we shall see further on. But, not one has been a perfect reproduction. All the works of the great masters have been copied in a manner able to defy the eye of the ordinary purchaser, but the Madonna of Genazzano cannot be copied in such a manner, as that the merest child may not know, how far it is from the original. This will be seen to be the judgment of Signor Luigi Tosi, a painter of great eminence, whose testimony on this point we shall presently give.

4. The fresco consists of a representation of the young Virgin Mother, holding in Her arms the Infant Jesus, Who embraces Her, with a kind of anxious fondness. One little arm is wound round Her neck; and the infant fingers appear upon the further side, after encircling it. **The other small hand is placed upon the embroidered hem of Her modest dress, of traditional green colour. The Child is dressed in red, and a mantle of blue covers both.**

The Divine Infant looks exactly like one would imagine Him to have been; and, as the writer of this book has noticed, such as one would imagine He was like, from the likeness of Our Lord in the church of St. Sylvester in Rome, when a little child. In gentle, fond, human sweetness, He appears in every line the Son of Mary, having but one human parent. In a dignity of thought inexpressible, He appears what we should expect the Son of God to be in human nature. Nowhere else, not even in the Eternal City, the metropolis of art, is the Adorable Infant so powerfully, and apparently so perfectly portrayed, so as to appear not only willing but anxious to relieve the sorrow that His Mother endured for His sake, by granting every prayer She may offer. Elsewhere, Mary is shown in a hundred beautiful ways pleading for us with Jesus. Here Jesus is shown as if seeking some occasion to grant mercy to the poor children of Eve, for whom He knows that His Mother is everlastingly solicitous, that so He will have suffered for none in vain.

And then, who can describe the Immaculate Virgin Mother as here revealed. The features are all that we should suppose Mary to have; and, strange to say, as near as possible to what She is represented to have, by the very best authorities that have written upon Her appearance. The hair and its colour, the highly arched eyebrows, the lofty forehead, full of thought, the colour and size of the eyes, the cheeks, the Grecian, elongated, rather than Jewish nose, the exquisitely cut, **vermilion** lips, the dress and contour, all are the same.

Then as to the expression, none can describe it; for, reader, that expression changes, and these changes which many see, and all writers upon the Shrine note, are continual miracles connected with this most miraculous of images.

5. Yet, there is also a general expression which never passes away, which ravishes the beholder, and holds him for hours contemplating the Image. This is so ineffably sweet, so sad, so mild, so full of celestial beauty, so powerful to draw all hearts by its unutterable blending of all that can be conceived perfect in young, virginal, most purely innocent, and yet maternal loveliness, with all that may be imagined highest and noblest in spiritual perfection — a perfection excelled by nothing created short of the Humanity of Her Son — that it is in truth the very ideal of what the Christian would suppose Mary to have been, say, at that sadly

interesting time, when, upon having presented Her Child in the Temple, She heard the awful words of Simeon; and coming down from the Temple to her habitation alone and silent, She « *kept them,* » « *pondering upon them* » sorrowfully, yet, as became the most perfect of creatures, resignedly « *in Her heart* ». Long years after, She revealed to St. Gertrude that, at these moments, as She held Her innocent Infant to Her sinless bosom, She looked out into the terrible future and saw the end, — the Scourge, the Thorns, the Cross, the Death —, a flood of tears would rush out and fall in showers upon the divine face of Jesus, while He, knowing the sad cause of it all, would essay (**try hard**) to console Her. This appears to be the very moment seized upon by the artist, whether natural or supernatural, who painted the fresco of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, to represent Her with Her Child.

And who can conceive a moment more propitious for causing Jesus to grant Her all whatsoever She may demand (**request**), or a moment more tenderly appealing to the heart of the worshipper. In the painting, the head of the Virgin Mother leans lovingly, but sadly, towards the face of Her Infant Child; and the eyes, the nearer of which to Jesus is strained towards Him, are full with the wellings of the fountains of Her heart involuntarily opened in Her grief. This is surely a moment when neither the sinner nor the sinner's God, can resist the sweet influence of Mary. It may, too, be some reason for the picture's wondrous power.

6. Then again, there is in the figures the very likeness we should expect between the Mother and the Son Who would have none but that Mother to give Him His human nature.

« *Jesus Christ,* » writes one of His Saints, and a great and learned one, St. Thomas of Villanova, « *Jesus Christ most perfectly resembled His Mother. Those who saw them both in life assure us that never had a son so great a resemblance to a mother, in aspect, in manner, and in conversation. In brief, the Mother and the Son had each one every feature of the other, in a manner most extraordinarily faithful* ».

Nicephorus, an author of the 8th century, gives us the same information from the tradition most trusted in the East, together with a delineation of the features of Mary. He also states that Jesus was perfectly like His Mother. Of Mary's appearance he says: « *She was most modest, and full of dignity. She spoke little, and only when necessary. She listened willingly. She was most affable to all, and for all demonstrated respect and esteem. Her person was of moderate size, although some affirm that she was of more than moderate size. The hue dominating in Her countenance approached the **colour of wheat**. She had **auburn hair** with brightly shining eyes, the pupils of which were light in colour, something like that of oil. The eyebrows were arched and grandly formed. The nose somewhat long. The lips, from which issued words full of grace, were*

**vermilion.** *The countenance was not round, not long, but oval; the hands and the fingers long. She had nothing whatever of rudeness, but She was sweet and simple, and Her aspect was candid without a shadow of dissimulation (faking one's true feelings). In Her manners there was nothing of softness, but She was remarkable uniquely for singular modesty and self-possession. She was content to wear a dress of natural colour, as is yet seen in the veil which covered Her head. And to speak briefly, in Her whole being there was heavenly beauty ».*

St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, writes: « *There is in all created beings a virtue which produces like from like, in such a manner that if nature is not impeded, the son will be like the father and the mother; but if a son should be born of a mother without a father, by divine power only, such a son ought necessarily be like his mother. Now Jesus, according to the words of Holy Scripture, is the most beautiful among the sons of men; « **Thou art fair in beauty above the sons of men, grace is diffused upon thy lips** » (Ps. 44-2). Therefore, also, the Virgin Mother is the most beautiful amongst all women. She has reached a grade of beauty so sublime that, in the entire order of nature, no creature can be imagined more beautiful than She is ».*

Denis the Carthusian writes in the same strain. « *As Christ was beautiful above all the sons of men, so the Virgin was the most beautiful amongst all the daughters of men, and had all of that which could be found most sublime and most perfect in a human creature, and by the work of nature. Wherefore, God, the magnificent Creator of all things, hath embellished Mary internally, with the abundance of all graces, and of all endowments the most wonderful; He Himself having coöperated in a supernatural manner in Her formation in Her mother's womb, in order to prepare for His Son a worthy habitation. Thus also, Her exterior aspect was admirably resplendent, with such a fullness of divine grace ».* And further, this pious author exclaims: « *What ought we think of an appearance, I would say almost divine, to which there is nothing in the world we may compare? Of that brow, in comparison to which the serenity of the most beautiful day is but a cloud? What shall we say of that soul, which, after the soul of Christ, expresses most faithfully the image of God ».*

The Church, in using so many of the most beautiful metaphors of Holy Writ to describe Mary, warrants all that the above sacred writers tell us of Her heavenly appearance. Thus, She is « *fair as the moon, beautiful as the sun, formidable as an army set in battle array* ». Descending to particulars, of Her the words of Solomon are used « *As bands of scarlet are thy lips, and thy cheeks as the skin of the pomegranate. Thy neck is as the tower of David. A thousand shields hang from it, all as the armour*

*of the strong* ». And finally « **Thou art all fair O my beloved! and there is not a spot in Thee** ». (Cant. IV. 3. 7.).

What we have quoted is but a small portion, indeed, of all that the Church and the servants of God have manifested to us of the heavenly appearance of the Virgin Mother. Neither the pen of the writer, nor the pencil of the painter, however, can ever properly portray it. Since Her Assumption into heaven, it has been given to some of Her chosen servants to see Her, probably as She appeared on earth. But, save in these instances when She Herself was really seen, nothing, we believe, can give Her devout clients such an intimate knowledge of what She really was, and is, as does the Image She Herself caused to be brought so miraculously to Genazzano. In it, She seems not only to reproduce Herself in appearance, but, as it were, to live and move, and to respond with a heavenly intelligence to every prayer and desire of those who come in love and faith to honour Her, and to seek Counsel and other favours at Her feet.

This is saying a great deal, but not too much. All those who now, since 1467, have devoutly visited the Sanctuary where the miraculous Image reposes, bear witness to the fact. It is one of the reasons why it was, and sometimes still is, called the Madonna of Paradise. The pilgrims to the Shrine are so impressed by it, that numbers of them speak out to Mary as if they saw Her personally. And after a while all, without exception, who come to implore with earnestness, any favour, find themselves as if they were in the visible presence of the Queen of Angels; and so, while their fervour increases, they are ravished by the indescribable celestial beauty of the Image, which seems, in every feature, to respond to the prayer and affectionate outpourings of the suppliant.

7. But the most wonderful manifestation of this power is the positive, and consequently, **miraculous changes in colour** and appearance, which the features of the figure of Our Lady seem to undergo. Yet there is, perhaps, nothing connected with this most miraculous of all the Images of Our Lady which is so constantly experienced. All who have obtained singular supernatural help speak of it. It is a strange fact, but, as we shall see, thoroughly well established.

The writer of this work would be loath to speak of his own experience, had not so many devout clients of the Sanctuary, living and dead, spoken of theirs. Like all else who come to the feet of Our Lady of Good Counsel, he had favours to ask for others and for himself. He had many times seen the sacred Image, and had learned to love it for the consolation it imparts to all. **On one occasion, however, while offering up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for some in suffering in whom he took much interest, and for other reasons, he was astonished to find**



that the sweetly pale features of the figure of Our Lady became joyous, illuminated, and suffused all over, with a deep crimson, or rather, vermilion hue. The eyes became more open and brilliant; and this continued during the remainder of the Holy Sacrifice. He felt a great consolation, but, not having heard at the time of the well known changes in the aspect of the countenance of the figure of Our Lady, he believed that what he had noticed had to be the effect of his own imagination, or of some light thrown upon the Image in some unknown way. He therefore kept the matter to himself. However, in reading over, for the purposes of this book, the old, and modern Italian histories of the Sanctuary, he was struck with **the unanimity with which they all testified to these changes, and with which they all agreed that such as he had noticed were a sure presage of petitions being granted.** Some months after, brought news from Australia, that certain favours asked for friends, had been in a most extraordinary manner received; and that too, within a few days after the change had been perceived in the miraculous Image at Genazzano.

When the writer, afterwards, witnessed the miraculous cure of blindness and epilepsy combined, in the case of Lydia Vernini of Zagarolo, — described in the chapter treating of the miracles performed at the Shrine (**Chapter XII**) —, he had no further hesitation in believing that his own unworthy petitions, for extraordinary favours, had not only been heard, but had been shown to have been heard, by the sweet clemency of the all powerful Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

**Then, at other times, the sacred figure of Our Lady, seems to speak to the heart of the suppliant; and then, his soul receives a strong, irresistible impression or inspiration to act in a manner that never had been thought of before. He rises from his prayer strengthened and illuminated; and generally finds, afterwards, that the course of action, holy and wise, which he felt impelled to adopt at the feet of the sacred Image, was the best possible that he could adopt, and was blessed alike with temporal and spiritual success.**

Nearly all who visit the Shrine of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, experience the one assistance, or the other, and often both. That Sanctuary is a hallowed land of miracles, wrought by the power of Mary with Her Son in favour of those sincerely devoted to Him and to Her. No one, of course, is bound to believe this. But the faithful who try the efficacy of a devout pilgrimage to Genazzano, in their spiritual and temporal necessities, invariably tell of wonders worked in their own cases.

**8.** Regarding the singular changes in the features of the Image of Our Lady, the famous General of the Augustinian Order, **Francis Xavier Vasquez**, who lived and wrote under the learned Pontiff Benedict XIV,

thus expresses himself, in a Latin letter addressed to the Fathers of his order, upon the occasion of having received the Papal approbation for the Pious Union. « *We have there beheld, »* he says of Genazzano, « *the most comely Image carried thither by angelic hands from Albanian regions, in 1467, the beauty of which delights the hearts of all beholders, the aspect of which is now joyful, now sad, now suffused with **roseate hues**, according to the disposition of the visitor who approaches it, and the ravishing appearance of which is worthy to be compared with Paradise, for which reason it was, anciently, called Holy Mary of Paradise ».*

It will be seen further on that Canon (**Andrew**) Bacci noticed the same changes, to his great consolation and advantage. When he knelt for the first time, in much agony of mind, before the sacred Image, he states that **it assumed this joyous aspect about the middle of the Litany**, which was being recited, according to the invariable custom, whenever it is uncovered for any purpose. The Augustinian Fathers present noticed it too; and one of them, without knowing the reason of his coming, was, therefore, able to tell him that, whatever he had come to demand (**request**) of Our Lady of Good Counsel, it had been granted. That very day, on his return to Rome, he found that what, humanly speaking, was impossible had been effected. He was freed from his agony of mind. From that moment forward, the grateful Canon (**Bacci**) became the Apostle of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel in Rome, and one of the most devoted clients of Her Sanctuary at Genazzano.

**Father (Stephen Andrea) Rodotà** whose zeal for the sacred Image we shall speak of also, in a special chapter (**Chapter XVIII**), noticed the same happy **changes in its expression**, when demanding (**requesting**) favours he afterwards obtained. So did hundreds, and indeed thousands, of the devout petitioners who came to the Sanctuary.

**9.** And then, if imagination should be thought to have influenced the pious and those not skilled in pictures, it can not be said to be able to deceive the eye of an able and practised painter of high standing in his profession.

In 1747, **Luigi Tosi**, one of the principal painters then residing in Rome, and a disciple of the illustrious Solimene, while employed in taking the, afterwards, celebrated copy of the sacred Image for his native city of Genoa, left on record a statement of his experience and opinion of the original, which corroborates fully all hitherto said regarding its wonderful change in aspect, and its marvellous power.

His declaration, duly executed and witnessed as will be seen, was made in Italian. The following is a literal translation of the document:-

« *Ad majorem Dei gloriam.*

« This day, being **the eleventh of June 1747**, a day consecrated to the Apostle Barnabas, the miraculous and ever prodigious Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel being uncovered with the usual veneration, homage, and devotion, in this our Augustinian Church, to **Signor Luigi Tosi**, a most virtuous Genoese Painter residing in Rome, in order that he, by his virtue and skill, should take a copy on canvass of the said holy Image, as like to the original as possible; and for this purpose, the great glass, sustained and ornamented with fastenings of the finest silver, being taken away, so that, in such manner, the before named Signor Luigi, might better be able to see, consider, and contemplate it; on such occasion, in the presence of all of us, the undersigned, the following most attentive ocular observations were made:-

« **In the first place**, Signor Luigi, the painter referred to, prostrate before the holy Image aforesaid after having well contemplated, regarded, and many times most attentively considered it, has clearly seen, and publicly asserted, that of all the copies, which either on copper (engraving), or in pictures, have been at different times, and with repeated observation made, of a holy Image so prodigious, not one of them properly and truly resembles it: and that it would be most difficult to find a painter, how excellent soever, to whom could be given the glory and the advantage of executing a painting, or copy of it, with full and perfect resemblance to the original; because the features and the delineations, as well of the holy Image of Mary, as also of the holy Child, Whom She holds close to Her breast and to Her face, in an attitude graceful and loving, are so fine, delicate, gentle, amiable and singular, that the whole picture seems properly rather an angelic, than a human work.

« **Secondly**, the same Signor Luigi, with that skill which he has, as the disciple of the celebrated Solimene, in both ancient and modern images of Most Holy Mary, observed, asserted and concluded, that the holy and miraculous Image spoken of, is neither of the Greek style, nor of the Gothic style, nor of the style of our past ages, nor of modern style; and that in all its parts there is such a fineness and exquisiteness of taste, that it is necessary to observe carefully the least things in it, and the most minute delineations, in order to succeed in executing a copy as like to it as the art and the skill of the painter can attain to. Whence he has publicly concluded with firmness, that some artist very much better than man, or, at least, some holy man, painted and delineated it. And this is so much more the case, that it cannot be known or discerned, whether it is truly a picture or rather is it an image miraculously, and with celestial

colours impressed, and, as if inviscerated (**dictionary - deep-seated, internal**) in a simple crust of wall-plaster, which is the whole support of so great a treasure.

« **Thirdly**, he has himself ingenuously (**candidly**) confessed, that scarcely had he placed himself, **about the nineteenth hour**, in a sitting posture upon the altar, in order to be able better to take the aforesaid desired copy, when suddenly, the forms (of the Virgin and Child) became so confused to him, that, without being able to form any idea or image of the original, he did not know where to turn, nor what to resolve upon, nor how to commence. But inspired afterwards, internally, to prostrate himself, scarcely had he bent his knees humbly and devoutly before the holy Image, with the greatest reverence and devotion, when presently his mind became clear, the idea of the original became well impressed upon his imagination; and thus he was happily enabled to commence to copy it, prosecuting afterwards for two days, almost continuously on his knees, the desired and most happy work.

« **Fourthly**, the same Signor Luigi, the Painter, has observed and considered, and in the presence of us all, asserted, that this holy and miraculous Image changes itself very frequently, both in countenance and colour. In fact, **about the 19th hour**, the holy Image being uncovered, and we all, the undersigned being present, have seen it with a visage joyful, sweet, and amiable, but of a pale colour as is usual. **Then at the 20th hour, all of a sudden**, it changed countenance and colour, appearing to the eyes of all the witnesses present, with a new air of majesty, and **with a face so lit up, rosy, and brilliant, that Her cheeks seemed like two roses fresh and vermilion coloured**. And this unlooked-for, most visible, and most powerful change, caused in the minds of us all present, so unusual a stupor and tenderness, that one amongst us broke into such a tender and copious flood of tears that, on account of his vehement commotion, he had to depart, weeping, from the holy Chapel and the holy Altar. And the above-mentioned virtuous Signor Luigi, almost wandering, knew not where to lay hand upon colour or brush, to continue the commenced work. **But he was animated, afterwards, by an internal spirit and courage upon hearing from the fathers that, when the holy Image appeared ruddy, brilliant, and joyful, it was then an excellent sign**, according to the many observations made in past times. Encouraged then, in this way, and animated suddenly by that amiable countenance, he copied such fine delineations and exquisite delicacies of the sacred Image, that his copy can be said to be more like to the holy original than others.

« **Fifthly**, he himself has also observed, and frequently and most exactly observed, that as the holy Image changes its aspect, so also does it change the look and the light of its eyes. **If it appears pleasant and**

*serene, the eyes become majestic and joyful; **if its colour is pallid and meagre**, so also appear the virginal pupils of the eyes. **If with a visage inflamed, brilliant, and rose like**, then the eyes appear more joyful, pleasant, lucid, and more open. And of this prodigious mutation, we the undersigned, beyond that which is here described, have seen yet more, with stupefaction and great tenderness. Whence it is to be concluded that the sacred Image is a work rather divine, than human.*

*« **Sixthly**, the same Signor Luigi has also observed, considered, and believed, that those stripes of different colours, which are represented above the diadems upon the head of the Virgin and of the holy Child, are **not** ornaments of a canopy or awning, as some have believed in past times, but rather a portion of an iris or rainbow, as we call it. And the existence of three different colours proves this, as also the ancient custom, in days gone by, to paint many holy Images of Mary surrounded by a celestial rainbow. Of which things, the before named Signor Luigi protests to have made a special study.*

*« **Seventhly**; finally, it was on this occasion with greater convenience (**than ever before**), and with new ocular and most exact consideration and inspection, observed and concluded that it is a continual and most patent miracle how this holy Image, two palms high and a palm and a half broad, impressed upon a simple thin crust of wall-plaster, has been preserved for three centuries or thereabouts, from 1467 up to now, and is still preserved intact, uninjured and perfect, without the countenance of the Mother or of the Son having suffered any damage whatever; all the more that **the thin crust of wall-plaster upon which it is seen so well impressed and coloured, has not behind it any support, or any thing whatever on which it could rest, or by which it could be sustained.** Whence we all, in full and ample faith of all that which up to this has been said, and faithfully registered, with our own hands subscribe ourselves.*

*« I, Father Master, Brother Pancotti, affirm as above  
with my own hand.*

*« I, Luigi Tosi, affirm as above etc.*

*« I, Andrew Bacci, Canon of St. Marks affirm. etc.*

*« I, Brother Bartholomew Daglio, Augustinian Provincial of  
Lombardy, affirm etc.*

*« I, Br. John Baptist Mary Fossati, Sacristan, affirm etc.*

*« I, Father Anthony Mary Madureyra, affirm etc.*

*« I, Lawrence Jacopini, Treasurer of His Excellency, the Lord  
Constable Colonna, affirm etc. »*

This testimony of Luigi Tosi and of the witnesses who with him examined the miraculous Image in 1747, described it as it had been for nearly three hundred years in Genazzano, and as it remains there to this day. Its whole history was then thoroughly known. But the thousands who witnessed its miraculous coming on the memorable Saturday of April 25th 1467, could not have been in the same state of certainty as to where it came from. They were animated with the same sentiments of love and tenderness which all who contemplate the beautiful features of the Virgin Mother and Her Child feel to this hour. They at once called the sacred Image, the Madonna of Paradise, for they could not imagine that it came to them otherwise than from heaven direct.

In the next chapter, we shall see how soon they were undeceived (**disabused**) upon this point. The Image came indeed as they saw it, from on high, but through the air only. It came not the less miraculously, in signs and wonders. It came not only to build the church of Petruccia and to work innumerable miracles, but also to spread throughout all the earth, in God's good time, the gift of Good Counsel, through devotion to the Virgin Mother of Jesus.

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## Chapter VII

### THE MIRACULOUS TRANSLATION

1. The people of Genazzano undeceived. - 2. The Pilgrims from Albania. - 3. Their names. - 4. Their story. - 5. True history of the Translation - Its coming to Scutari. - 6. Decay of devotion to it in Albania - Scanderbeg - 7. Prayer of the pilgrims. - 8. Orders of Mary. - 9. The Image in the air, followed by pilgrims, leaves Scutari. - 10. Miraculous passage over the Adriatic. - 11. Image disappears at Rome - Pilgrims grief. - 12. News reaches Rome of the wonderful apparition - They find the Image. - 13. They live and die, and leave their families in Genazzano.

1. We have seen that the inhabitants of Genazzano originally believed, and had some reason to believe, that the Image of Our Lady came to them from Paradise. Not one of those amongst the crowds who came during the first few days, and who saw and contemplated that beautiful object as it stood near the unfinished wall of the chapel of St. Biagio, doubted that it had come from heaven.

In a little time, however, a circumstance occurred which, while manifesting wonderfully the miraculous Providence watching over the precious treasure, made it clear that it did not, at least this time, come direct from heaven. Yet it was, in every sense, a heavenly gift, sent by God's Virgin Mother, amidst circumstances as extraordinary as had accompanied **the coming of Her holy House of Nazareth, first to Dalmatia, and then to Italy.**

2. This was made known by the appearance of two strangers, not of the Italian race, amidst the multitudes coming in increasing numbers to witness the prodigy, and to ask favours at the feet of Mary. When these two first saw the Image, they were filled with an ecstasy of indescribable delight, and could scarcely be brought to absent themselves from its holy presence. They declared that they would never leave it; that they would labour and live and die in its sight. And faithfully, as we shall see, they kept their promise.

3. They were both from the city of **Scutari, in Albania**, at the other side of the Adriatic Sea, opposite the Italian coast, and at a latitude about the same as that of Rome. The one, a true Albanian, was a young man named **Georgio**, and the other, a man more advanced in years, was, though born it would appear in Scutari, of the Sclavonic race, and was called **De Sclavis**. They gave the history of the wonderful coming of the sacred Image in a manner very different from that supposed (**namely, from Heaven**), and which the people of Genazzano desired so

much to believe. But every circumstance that occurred after (**their arrival**) tended all the more to confirm their story, which was as follows.

4. Some three months previous, in the January of the year 1467, they said, the last great monarch of Albania (**King George Castriota, commonly known as Scanderbeg**) died<sup>1 2</sup>; and the Turks, whom his valour had kept back for more than twenty years, were advancing in irresistible might, upon their unfortunate country. The enemy had already occupied nearly all its fortresses; and Scutari, the city of the strangers, was only preserved by a Venetian garrison, invited there by Scanderbeg, from sharing the fate of the other cities of the country. There was no knowing the moment, however, when it too would fall, as in fact it did fall shortly after, into the hands of the Turks. At this juncture, those who wished to preserve their faith and their freedom, endeavoured to emigrate to neighbouring Christian lands; and amongst the many who deliberated upon making such an attempt, were Georgio and De Sclavis.

5. It would appear, moreover, that they had had the care of or, at least, were much devoted to a beautiful little church which was situated at the foot of the mountain upon which stood the fortress of Scutari and was near to the junction of the two rivers, the Bojana and the Drina, upon which the city is built.

This little church was dedicated to the Mother of God, under the title of **Her Annunciation**. It was the chief sanctuary of Mary in the dominions of their ancient monarchs, and to this church, not only the people of Scutari, but those from **Croja, the capital**, from Epirus, and from all Albania and Slavonia repaired to satisfy their devotion to Mary, and to obtain graces and favours. The reason for this great devotion was, they said, that about two centuries before 1467, *and exactly at the time when all Dalmatia and Italy were full (of the news) of the wonderful translation of the Holy House of Nazareth to Loreto*, an Image of

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<sup>1</sup> **Year of Death of Scanderbeg** - Currently (2015), there seems to be general agreement that Scanderbeg died in 1468 and not, as given above by Mons. Dillon, 1467. There are early sources which Dillon would have had sight of that give 1467 as the year, e.g. from 1850, Moore, Clement - "George Castriot, surnamed Scanderbeg, King of Albania" - Pages 363 & 364. So there.!

<sup>2</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon in 2017** - I have recently (25/5/2017) found out that, by Letter dated 17th January 1968, Pope Paul VI marked the Fifth Centenary of the death of George Castriota.

A copy of this appears (in Latin only) on the Vatican Website and is entitled - **Letter to the Cardinal Prefects of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches and for the Evangelization of Peoples on the 5th centenary of the death of George Kastrioti Skanderbeg (January 17, 1968)**. It is addressed to Cardinals DE FURSTENBERG and AGAGIANIAN.

Only a Latin version appears on the Website. The Address of this is -

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/la/letters/1968/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_let\\_19680117\\_chiese-orientali.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/la/letters/1968/documents/hf_p-vi_let_19680117_chiese-orientali.html)

While I am not competent to translate Latin, I can see references in the Letter to both Our Lady of Good Counsel and Our Lady of Scutari. << *In hisce ergo adiunctis redintegrata fiducia maternam opem Deiparae Mariae Virginis a Bono Consilio imploramus, quam antiquitus, post ipsius Georgii mortem, Genestani multa pietate excultam Albanenses ut Beatam Virginem Scodrensem pernoscent.* >>



Our Lady was miraculously conveyed to the little church of the **Annunciation in Scutari**, it was supposed from the far East. It filled all Albania with devotion to God's Mother; and, according to Georgio and De Sclavis, was no other than that which now stood before the gaze of the people of Genazzano.

6. The little church of the suburbs of Scutari was, therefore, dear to all the land, and to all the populations of the Christian provinces, lying between the waters of the Adriatic and the Black Sea. But alas!, it had to be admitted, that devotion to it had grown cold. Schism worked its blighting way in Albania. The morals of the people had decayed with the purity of their religion. Devotion to Our Lady languished, even in Scutari itself. The Turkish invasion, a clear punishment sent from heaven, could not call the mass of the population to repentance. As a writer on the subject feelingly complains, *« the young men and maidens no longer delighted to place flowers on the altar of Mary of Scutari; and therefore, their punishment could not be far distant »*.

Nevertheless, many remained faithful; and amongst them, the hero, whom the Albanians still love to call the **« lightning Lion of War »**, the great King, George Castriota or Scanderbeg<sup>1</sup>. He loved the sanctuary of Mary with a devoted, enthusiastic love; and Mary, in return, not only made him a model of Christian perfection, but also gave him an invincible power, which preserved not only Albania but also Christendom during his reign. When he died, She appeared to have nothing else left to love in that land, and so, though She came to it in benediction, She determined to leave it in anger to its fate; and She did so under the following circumstances<sup>2</sup>.

7. While the two, Georgio and De Sclavis, weighed down with the misfortunes of their country, were contemplating leaving it for ever, they first had recourse, for light and direction, to their beloved sanctuary of Mary in Scutari. There, prostrate before Her sacred Image, they asked

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon in 2015** - Scanderbeg.! Until I read this book I had never heard of him. I left school in 1963 having studied History for ten years. Looking back today at what was being taught then, I see that what was referred to as European History dealt only with Western European History. It was as if the eastern part of Europe did not exist. But the Eastern part of Europe has had a most significant history largely dominated by the expansionism of the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

The Turks, theoretically, might have eventually taken over most, if not all, of Europe but for certain specific military losses (notably at Vienna and Lepanto) and certain specific leaders who prevented or slowed their progress. Scanderbeg, a great military and political figure, held up the Turkish advance through The Balkans for about twenty years. This provided a "breathing space" during which other European leaders, somewhat belatedly, became more united in their defence of Europe against the Turks.

I am suggesting that you now read the following two articles -

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skanderbeg>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline\\_of\\_Skanderbeg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Skanderbeg)

<sup>2</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon in 2015** - I think that Mons. Dillon, like many of his colleagues, was getting carried away in what he was saying here. It flies in the face of the Church's teaching on "Free Will".

Her assistance. They felt deeply at having to leave friends and fatherland, and they knew not the land they were going to. But more than all, they felt an unspeakable grief in leaving for ever their beloved Madonna, the beautiful Image they had worshipped so tenderly from their childhood. This principally, made them doubt whether they should go or stay. With copious tears they, therefore, besought Our Lady's help: and that help came in a manner most unexpected indeed, but nevertheless, most grateful. They were to go, but they were not going to lose their most valued treasure.

8. Those, as we have observed in the previous chapter, who visit the Madonna of Genazzano, in affliction and doubt, and who in their distress do what those good clients of Mary did at the feet of Her sacred Image in Scutari, state that they feel, by some wonderful supernatural inspiration, what it is that they have to do. The direction is often as distinct as language might make it. It must have been some such inspiration as this which reached Georgio and De Sclavis. Both felt as if Mary had spoken to them. Besides this, **they had a dream of like import.** Mary told them to prepare all things necessary for their journey, and to fly for ever from that unhappy land; and further said that She Herself would, **in that very Image** they so loved, depart from Scutari, and from the profanation of the Turks, soon destined to be its captors, and travel to another land, to diffuse there those graces and benedictions of which Albania had proved itself unworthy. And finally, She ordered that they should follow Her **in Her Image** wherever it might go.

Those who are led by the hand of the Mother of God, are neither in doubt nor in trouble of spirit at Her guidance. They believe, and indeed they know, the power of Mary with Her Son. They know Her tenderness, Her charity, Her care of Her own; and they are not surprised at any manifestation of Her miraculous mercy.

9. The fortunate emigrants, then, repaired on the following morning to the church, fully prepared to quit Albania. They entered the little sanctuary, and behold!, while kneeling for the last time in Scutari before the beloved Image, suddenly, it commenced to detach itself from the wall. **In the same manner that it came two centuries before, it left the niche it so long occupied. It stood in mid-air. A white cloud at once enveloped it. Through that cloud, however, it was visible to their eyes. It moved towards the door of the church, departed, and then, lightly ascending, gently travelled at a pace not greater than their own towards the sea, a distance of about twenty four miles from Scutari.**

10. Here the white cloud did not stay in its course through the air, but passed over the waters. The two pilgrims, led by the spirit of God, knew that the divine assistance would not forsake them; and, more

confident than the Israelites of old, they, trusting in Mary's protection, walked not indeed between the waters but over them. They found the waves to be as hard soil beneath their feet, and they followed the Image until it reached the opposite shores of Italy. The waters were the same to them as adamant (**dict. - a legendary stone of impenetrable hardness**). When night came on, the white cloud which shaded them from the mid-day sun, grew illuminated, and became to them as the pillar of fire to the Hebrews in the desert. Thus, over mountain, and river, and sea, and valley, they passed, until at length, the wide plain of the Campagna of Latium, opened out before them, and they saw in the distance, the towers and the domes of Rome.

11. Thither the cloud moved, until it reached the gates of the city, when, to their inexpressible grief, just as the star of Bethlehem in the case of the Magi it, all of a sudden, disappeared from their sight. They were inconsolable. They searched all the churches in Rome, with the hope of finding it resting in some one of them. They went through every street of the great city. At the time, numbers of their countrymen were to be found everywhere in Italy, forced, for a reason like their own, to leave the home of their forefathers. But none could give them the least tidings. Perhaps none could understand, or, if they did, could not believe their strange story. Thus afflicted, as Mary was once Herself at losing Her Child and Her God in Jerusalem, they continued seeking, as men disconsolate, or, perhaps, as people who heard their story thought, as men deranged, for that white cloud and beautiful Image they had lost.

12. But soon the news reached Rome itself of the wonderful apparition of an Image of Mary, just such as they described, upon the unfinished walls of a church commenced, but abandoned, in Genazzano. Report spoke too of a white cloud, giving forth rays of light, which accompanied its coming amidst strains of angelic music; and of the Image remaining suspended in the air; and of innumerable miraculous cures being wrought at its feet; and of multitudes flocking from all quarters to its Sanctuary.

The people of Rome began to follow the example of those of the lesser towns, and go on pilgrimage to Genazzano. Those who thought the two Albanians deranged, now began to regard them as true servants of Mary, and to believe that the lost Image was the one followed, as they stated, over land and sea. The news no sooner reached the two pilgrims, than, with all haste, they set out for Genazzano. There, to their inexpressible delight, they saw above the heads of kneeling thousands, amidst lights and flowers innumerable, while workmen were busy constructing a magnificent marble canopy over it, the beloved Image which they had, but only for a season, lost. Those from Rome who saw their distress at losing it, could now understand their delight.

13. The pilgrims determined never more to leave the sight of their beloved Image. They both settled in Genazzano, where they married and had families there. The family of De Sclavis became extinct, in its direct line, only during the last century (18th). That of Georgio exists to this day, and is one of the most numerous and respectable families in Genazzano. The Mayor, and Notary, of the town is a direct descendant of this latter, and has furnished the writer, from the Archives of the municipality, with a family tree, which the reader will find amongst the other proofs of the miraculous translation in the chapter (**Chapter X**), where such proofs are given and critically examined.

The people of Genazzano received the narrative of the pilgrims coldly enough. They did not wish to have the flattering illusion, that their Madonna came from Paradise, broken. They did not desire to entertain the idea of the possibility of the sacred Image departing from themselves, as it had done from Scutari and, as tradition said, it had also departed from the East. Yet, as we shall see, nothing whatever occurred to cast the shadow of a doubt upon the statement of the two Albanians. Albania, at the time, occupied the attention of Italy and of Europe generally, more than any other country in the world. Christendom was full of the fame of Scanderbeg, and was just at the moment mourning his death. The Turks were at fierce war there with the Christians. Albanian refugees were crowding in upon Latium, Venetia, and Calabria. From the opposite coasts of the Adriatic, the whole exposed line of the Italian peninsula was threatened.

We cannot then, in justice to our history, pass over a country so wound up with the sacred Image; and so before we proceed further, we shall devote a chapter to Albania and its last great Christian Chief, King George Castriota, the favourite client and child of Our Lady of Good Counsel. We shall also see that the coming of the sacred Image to Italy, coincides with the commencement of the complete ruin of the Turks.

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## Chapter VIII (Part 1 of 2)

### SCANDERBEG AND ALBANIA

1. Reason for this chapter - Description of Albania - Physical features - Fortresses. - 2. It is Christianised - Leans to schism - Is punished with the Greeks. - 3. The condition of the East - Its destruction by Mahomedanism. - 4. Conduct of the West - The Turks - Their early Caliphs - Conquest of the European East. - 5. Rise of Scanderbeg - His captivity under Amurath II - The Janizaries - Education of Scanderbeg - His military genius and position with the Sultan - Abandons the Turks - Frees Albania. - 6. Efforts of Amurath's generals and armies against him, fruitless. - 7. Amurath with 200,000 men defeated at Croja, dies of a broken heart in consequence. - 8. Evident protection of Mary - Fall of Constantinople. - 9. Efforts of Mahomet's generals against Scanderbeg, defeated always - Truce. - 10. Scanderbeg in Italy. - 11. Truce broken - Scanderbeg defeats the whole force of Mahomet in person. - 12. Gives Scutari to the Venetians. - 13. Scanderbeg's dying hours at Lissa - Miraculous recovery and defeat of the last effort of the Turks - His death - Tradition regarding the sacred Image in Albania.

1. In a history (**this book**), where so much is spoken of the regions from whence the miraculous Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel came, it will be of great use to take a brief glance at the once entirely Catholic nation in which it so long remained (**Albania**), and at the great client of its Sanctuary in Scutari, King George Castriota, or, as he is better known by his Turkish appellation, **Scanderbeg**, (from the words *Iskander* and *beg* or *bey*, which mean Alexander the prince) the hero of Christendom.

Before this country fell finally under the Crescent, it was called Albania, a name by which it is still known amongst Christian nations. Its present (**1883**) inhabitants call themselves "*Skypetars*". Its Northern portion formed the Illyria of the Roman Empire; and its Southern division was identical with the Epirus of the Greeks. On the West, it was watered by the Adriatic and the Ionian seas. On the South, it touched Greece. On the East, it was bounded by Thessaly and Macedonia; while on the North, it had Montenegro, Servia (**Serbia**), and Bosnia, with their population of Sclavonians, as neighbours. To this day the Albanians preserve their ancient Illyrian character, though intermixed, no doubt, in the progress of centuries, with the adjoining races of Slavs and Greeks. They are a most warlike race. Since their subjugation by the overwhelming forces of the Turks, those amongst them who became deprived of their faith proved to be the most fierce and terrible Mussulman warriors. The men of the district of the Suli, who dwell upon the steep glen sides and valleys of the

Acheron in the South, resisted all the forces of **Ali Pasha**<sup>1</sup>, for a lengthened period in this century (**early 1800s**). They till their fields, it is said, sword in hand, and hide their harvests from Turkish rapacity in the earth. Of them, Lord Byron writes : -

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,  
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?  
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,  
And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

Towards the Northern boundary, in that tract of country which lies between the Black Drin and the sea, are the Mirdites, or, in their language, "*the brave*". These are, and always have been, since the days of their last great captain, **Castriota**, fervent Catholics. They, like the Suliotes, cultivate their farms while girded for battle, and are, at any moment, prepared to fight for their freedom and for their faith. They have consequently preserved intact both the one and the other.

From the above description, the reader will easily understand that we are talking about mountaineers. And thus the inhabitants of Albania may in general be called. The country, as its name, derived from Alb or Alp, signifies, is altogether a mountainous region. Its promontories jut out into the waters of the Adriatic, at a height sometimes reaching 5000 feet; and within are found a series of more or less lofty ranges, which run off to the sea from the Bora-dagh and the time honoured Pindus. Like the Highlands of Scotland, and like Switzerland, Albania abounds in steep glens and natural fastnesses. It is, therefore, a country difficult to conquer and difficult to hold. But unlike Switzerland and Scotland, it is rich in all that should make a population contented and secure. Its soil is naturally fertile, and there is in it every variety of climate. But the wretched misgovernment of the Turks has worked upon it the same desolation that has fallen upon every province which, unfortunately, has had to submit to their sway. (**Author was writing this in 1883**).

In the times of its independence, Albania had many cities, all fortresses. Of these, the capital was Croja; and the chief stronghold after that was **Scutari**, securely built on a steep height near the lake of the same name, upon the point where the river Bojana, issuing from it, is joined by the Drina. The Turks, upon obtaining the government of the country, utterly destroyed Croja; but they retained Scutari, which forms the principal place of defence in the provinces of Scutari and Janina.

2. Albania was Christianised early. In the division of the Roman Empire which occurred after the death of Constantine, it followed the fortunes of the East. In religion, its rite was the Greek; and through

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<sup>1</sup> Ali Pasha (1740-1822) - See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali\\_Pasha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali_Pasha)

various fortunes, it oscillated, like most of the Eastern provinces, between orthodoxy and schism. It would appear however that, finally, it yielded, at least in great part, to the influence of the (Eastern) Court of Constantinople; and, as a consequence, it became involved in the misfortunes which Providence permitted to fall upon all the provinces of the once vast and mighty empire of the Greeks.

3. Even at this distance of time, it is hard to contemplate such a terrible catastrophe as the destruction of that empire by the bitterest foes of Christ. And yet, it is impossible not to see in such a visitation, the just judgment of God. The millions who owned allegiance to the emperor of Constantinople were the most civilised and polished the world ever saw. They were even more so than the Romans of the West at any time. They knew every art that could embellish life. Every material want was satisfied. They had commerce, agriculture, and imperial and municipal legislation, carried to a perfection which, if it did not reach that of the moderns in some respects, in others, it far surpassed them. The government, if despotic, was enlightened. The law was that of the **Justinian Code**<sup>1</sup>, *ratio ipsa scripta*, and thoroughly respected.

To all that Grecian language, literature, philosophy, and art, could give to life, its people added the priceless blessings of Christianity, moulding, protecting, and elevating all their social institutions. Their lands teemed with plenty. The position and extent of their dominions enabled commerce to waft the superabundance of one locality, to supply the wants of another. Egypt, the granary of the world, was theirs; and theirs were the mines of Ophir, the cedars of Lebanon, the blades of Damascus, the trade of Alexandria, Smyrna, and the Hellespont, the spices and silks of the Indies, and the schools of Greece. But their civilisation proved, after a time, to be, in practice, but the civilisation of every mighty empire that existed previously, and which God had to shatter for its sins. The East rotted in its wealth, "*in the fullness of bread*"; and to such an extent that even the faithful few who prayed and fasted in its monasteries and deserts could not save it. It sinned as did Babylon; and, it is to be feared, even as did "*the cities of the plain*". The pride, and delirium of pleasures turned (**sidelined**) its reason. It persecuted the saints. It corrupted the truth; and, after many rebellions, it fell finally from the unity of the faith. It recovered, reeled, fell, and fell again; until at last, God, weary of its prevarication, let loose upon it<sup>2</sup> the most terrible scourge the world has yet seen.

In the seventh century, a fanatic who had formed a religion based upon lust and spoils, in the deep wilds of despised Arabia, saw in a dream

<sup>1</sup> **Justinian Code** - You don't need to read this - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corpus\\_Juris\\_Civilis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corpus_Juris_Civilis)

<sup>2</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - I feel permitted to say that I do not believe that God works this way. It is our deficiency of practice and prayer that gives Satan the upper hand.



the Crosses oscillate and fall from the towers and processional staves of the great and distant Constantinople, while the empire of that proud city was promised to him and to his. This was the beginning of its ruin. From that hour, there was no escape. Through the course of eight centuries, the realisation of this vision became the darling project of all the successors of Mahomet, from Abu-Beker to him who finally took the great capital of the Christian East from the last of the Caesars (**by Mehmed II in 1453**).

Yet, however well deserved, it is impossible to see destruction fall upon so much Christian magnificence without emotion. The storm, which ceased not until it had swept every vestige of Christian civilisation from the East, commenced its terrific course when the empire seemed to have reached the very zenith of its splendour. **Heraclius**, after crushing its worst and most dreaded foe, **Chosroes II**, the Monarch of Persia, won back the treasure of the True Cross; and had but just borne the sacred burden upon his imperial shoulders to the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, when that cloud, “*no bigger than a man's hand*<sup>1</sup>” (**Islam**), arose in the deserts of the South; and a vast crowd of half-naked savages, wrested from him, almost at a blow, the first cities and provinces of Asia Minor. Antioch, Damascus, Smyrna, even Jerusalem itself, and all the Holy Land, passed into the power of the Paynim. Omar, the third in succession from Mahomet, erected his mosque upon the site of the temple of Solomon; while Amru and his companions severed Egypt for ever from the Greeks. The valour of Kaled, in a few brief campaigns, gave the children of “*the Prophet*” a domain, as wide as that of Antiochus, in Syria. And in a generation, Christian Asia, and the best part of Christian Africa, instead of being a support to the Roman East, were converted into a formidable, compact and fanatical power, which constantly menaced its existence, and the very existence of Christendom itself, with utter ruin<sup>2</sup>.

**4.** The chivalry of the West, it is true, for a season (**for a time**), kept back the progress of this formidable foe. The Crusaders and the military orders of the Catholic Church, even if finally obliged to abandon their few conquests, at least kept Europe from desolation. But alas! when the noble zeal of **Saint Louis** passed, and German emperors thought more of persecuting the common Father of the Faithful (**the Pope**), in their attempts upon Italy, than about the defence of Christendom; when the cupidity and laxity of morals, which made such a “**Reformation**” as that of Luther possible, began to appear; when all hope of a sincere unity in faith, and a thorough reformation in conduct (**morals**), seemed as

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<sup>1</sup> This line is a standard allusion to any small, menacing omen.

<sup>2</sup> **Footnote added by Eugene Shannon** - Typically, in Western society, we are not familiar with the histories of many other countries apart from our own and some close neighbours. It would be useful for the reader to now read the following article -

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine\\_Empire\\_under\\_the\\_Heraclian\\_dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire_under_the_Heraclian_dynasty)



delusive (**unlikely**) in the European portion of the Byzantine empire, as it had been in the Asiatic or African; the sword of destruction was at last unsheathed upon it; and the Bosphorus was crossed by the fiercest hordes of the fanatical adherents of the Koran ever before let loose upon a Christian land. These were the Turks under **Orkhan**, the younger son and successor of Othman, or Osman, the founder of their dynasty in Asia. The prosperity of the latter was amazing. Orthogrul, his father, was the chief of a mere fragment of a nomad tribe of Oguzians from the Turkestan steppes, East of the Caspian sea, whom the tide of Mongul conquest had scattered. Taking service under the Sultan of Iconium, he and his people were rewarded with a grant of land in Phrygia. He ruled his tribe for at least fifty years and, on his death, Othoman or Othman - *young bustard* - although his youngest son, succeeded.

Upon the destruction of the Seljuk Sultinate in the 13th century, Othman soon made himself master of nearly all the former empire of Iconium. To this territory he speedily added all that remained to the Greeks of Asia; and thus left Orkhan, his son and successor, in a position to carry the terrible Crescent across the Hellespont. Orkhan reigned from 1326 to 1359. His first stroke at Europe was to lay siege to Gallipoli, to Koiridicastron, and other strongholds of the Byzantines. He took them and, before his death, he swept over the Balkan peninsula, and set his foot so firmly on Western soil that his son and successor, Amurath I, was able to establish his capital at Adrianople. Amurath proved as active and as formidable as his father. In his reign the empire of the East was reduced to Greece, Thrace, and a few districts of Bulgaria close to the capital.

Constantinople was still, no doubt, formidable as the first (**foremost**) fortress in the world; and great hope was entertained that it would last until a reaction against the Turks set in. The Christians of the rest of Europe, so long indifferent to the progress of the Moslems, did not confide, however, in its impregnability. They united their forces, and sent what they considered an overwhelming army against the foe. But that army, amounting to half a million men, Hungarians, Wallachians, Germans, and Italians, was utterly routed and broken at Kossova in 1390. Amurath was killed, but this did not save Europe. **Bajazet I**, his son and successor, swept in a continued victorious career over Servia (**Serbia**) and Wallachia; and was prevented from advancing further upon Europe, only by a providential interference.

This was the descent of Tamerlain<sup>1</sup> upon Asiatic Turkey. It gave breathing time to the unfortunate populations of the Balkan peninsula, and of Constantinople, to repair their disasters; and, if wise, to drive the Turks from Europe. But they did not use it; nor does the history of the

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<sup>1</sup> Tamerlain (c.1330-1405) also **Timur** also **Temür**

Church tell that their condition, either religiously or morally, bettered. The Eastern Church returned neither to unity nor to sanctity. Even Bajazet, when about to meet the most formidable army of Christians ever sent against him, judged, from the low ebb of their moral and religious condition, that their conduct would surely bring upon them the anger of their God. And he was right. Over one hundred thousand Christians, the flower of the chivalry of Germany and France, were utterly destroyed at Nicopolis in Bulgaria in 1396. Their wealth fell a prey to the conqueror. The Emperor Sigismond had to flee for his life. Nothing, at that moment, but the providential calling away that we have mentioned of the proud Sultan to his own terrible doom at the hands of Tamerlain in Asia, saved Central Europe from instant ruin and the rest of the Continent from serious danger. Fifty years of rest now passed without much amendment in the European East. Little or nothing was repaired; and again the war cloud gathered with more terrible effect than ever. Amurath II ascended the throne of his grandfather Bajazet in 1422. He speedily spread his power over the remnant of territory left to Constantinople. He added Greece, and finally Albania, to his dominions; and gave a death blow to all opposition to his power, at Varna, in 1444, by a victory over the Christian crusade which the zeal of the Pope had gathered to resist him.

5. The reign of this conqueror, Amurath II, brings us to the mighty leader (**Scanderbeg**) whom Mary, Mother of Good Counsel, had raised up to save Albania and Europe from him, and from the still more terrible power of his son and successor Mahomet II, the captor of Constantinople. This leader was George, the youngest of four sons of King John Castriota whom hard fortune had compelled his father to hand over as a hostage to Amurath in 1423. At that time, though young in years, the latter was, nevertheless, so well grounded in the love and the knowledge of the Catholic religion as never to depart from it. He carried with him, to his long exile, the love of the sweet Madonna of Scutari the beloved Patroness of his father-land; and She saved him from the worst effects of his new master's blandishments, which were all used to try to destroy his faith.

It may be well to remark here that one of the diabolical schemes of Orkhan, in order to raise a bodyguard for the protection of the person of himself and of his successors, was to take young Christians captive, and, circumcising them, to rear them, under the care of fanatical mollahs, in the deepest hatred of their Christian parents and of their Christian faith. These, being afterwards well trained to arms, were called **Janizaries**, and proved the fiercest enemies of Christianity. They formed a kind of praetorian guard for the Sultan; and, having no relatives amongst the great families of the Turks, the dynasty, as such, was sure of their allegiance. It is no part of our purpose, to enter into (**discuss here**) the

danger they proved to their masters, and which led to their suppression in blood, as late as 1826. In the days of Amurath II, however, they were in full favour. The “**Commander of the faithful**” (Amurath II) made it his study to increase and perfect them. The younger Castriota, therefore, attracted the immediate attention of the sultan. The youth was, it is said, most beautiful to look upon; and unusually well gifted with every quality of mind and body. Amurath counted upon making anyone of his tender years, in time, a strong support of his throne. He therefore, knowing the royal origin of the captive, had him educated as if he were his own son. He gave him masters in the Arabic, Turkish, Slav, and Italian languages. Young Castriota became proficient in them all. He was trained in every branch of military knowledge known at the time. He obtained, when he reached manhood, a command in Asia. He moreover greatly distinguished himself against the Mahomedan enemies of the Turks.

But Amurath miscalculated when he placed the young commander at the head of a force to fight against the Christians. And bitterly he had to repent of his error. Castriota found in this force three hundred Albanians as firm in their faith, and as devoted to their beloved Madonna of Scutari, as he was himself. And so, confiding in Her intercession, when the first confusion of the first engagement between the forces of **Hunniady**<sup>1</sup> and Amurath arose, Castriota gave the signal, and, without striking a blow against his fellow Christians, he and his troops changed sides, and were soon freemen upon the mountains of Albania. There he floated the flag of his father-land and of his faith, and was soon joined by the fighting men, Suliote, and Mirdite, and Slav, and Greek, who remained true to the traditions of their country and their God.

6. It was, however, a terrible risk to rise against the mighty conqueror who, after Varna, was, it may be said, omnipotent in all that land now referred to, or which was lately known as, European Turkey. Amurath was enraged at being baffled by one whom he had so splendidly educated for quite another purpose than to be his enemy. The first news he heard of the desertion of Castriota was followed by the still worse intelligence that the fugitive had taken every Turkish garrison but one in Albania, and that every Turk in the country was put to the sword<sup>2</sup>. At once the Sultan dispatched forty thousand of his bravest veterans, fresh from the victory of Varna, against the offender. These, Castriota met with 15,000 mountaineers, raw, undisciplined, but devoted to their leader, and perfectly pliable in his hands. The battle was one of the bloodiest on record. The Christians fought for freedom and for life; for faith, for father-land, for all that was dear, against a foe that had bound them in a

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<sup>1</sup> Hunyadi Mátyás (Matthias I) (1443-1490) - See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthias\\_Corvinus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthias_Corvinus)

<sup>2</sup> Scanderbeg - See Endnote 5.

hateful slavery. The Turks, enraged at the desertion of the favourite of their sultan, and full of hatred for the Christians, fought for revenge. But after a terrible conflict, the genius of Scanderbeg prevailed, and the remnant of the Turkish veterans, reduced to a handful, had to flee from Albania. Not to give Castriota time to profit by his victory, two other armies of Turks almost immediately appeared, composed of the picked men, and the most fanatical in all the hosts of Amurath. They were, in comparison to the forces of Castriota, as numerous or more numerous, than the first. Their determination was to crush him, and be done with him. But they followed the same fate as their predecessors. They fought however, with such desperation, that only seventy two men were left to surrender. At length the sultan himself, the victor in so many contests, determined to take the command. He assembled all the forces of his empire at that time capable of taking the field. He marched at their head with a fixed resolution to annihilate Albania, and wreak his vengeance on Scanderbeg. Fortress after fortress of the devoted country fell before the skilled and enthusiastic onset of his troops. His cavalry covered the land like dense clouds. There seemed no hope at all for Albania when his multitudes of trained warriors at last encircled Croja, its capital, the last fortress left to Scanderbeg and his handful of mountaineers.

7. Croja would certainly have offered as little resistance as its sister cities, but the Christian hero was there, strong in his confidence in Mary the powerful Protectress, Who had never once in all his life forsaken him. With matchless strategy he contrived to keep the myriads of his opponents from the walls. With energy almost superhuman, he swept unexpectedly, now here and now there, by night and by day, into the midst of the foe; every swordsman of his band hewed down scores, and his own blade flashed as the lightning and caused Moslem heads to fall like snowflakes where he passed. Thousands of the bravest warriors of Amurath were thus swept away continuously. His hosts were diminishing to the point of danger to his very person. And so, the fierce conqueror of so many nations had to withdraw the remnant of his armies, in sorrow and in shame from the walls of Croja, pursued with terrific slaughter by the Christians. His proud spirit was crushed at this terrible reverse. He had barely time to reach his capital Adrianople, when he sank under the misfortune. His heart broke and he died in consequence, unquestionably, of his disaster in Albania.

Jubilation for this miraculous victory filled all Christendom. The Sanctuary of Our Lady in Scutari was crowded; but none there prayed with more humility and thankfulness than King George (**Scanderbeg**) himself, who attributed all his victories to Mary. She made him as gentle in peace as he was terrible in war. Naturally violent, he so restrained his temper in his efforts to repress anger, it is said, that his lips would split

and bleed. But yet, through Mary, he had as much power over his own passions as over his enemies in the field. He was pure in morals, honourable in conduct, and most devoted to the unity of the Faith, a unity which he furthered with all his power amongst his people. After his splendid successes, he received the blessings, as he had the prayers, and all the temporal assistance that could be given him by the saintly Pontiff Nicholas V. All the princes of Europe sent him their congratulations. But instead of being exalted at this, he used the little peace, his victories secured to Albania, to prepare for new wars.

8. And these soon came in more frequency and force than ever. Amurath was succeeded by Mahomet II, the sworn, the fiercest, and most unrelenting enemy of the Christian name that Mahomedanism ever produced. Reared, it may be said, with Scanderbeg, he knew the Christian leader well. Stung to the quick at his father's disgrace, he determined to crush Albania, but took care not to venture himself into its mountains. And then, if he could not fully succeed, policy required that he should occupy Castriota so as to prevent him from thwarting the vast designs he planned against Christendom at large, and against the unfortunate city of Constantinople in particular<sup>1</sup>.

At this period, it was a melancholy sight to behold that city standing in solitary independence, almost like a spectre amidst the ruins of the immense empire that once belonged to it. Yet such was the condition to which Amurath had reduced it. Its failings had been great, and they continued even to the last. Yet all Christendom felt keenly that it should not fall into the hands of its inveterate and unrelenting foe. And then its last emperor, Constantine Paleologus<sup>2</sup>, might be said to be one of the best that ever occupied its throne. He felt the approach of the storm, and bravely prepared to meet it. To defend a wall twelve miles in circumference, and to meet an army at least three hundred thousand strong, which was continually reinforced and assisted by several hundred vessels at sea, he had but nine thousand men. Yet, aided by the brave Justiniani of Genoa, Paleologus withstood, for eight weeks, the whole force of Mahomet, his cannon, his towers, and his fleet. In such a dire extremity, it is sad to think that Europe was inactive in sending assistance. The unfortunate Emperor had to struggle alone. He fell, but his bravery immortalised the last day of Christian Constantinople, and made it the most glorious of its history.

On the morning of that day, Constantine Paleologus and his court received the Holy Communion in the glorious fane (**church**) of St. Sophia, which then, for the last time, witnessed a Christian rite. He

<sup>1</sup> Mahomet II (1432-1481) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehmed\\_the\\_Conqueror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehmed_the_Conqueror)

<sup>2</sup> Constantine XI Palaiologos (1405-1453) - See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine\\_XI\\_Palaiologos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_XI_Palaiologos)

placed his house in order for his death. He asked forgiveness for his faults from all and, with his handful of soldiers, prepared to die where he could no longer live. On that morning, two hundred and sixty thousand Turks advanced to the onset.

They were met with an energy superhuman. The famous **Greek fire**, the millstones of the city, boiling oil, and molten lead, destroyed the foe in thousands. But alas, the force of numbers prevailed and, over the dead body of the Emperor, the Turks, with a yell of fury, entered, for the first time, the proud capital promised to Mahomet in his dream. For three days, the victors, by order of the sultan, plundered and slaughtered as they pleased. Forty thousand fell by the edge of the sword, and sixty thousand of the most cultured people in the universe passed into positive slavery. The Crosses fell in truth from the church towers. The morning of the 30th May 1453, saw the Crescent floating over Constantinople. The caliph entered it as conqueror. Before his death, if he did not quite succeed in subjecting the world, he could boast that he subdued Constantinople and Trebisonde, overcame at least a dozen kingdoms, and took innumerable fortresses. Why he did not succeed to the full extent of his desire was that God had raised up against him **Hunniady**, who overcame him at Belgrade in 1456, and **Scanderbeg**, who occupied him from that until 1467.

9. From the death of Amurath in 1450 to 1461, Mahomet sent several armies under his ablest commanders against Albania. His policy, moreover, of bribery, after the fall of Constantinople, caused the faithless chiefs of Epirus to desert their national standard, and even to join the Turks against their king. But the moment these apostates left the Christian cause, the spirit that made them formidable departed, and when they appeared amidst the thousands of Mahomet, they were mowed down by the faithful Mirdites of Castriota's forces, like grass before the scythe. On one of these occasions, over thirty thousand Turks and apostates fell before the little band of Scanderbeg. At length Mahomet gave up the task of subduing the great leader, in despair; and agreed to a kind of armed truce in 1461.

10. We find Scanderbeg now in Italy. His fast friend Pius II, (Æneas Sylvius), occupied the Pontifical Throne. He, like his predecessor, had supplied the Albanian Chief with the sinews of war in abundance. So did the King of Aragon, who then ruled Naples. Scanderbeg came principally to assist the latter. He showed that his sword was as potent against the chivalry of France as against the hosts of the Osmanlies (**Ottoman Turks**). He restored, in a short period, the Southern kingdom to his benefactor. After satisfying his devotion at the tombs of the Apostles, he left Rome, where a street is still called after him; and

passed, fortified with the blessings, the advices, and the increased aid of the Pontiff, to still greater triumphs in Albania.

11. In 1464, we find him in a position to disturb the armed repose of Mahomet. The latter sent his best generals as usual, but, as usual, only to hear of their defeat, with incalculable slaughter. At last, the haughty conqueror determined to go himself against Scanderbeg at the head of the most numerous and best equipped army his dominions could furnish.

This vast host was divided into two divisions. One division, two hundred thousand strong, advanced upon Croja. Another division, still more formidable and commanded by the sultan in person, followed. Slowly, but in steady conquest, this immense array spread over the land, subduing, as in the time of Amurath, fortress after fortress; and at last, leaving not a particle of ground for Scanderbeg to stand on, but his capital. The first army was met by a handful of hardy Catholic mountaineers, who never deserted their leader; and again, to the wonder of the world, was utterly routed with terrific slaughter. Just as Amurath, so also the proud and mighty Mahomet had, in humiliation and shame, to withdraw the remnant of his shattered forces from Albania. This was in 1464. Scanderbeg, worn out from twenty four years of incessant fighting, was drawing to the close of his career. He felt that the shadow of death was upon him, and he made the last arrangements for his country with care, as became a faithful Christian.

12. Knowing that, when he should be gone, his beloved sanctuary of Our Lady in Scutari could not resist the Turks, he handed it over for safekeeping to the Catholic Republic of Venice. He went and prayed there for the last time, and then, though exhausted, he took again to the mountains for the defence of his people.

13. In January 1467, we find him in the city of Lissa, spent and dying, but dying the death of the just. He that never feared death in the field, knew well how to meet it upon his couch of infirmity. He was recollected and calm. All his thoughts were directed to eternity. His last confession was made. For the last time he received the holy Viaticum. The holy Unction had been applied to all the senses of his body. The last blessing of the Church, which from its Supreme Head (**the Pope**) to its lowest member loved him tenderly, was pronounced upon him. The brave men who followed him to victory so often wept like little children, as they encircled his bed. There was sorrow deep in Lissa; wailing over all the valleys and hills of Albania. The shadow of death seemed to be upon the land.

Castriota, though away from his beloved Madonna, had doubtless Her holy Image near him. God's Virgin Mother, never absent from his thoughts in life, in his last extreme hour was not wanting to him. His great heart beat with the hope to soon see revealed in the light of heaven

that benign countenance which he gazed upon with such rapture in the sanctuary of Scutari, and which cheered and consoled him so often on earth. Mary, Who never permitted him to fall into the hands of the enemy, or to be even once vanquished or wounded, was now determined to keep the powers of darkness from troubling his last moments. Sweetly, the mighty warrior was sinking like the calm setting sun of some glorious day, when it pleased Her, Who in him, Her client, had ever proved Herself "*formidable as an army set in battle array*", to glorify once again, even in death, him whom She had so wonderfully glorified in life.

As his eyes, therefore, were closing gently and peacefully upon the world, a shriek came from the streets of Lissa, and even the strong limbs of the warriors around the bed of their dying Monarch trembled. It was a too well known cry: the Turks! the Turks are upon us! And truly it was so. The hordes of Mahomet were at the city gates. They had heard that the terror of their accursed creed was dying, and hoped, in his helplessness, even at his death, to have one victory over him. But Mary, as if to show the supernatural power with which She blessed him, was again at the hero's side, and showed Her love to the last. Those dying eyes of his once more opened. Those ashy cheeks flushed. The drooping head was elevated. The sweat of death was wiped from the pallid brow. Scanderbeg, himself once more, looked for the sword that did such execution upon the enemies of his country. It was given to him, and the genius that never failed flashed forth as vigorously as it did in his manhood's prime. He ordered his veterans with his own matchless skill to prepare for the conflict. It was as ever, bloody, but decisive. The Turks were routed with the usual slaughter, fled, alas for the last time from Albania. The cries of victory, which gave glory to God, and to Our Lady of Scutari, resounded once more through the streets of Lissa. The Christian hero smiled, for these sounds were ever the gladdest of his life. And then, as if he knew that all was over, he smiled again, and looking up as if he saw the Virgin Mother open her loving arms to receive him, he sank back upon his couch, and gave forth his noble soul to God and to Mary.

Albania at that hour, indeed, was desolate. All Christendom mourned. The very horse of the hero refused its food in grief, and died. Agony worse than death may be said to be the condition of his faithful followers left behind. The people, like sheep without a shepherd, awaited but for the moment when the wolves, no longer to be hindered, should devour them. Worse than all, the Madonna of Albania, Our Lady of Scutari, would stay no longer in the land. The events of the miraculous translation that we have narrated, took place when Her beloved son and client, Scanderbeg, had been but three months dead. Then, in swift but steady conquest, the hosts of Mahomet passed over the land, and the



horror of death fell upon its Christian inhabitants. Many, unfortunately, apostatised. Those who remained faithful, passed into a kind of bondage, since those times almost unbroken. Their condition has been greatly ameliorated of late years, and in religion they are now, it may be said, free. The recollections, however, of their glorious Christian past, are never absent from their minds. They delight to speak of the exploits of their ancestors. The memory of their last great heroic king is as fresh as it was the day he died at Lissa. We shall see how intense their grief is at the loss of the sacred Image, when we come to deal with the tradition regarding it, still vigorous in all Albania.

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## Chapter VIII (Part 2 of 2)

### OVERTHROW OF ISLAM

1. State of Europe. - 2. Heresy of Luther - Siege of Rhodes by Soliman - Of Vienna - Conduct of Charles V. - 3. Sack of Rome - Divisions within Christendom. - 4. Effect of the Miraculous Translation on the Church. - 5. On the Saracens - Victories of the Christians. - 6. Mark Antony Colonna - Pope St. Pius V. - 7. Destruction of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto. - 8. Triumph to Colonna. - 9. Turks on land - They invade Austria - Take Candia - Are favoured by the divisions between the Christian princes. - 10. Innocent XI - His unavailing efforts to unite them. - 11. Orders the sacred Image to be crowned. - 12. Effects - Powers unite - Sobieski and Charles of Lorraine join - Turks utterly defeated at Mohats. - 13. The Virgin Mother of Good Counsel victorious over Islam.

1. The coming of the miraculous Image to Italy, may be said to mark the period when the contest between Christianity and Islam was at its height. There certainly never was a time when the Crescent menaced the very existence of the Cross to a more alarming extent. Though all Europe was then Catholic, its princes and peoples were sadly divided.

The social state of many parts of the German Empire, of England, of Scotland, and of Eastern France, was such as to make the terrible heresy of Luther a success some fifty years later. The arms of the princes who sided with that heresiarch in Germany, were turned against their Catholic fellow countrymen with as much bitterness and effect as were those of the Moslems.

2. Contemporaneously with Luther, and, strange to say, at the very time when he went about openly preaching his errors, Rhodes was being besieged by Soliman (1522), and after a most heroic defence taken from the brave Knights Hospitallers. Not a hand was lifted by a European monarch to assist the defenders of Christendom. A few years later, Soliman conquered Hungary and twice threatened Vienna. Charles V indeed, moved against the Sultan on the last of these occasions, but seemed far more bent upon the humiliation of his rival, Francis I of France, than upon the preservation of Europe generally from the preponderating power of the Turk. To such an extent was this insane feeling of the Christians carried, that even when the Church was threatened on one side by Protestantism and on the other by Islam, mercenaries under Bourbon took and ravaged Rome with a cruelty and destructiveness worse than Gaul or Goth or Vandal had ever exercised towards it in the past.

3. It is a sad and a sickening spectacle to see the common Father of the Faithful, the Vicar of Christ, obliged to take refuge in the Castle of Saint Angelo during the horrors of this devastation, and there to remain for days in momentary expectation of his death at the hands of soldiers combating for his Catholic and Apostolic Majesty, the Ruler of the German Empire, and of the Catholic peoples of Spain, Austria, the Netherlands, and the Indies. The Church, in truth, was sick at heart. Its princes were distracted by jealousies. Worldliness had invaded the sanctuary. Heretics were busy tearing asunder her fairest provinces. Islam, after having eaten up Asia and Africa, threatened with more formidable force than ever before to spread its power over Europe.

4. Christ however is never unmindful of the Bark of Peter no matter how deep soever He may seem to slumber. He uses many ways to save it, and amongst these ways, used at the time of peril we speak of, was certainly the increased devotion awakened amongst all classes to the Virgin Mother of God, by the miraculous translation of Her sacred Image from Scutari to Genazzano. Millions visited the Sanctuary not only from Italy but from all parts of Europe. These brought back with them to their homes the love and fervour awakened in them at the Shrine. Copies of the miraculous Image spread devotion to Our Lady throughout Europe. It fixed the attention of the masses on the countries which had already fallen under the Mussulman yoke. It caused them to pity the condition of the Christians in Albania and elsewhere, who had lost liberty, property, and all that men hold dear. It made them tremble for their own fate, and prepare to make efforts to curb the power of the foe. Then, when Protestantism appeared with its attack on God's Virgin Mother and His saints, the beautiful appealing features of the Madonna and Child as revealed in the Holy Image of Genazzano, awakened feelings of love and devotion to Mary, that caused them to reject with horror a religion which excluded Her worship from its system of belief and practice. The devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel at this early period, spread in a marked manner throughout Naples, Sicily, the States of the Church, Northern Italy, Bavaria, Austria, Spain, and Flanders. It is a singular fact that in these countries where it took the deepest root, the progress of the so-called Reformation of Luther was completely checked.

5. But the effect of the devotion upon the outer foe of Christendom is still more remarkable. Not long after the coming of the sacred Image, the preëminence of the Saracens who had actually effected the conquest of some towns on the very coast of Italy, began to be shaken. The Catholics of those countries precisely where Mary of Good Counsel was most honoured, gradually but steadily took heart. Small reverses at first, and finally great and terrible disasters began to fall upon the infidels. In 1480, a handful of Knights Hospitallers who defended Rhodes, repulsed

under their intrepid Grand Master, Peter D'Aubusson, the whole power of Mahomet II; and when, as we have stated, it fell under Soliman II, in 1522, the lesson given to the captors, was of such a nature as to convince them, that a new and unlooked for enthusiasm filled the Christians. Though the Turks obtained a victory over Hungary in 1526, they were utterly routed at Vienna four years later; and six years later still, upon Soliman himself appearing with the (for the times) enormous armament of half a million men, he had to withdraw upon the appearance of Charles V. Just as the first centenary of the coming of the sacred Image to Genazzano approached, Europe was amazed at the wonderful constancy, with which a few knights of St. John under their Grand Master, John Parisot de la Valette, defended Malta against all the forces and fleets of Soliman, flushed by the great naval victory he had just obtained over the ships of Philip II of Spain. This latter was, however, the last triumph of the Turk over the Christian upon the sea.

6. At this moment, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel began to show its direct instrumentality in crushing the power of the Infidel, in a manner clearer than ever before. It was from it, that the leader came, who was destined to give the most deadly blow to the preëminence of the Crescent upon the water it had ever received. This was Mark Antony Colonna, Lord of Genazzano, and Chief Admiral of the fleets of Pope St. Pius V.

It may be here again remarked, that one of the effects of the renewed devotion to Our Lady in Italy, consequent upon the coming of the miraculous Image, was a vast improvement in the morals and religious fervour of the masses. This ascended from the populace and made its beneficial effects be felt in time amongst every class, until at length, a saint of the truest type was elevated to the Chair of St. Peter. This was St. Pius V, who, as we shall see further on, was most devoted to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. It is incredible how much good this extraordinary Pontiff contrived to effect in the few years he reigned over the fold of Christ. He thought of everything. He forgot nothing. He cared for no man's praise or censure. He looked to God alone. Mary gave him in a measure vouchsafed to few, that gift most needed for a ruler, - the gift of Good Counsel. He reformed the Church truly, and so effectively that no abuse escaped correction. While then the great Pontiff spread beautiful order in all the house of God within, he curbed at the same time, the progress of the poison of Luther, and then prepared with all his powers to face the formidable, and more than ever threatening audacity of the Crescent.

In this undertaking he looked, as he ever did in all his actions, to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel for Her powerful aid. He obtained it in wonderful measure. His policy was blessed. He united with his own,

the strength of the armaments of Venice and of Spain. He sought for a leader for his forces, and found one beneath the very shadow of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel, in Mark Antony Colonna, Lord of Genazzano. In the command of the allied fleet it is true, that the half-brother of the King of Spain, Don John of Austria held the first place; but Colonna as the Pope's commander held the second; and besides being destined to succeed in case the Spaniard fell, or became disabled, he shared with him the control of the whole expedition, and the command during the decisive conflict that ensued. His was admittedly the genius that planned and executed the attack.

7. The allied fleets met at Messina, and sailed from thence in quest of the Turkish navy. They found it, in the gulf of Lepanto, and came to battle on the 7th of October 1571. It proved the most bloody naval engagement on record. It took place exactly on the spot where the fleets of Augustus and Mark Antony encountered each other, sixteen hundred years before. The Turkish fleet was far more numerous than that of the Christians. It was commanded by the ablest naval captains that Islam ever produced. Its men were flushed with the recent victory, which gave the Caliph possession of Cyprus. Many of the most distinguished men in the vast empire of Selim II were present with the fleet, encouraging their troops.

The Christians on the other hand, through the piety and wisdom of the Pontiff, were prepared by the exertions of Fathers of the Capuchin and Jesuit orders, to conquer or to die. Every man in the fleet had confessed and received Holy Communion previous to joining in the combat. At the moment the first shot was fired, a general Jubilee was proclaimed from the Pope. The soldiers therefore of the Cross, had a far more definite hope of glory after a death in that conflict, than even the most obstinate believer in the paradise of houries, amongst their opponents. They fought therefore with terrible desperation. The sea was turned into blood. In a few hours the bodies of thirty five thousand Moslems, and of over seven thousand Christians were scattered upon the waters. The roll of constant artillery, the crash of sinking ships, the cries of the wounded and dying filled the air. At last, God came to the assistance of the Christians. A wind drove the smoke of the combat in the faces of the Moslems, and after that, there was no hope for them. A few vessels sought safety in flight, but all else that formed a few hours previously, one of the most formidable fleets the world ever saw, fell into the hands of the allies.

8. So came the first irretrievable disaster upon the Moslems. They never from that hour recovered their former position upon the sea. The Pope gave to Mark Antony Colonna, the high honour of a triumphal entry into Rome according to the ancient usage; and by that act showed, that the glory of the victory belonged, in the greatest measure, to the Lord of

Genazzano. Banners taken from the Mussulmans, and even portions of their ships given by Mark Antony, long graced the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Good Counsel. That the Holy Pontiff attributed the victory to the Virgin Mother, Who gave him both the counsel to plan, and the strength to effect his vast designs against Islam, is evidenced by the fact of his having enriched Her sanctuaries and of having instituted the special title of Our Lady, — **the Help of Christians** — in thanksgiving to Her. In the old Castle of the Colonnas at Genazzano, is still a life size fresco of Don Mark Antonio, and his body lies at Paliano, about six miles distant.

9. But though crushed at sea, the Turkish sultan was still powerful as ever upon land. War against the Christians became a necessity, if for no other reason than to keep his Janizaries and his other uneasy military elements employed. In the century after Lepanto, the Turks meditated new invasions. In 1664, they invaded Austria, but were repulsed by Montecuculli at St. Gothard.

They however took Candia from the Venetians, five years after. This caused them to plan conquests in Europe on a more extended scale than ever. They had a splendid chance in the divisions which, notwithstanding the glory of the age of Louis XIV, existed amongst the crowned heads of the continent.

10. It was fortunate, that at this supreme crisis, the Bark of Peter was directed by a Pontiff as firm, and as devoted as St. Pius V. This was Innocent XI. He saw with well grounded alarm the immense preparations of the Turks for another invasion of Austria. He had made many a weary and useless effort to cause Louis XIV of France and Charles II of Spain to cease their sanguinary and expensive wars, and unite for the good of Christendom. The differences between the princes most concerned in resisting the impending invasion, were still greater. The heroic Sobieski had many complaints against the German emperor. Nothing could be expected from the Protestant princes of Northern Europe. Almost as little would be given by France. Spain was cold. The Christian world in general, distracted.

11. Such was the position of affairs when Innocent bethought of having special and marked recourse to Our Lady of Good Counsel. Towards the end of 1682, he ordered the Chapter of St. Peters in Rome, to crown with diadems of jewels and gold, the figure of the Virgin Mother and Her Divine Infant, in Genazzano. This was done amidst all the splendour that could be employed by the power of the pious Pontiff, on the 17th of November in that year (1682).

12. The effect of this action was immediately visible in the success of the Pope's negotiations with John Sobieski, and Charles of Lorraine, and the Catholic nations of Europe. He reconciled the two former, obtained valuable assistance from the latter, and by the time the immense armies of

the Turks found themselves well entrenched about Vienna, the forces of Sobieski and Charles joined, and burst upon them from the hills surrounding the devoted city. The valour of the troops was undoubtedly great, and the skill of both generals admitted, but the Christians were certainly assisted by a power greater than any human force. A sudden panic seized upon the Turks. They fled precipitately, leaving behind them the richest booty, that ever fell before in Europe to a victorious army. 5,000 barrels of gunpowder, 100,000 tents and 300 pieces of artillery, were found amongst the spoils. The Christian leaders followed up this wonderful advantage, and in four years the once dreaded power of the Turks, was as certainly crushed upon land, on the **field of Mohats**<sup>1</sup>, as it had been on sea by the splendid victory of Lepanto.

**13.** From this it will be seen how great a share Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, had in defending the Church from the most formidable of all external enemies. Her sacred Image retreating before the Saracen from the far East to Scutari, and from Scutari to Genazzano, is a sign that vice and want of faith will cause Mary to pass from any people. The movement in Italy and other Catholic nations against Islam, so successful after the sacred Image came amongst them, is a sign that renewed fervour, faith, and devotion to Her, will bring from heaven every blessing upon the exertions of the children of God. As it is with the Christian commonwealth in general, so it is with particular communities and with individuals. They will get from Mary, in proportion to their efforts to deserve it, the gift of her seasonable (**timely**) help - Good Counsel and strength against all opposing forces of men or demons here, every spiritual or temporal blessing compatible with the security of their salvation in this world, and life eternal hereafter.

Having said so much upon the mere history of the sacred Image, we shall now proceed to consider the proofs upon which the facts we have stated rest.

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<sup>1</sup> **Mohács** - Note added by Eugene Shannon - This is a difficult one for me. The expression "the fields of Mohács" may have been a metaphor for Hungary in Mons. Dillon's time. There was a **Battle of Mohács** on 19th August 1526 which Hungary lost. See the following -

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Moh%C3%A1cs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Moh%C3%A1cs)

See, in particular, the Section entitled **Battle**. In that section you will read that the key to the success of the Turks was that they did not withdraw from the battlefield at night.

So, why does Mons. Dillon use the expression as an allusion to the defeat of the Turks in Europe? Subsequent to the **Battle of Mohács**, Hungary became a frequent battleground with the Turks. Eventually, but slowly, they were expelled. This may be what Mons. Dillon had in mind.

## Chapter IX

### PROOFS OF THE APPARITION (to Genazzano)

1. Unanimity of historians regarding facts given. - 2. Proofs examined by Vatican Archivists. - 3. Loss of early documents. - 4. Investigation ordered by Pope Paul II. - 5. Vatican Codex. - 6. Testimony of Coriolanus. - 7. Registry of miracles - Prayer of the copyist. - 8. Documents relative to Petruccia. - 9. Ancient inscriptions on the church and holy Chapel. - 10. Proofs of the manner of the coming of the sacred Image. - 11. Ancient works on the subject. - 12. The donations of Sixtus IV and Cardinal (**William**) D'Estouteville.

1. We have in the preceding chapters endeavoured to give the reader some idea of the country which the sacred Image left (**Albania**), and of the ancient classic land to which it came (**Latium in Italy**). We have also explained that which we consider to be a reason for the change of location. It now remains to examine, critically, the proofs upon which (**our belief in**) that occurrence, which is in every sense so extraordinary, rests.

We may mention then, at first, that all the circumstances we have narrated are given by every (**significant**) historian of the Shrine. Some of the works written about it, such as those of De Orgio, Senni, Buonanno, and Belgrano, are large and learned treatises, composed by men of the highest character and of great culture. The smaller volume of Luigi Vannutelli is no less valuable, because of the literary repute and local knowledge of the author. Nearly all who have written have been led to write through a motive of gratitude to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel for some signal favour received at Her Sanctuary. The same may be said with regard to the authors of those minor tracts, now so common in French, German, and Italian. The same main facts are given, in a manner more or less diffuse, by all of them.

It is true that we have no formal histories, like the above-mentioned, which date back further than the 17th century (**1600s**). But the want of such in no way affects the mass of proof, traditional and historical, which exists, both for the wonderful apparition of the sacred Image in Genazzano, and for its miraculous translation from Scutari in Albania.

It is with these two events that we have chiefly to concern ourselves. In this chapter we shall deal with the proofs of the miraculous appearance in Genazzano, and in the next chapter with those of the translation from Scutari.



2. We may here state that, in all matters connected with these proofs, we are now greatly assisted by the labours of two learned and expert archaeologists who were deputed, in the last century (18<sup>th</sup> century), by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, to examine into, and to report upon all matters connected with the appearance and translation of the sacred Image. These were the brothers, **Calistus and Cajetan Marini**, custodians, at the time, of the Vatican Archives. The reason for their being thus deputed was to ascertain whether the facts connected with the Image were or were not of such a nature as might warrant the Church in granting a Proper Mass and Office in honour of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. After a long and elaborate examination, the report made by them was so favourable - indeed with the materials at their disposal it could not be otherwise - that the desired favour was granted. They not only interrogated upon oath the oldest and most trustworthy inhabitants of Genazzano, but also examined such then existing historical and monumental records as had survived the vicissitudes which had befallen the archives of the Sanctuary, and those of the borough of Genazzano from the stormy days that immediately succeeded the coming of the miraculous Image.

3. We now know that the archives of the convent of Santa Maria were more than once removed. In the reign of Alexander VI, some twenty five years after the translation, Caesar Borgia, the Duke of Valentinois, drove out the Colonnas, and held the town and castle of Genazzano for several years. The Colonnas had scarcely settled themselves again after this storm, when, under Clement VII, fire and sword ravaged all their strongholds. In 1540, Ascanius Colonna engaged in open rebellion against Pope Paul III, and paid the penalty of his treason, by losing Genazzano. In these trials, following each other in such quick succession, many precious documents were either lost or destroyed. Some, of the greatest value, were sent to places considered, at the time, to be of greater safety than the fiefs of the Colonnas.

Tivoli, then a Papal residence, was the nearest locality of the kind, and thither, certainly, a number of records of value were sent, as appears from an autograph letter of the Prior General of the Augustinians written as early as 1587. This was Father, afterwards Cardinal, Gregory Elpareense, called Petrocchini. He says, "*We have heard and know for certain, that there are in Tivoli, very many writings and instruments concerning our convent of Santa Maria of Paradise, in Genazzano, and that these are detained by certain men in Tivoli, to the greatest detriment of our aforesaid convent*". Father Egidius of Viterbo, another General of the Augustinians, and also subsequently a Cardinal, states that, before the time of Clement VII, by order of the celebrated Father Mariano, his master, many writings were sent away from the archives of Santa Maria,

in the care of Father Felix da Prato, and were lost, together with all the goods of the same Father Mariano, on board a ship which foundered near Pozzuoli.<sup>1</sup>

Another circumstance, unfortunate for the existence of many other valuable documents, is that a conflagration broke out in the last century (**18th century**) in the archives of the borough itself. At present, one can find amongst such writings as have escaped this catastrophe several interesting records of the old churches of the town, from the year 1356 to the present. There is, however, nearly a total loss of records from 1460 to 1474. Buonanno states that, from the communal registers, there is precisely wanting the one for the year 1467. This may have occurred from the very fact of over care on the part of those devoted to guardianship of the Sanctuary in the troublesome times we have referred to. The most important documents were those most likely to have perished in the foundering of the vessel at Pozzuoli; or to have been lost amidst the voluminous records of the places of safety, such as Tivoli, to which they were sent.

However, although much that we may desire to have has certainly perished, still there remains ample historical, documentary, and monumental proofs in the mass of evidences still existing, which were examined by Cajetan and Callistus Marini of the Vatican Archives.

**4.** The first of these proofs, in our estimation, and one worthy of every attention, lies in the investigation ordered by the reigning Pontiff Paul II, shortly after the news of the miraculous coming of the sacred Image had reached Rome.

This Pontiff, named Peter Barbo before his elevation, was nephew to Eugene IV, and was a Venetian. He had held high employment in the Court of Rome for over thirty years previously. He was, consequently, both as a Churchman and as a Venetian, deeply interested and thoroughly acquainted with the remarkable events which were then taking place at the other side of the Adriatic.

He had seen the fall of Constantinople. He had shared in all the solicitude of his predecessors for the defence of Albania. He knew Scanderbeg intimately; and probably caused the last efforts of that hero against the might of Mahomet II to be made. He could not have been unaware of the existence of the famous Sanctuary of Our Lady at Scutari in Albania. The eyes of Europe were at the moment fixed upon that city, then garrisoned by the Venetians, his countrymen, and in daily peril of falling into the hands of the victorious Turks. We can not well imagine a juncture more critical, nor any combination of circumstances more calculated to fix the attention of the Pontiff on **an event so unusual, as**

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<sup>1</sup> Father Mariano - See Endnote 6

**an alleged miraculous translation of the principal religious treasure of the Albanian people, from their last free city, to an obscure town in his own dominions**, which was held by the chiefs of the Ghibelline faction. Moreover, at such a time and in such an age, no circumstance could well occur which would be more disastrous for the cause of Catholicity and of Venice. It was calculated to dispirit the defenders of Scutari, and to excite the hopes of their enemies. In fact, during the whole of their conquests in Illyria and Epirus, the Turks continually boasted that the dominion of the country was given them by God, because of the sins and unworthiness of the Christians.

And on the other hand, we have it on record that the Venetian commander laboured strenuously to do away with some dispiriting ideas circulating among his men, who must have supposed that heaven had deserted them. Senni, who quotes from the Albanian Priest and historian of the siege of Scutari, Marino Barletto, says that this supposition was occasioned by **the known loss of the miraculous Image of Our Lady of Good Office, the name by which the sacred Image was known in Albania**. The Turks, on their part, in order to dispirit the Christians still more, directed all their efforts against the church of St. Nicholas of Bari. It is said that, through the intercession of the saint, the balls that were fired at the sacred edifice rebounded and killed several of the assailants. This fact was instantly taken advantage of by the commandant, James Moneta, who thus addressed his soldiers.

*“But in the first place we shall have with us the Most Blessed Virgin and St. Nicholas, whose temple behold O Soldiers! behold how those most fierce traitors, those corrupters of divine worship, have violated and disturbed the building. Remember, O Citizens, that divine and not-to-be-concealed miracle, which this saint wrought against the barbarians during the first siege. For the first cannon ball which these very barbarians threw at that temple and that sanctuary, the Blessed Nicholas cast back upon themselves, so that many of them were killed. Wherefore, O fellow soldiers!, invoke him, for he is venerated also by me. Confide in him”.*

These words, however pious, show that Moneta was working against some diffidence felt by his men in the assistance of heaven, and which might be easily explained as being the result of the sacred Image being no longer found in its sanctuary in Scutari.

Pope Paul II must have been fully aware of all the circumstances in which Scutari was placed at the time when Rome first received the intelligence of the appearance of the sacred Image **in Genazzano**, and of the story given by the two pilgrims who came soon after. He heard the report of the miraculous cures. He knew that whole towns in his dominions were being emptied of their inhabitants who were going in

procession to visit the new Shrine of Mary. No one would have been better pleased to be able to find any fraud in the alleged facts than he would have been, if fraud indeed, could be proven. The Christians of Scutari and of all Albania would have been reinvigorated. The sacred Image, if taken by human hands, could be restored. The Pontiff then did exactly what we might expect one in his position to do. He at once instituted an investigation and, for the purpose of making it, he deputed two of the ablest prelates then in Rome. One of these was Gaucerio de Folcarquer, Bishop of Gap in Dauphinè, and the other, Nicolo a Crucibus, Bishop of Fara, now called Lesina, one of the principal islands of the Adriatic, not far from the coast of Albania.

The former prelate (**de Folcarquer**) was one of those who assisted at the Council of Avignon. He was consecrated as early as 1442, and died in 1480. He was frequently before entrusted by the Pope with missions of great importance. The latter prelate (**a Crucibus**), was also high in favour with the Pontiff for his learning and prudence. He knew the language, history, and customs of the Albanians perfectly; and, most probably, also often visited the shrine of Our Lady at Scutari, which was not far from his Cathedral city. The investigation which these distinguished delegates were ordered to make took place within two months after the apparition. The report, which according to Senni was given *viva voce* (**orally**) to the Pontiff, must have been favourable; for, not only was the devotion of the people not disturbed, but after their report, it received the greatest possible encouragement from the ecclesiastical authorities. The church of Petruccia was erected. A magnificent marble canopy was placed over the Shrine, and the Roman court showed, almost immediately as we shall presently see, a great esteem for the new Sanctuary of Mary, the Mother of Good Counsel.

It is possible that, amongst the missing records of the convent, or of the borough, there may have existed some written report of this mission. But, however that may be, the validity of the Sanctuary is made independent of any such document by other historical testimonies of a most conclusive kind.

**5. The first of these is from a Vatican Codex**, giving in detail the expenditure of the Curia in the reign of Paul II. In page 231 of that Codex we find that Lorenzo Zane, Archbishop of Spalatro, and Apostolic Treasurer, paid on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of July 1467, to the Bishop of Fara, (receiving on behalf of himself and of the Bishop of Gap) the sum of twenty two golden florins and 60 bononenos, for their expenses in going to the town of Genazzano, “*for a certain commission given them by our*

*Most Holy Father the Pope, as appears from a mandate given them on the above date*".<sup>1</sup>

Explaining and confirming the facts stated in this codex of expenditure, we have the still stronger testimony of the exact and learned **Canesius**, the writer of the life of Pope Paul II, who, speaking of the year 1467, says. "*At that time, in the town of Genazzano, situated in the diocese of Palestrina, God worked innumerable and wonderful miracles by means of an Image of the Blessed Virgin. For the examination of which matter, he (Paul II) destined Gaucerio, Bishop of the Church of Gap, and Nicholas of the Church of Fara*".<sup>2</sup> We may mention that the works of Canesius were published by the Eminent Cardinal Angelo M. Quirino, who testifies that the life of Paul II was written so accurately by the historian that he affirmed nothing but that of which he had a personal knowledge. That the apparition was regarded as singularly extraordinary Canesius further proves, by mentioning the finding of another miraculous Image of Our Lady near Viterbo at the same time, which the Pontiff took no trouble to investigate. His anxiety about the sacred Image of Genazzano proves not only the extraordinary public veneration for it but also the influence which considerations connected with the situation in Albania had over his mind.

**6. The next (second) historical proof** we have of the wonderful apparition is equally clear and valuable. It comes from a Superior General of the Augustinians, and was written some fourteen years after the occurrence. It is all the more valuable because it is appealed to, as a public undeniable fact, in proof for another purpose. This General was the celebrated Father Ambrose of Cori, or **Coriolanus**, as he is called from the city of his birth. He was twice Provincial of the Roman Augustinian province in which the convent of Santa Maria in Genazzano is situated, and actually held that office the very year of the miraculous apparition. He was, consequently, thoroughly acquainted with a circumstance so remarkable, and with which he must have had so much to do. Some years after, he became General of his order, and stood very high in the confidence of Pope Sixtus IV.

While in this position, he became involved in a controversy with the writers, Corradi and Domenico di Treveris, Canons Regular of St. Augustine, who denied that the Hermits sprang at all from their

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<sup>1</sup> **The following is the exact text of this entry** - "*die 24 Iulii (1467) solvit R. P. D. N. Episcopo Faren. recipienti pro se et Episcopo Vapicens, florenos auri de Camera XXII. bononenos 60, pro eorum expensis in eundo ad Terram Genazzani pro certa commissione eis facta per S. D. N. PP., ut apparet per mandatum factum dicta die.*" See *Esame Critico*, p. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> "*Sub id tempus apud oppidum Jenazzani Praenestina Dioecesi situm, ex Imagine Beatae Mariae Virginis complurima et admiranda miracula Deus effecit, ad cuius quidem rei examinationem Gaucerium Vapicensis Ecclesiae praesulem et Nicolaum Farenensis Ecclesiae Antistitem (Pontifex) destinavit.*" Canesius was first, Canon of San Lorenzo in Damaso, and afterwards, Bishop of Castro.

Patriarch (**St. Augustine**). In his reply, dedicated to his Patron, the Pope, he gave intense pain to his adversaries, who never ceased to persecute him, until, in the reign of the next Pope, **they managed to get him imprisoned.**

Father De Orgio speaks feelingly about this bad treatment of the General, and adduces it as a proof that what the latter wrote of the coming of the Madonna to Genazzano, would not pass without contradiction from enemies so bitter, if contradicted it could be. Coriolanus, therefore, in this defence, **found it necessary to bring forward several indisputable instances of sanctity** in his own slandered institute of the sons of St. Augustine. Amongst others, he adduced that of the « **Blessed** » Petruccia as one whose great holiness deserved the favour of a supernatural foreknowledge of the coming of the sacred Image to Genazzano; and he further instances the miracles, and the immense crowds which came to visit its Shrine from all parts of Italy. He refers to the fact that many towns were thus emptied of their inhabitants; and finally states that, from the multitude of the offerings made, the Church and Convent of the Augustinians were completed. These were all facts easy of contradiction, if they were not in every particular correct. The whole of Rome and of Italy were interested in his book, and they could pronounce as well as he himself could, upon the truth or falsehood of his allegations. He appeals to well known, contemporaneous and public facts, which were not, because they could not, be denied.

As it was, neither Corradi or Domenico de Treveris challenged a single statement of his, relative to the miraculous apparition of the Image, or any fact connected with it. His (**Coriolanus**) words are: *“The eighth was the blessed Petruccia of Genazzano, who having sold all she had, built where her house stood, the Church of our Convent, following the counsel of Christ, “if you wish to be perfect, go and sell all you have, and give to the poor and follow me”; and when all her efforts did not suffice to complete the church, she became the derision of ail the people. But she said, “do not be led astray my children, because before I die, (she was then decrepit) the Blessed Virgin and St. Augustine will complete this Church”. But the fulfilment of the prophecy was admirable. For scarcely a year passed after saying her words, when an Image of the Blessed Virgin miraculously appeared on a wall of the said Church, to gaze upon which all Italy was so moved, that both towns and cities went there in procession, amidst signs and prodigies and alms unspeakable; so that, she being still living, not only the Church, but a most beautiful*

*convent also was built; and she dying was interred in the Chapel of the aforesaid Image, in the time of our Provincialate.”<sup>1</sup>*

7. The third proof that we have of the wonderful apparition, is also most valuable. It comes to us in this way. As soon as the first surprise was over, the Augustinian Fathers, who had become, necessarily and by common consent, the guardians of the Sanctuary, bethought themselves of making a record of the miracles which were worked daily at the feet of the holy Image. They therefore employed, as speedily as possible, the public notary of Genazzano to examine all witnesses and facts regarding these miracles, so that the Holy Father, who doubtless would order an inquiry, might have proven facts to examine.

The notary commenced his labours two days after the wonderful apparition, and he continued them until the following August when, probably because sufficient proof then existed to satisfy the delegates of Paul II, he ceased. From causes already indicated, his registries disappeared together with the other records of Genazzano for the year 1467. But, fortunately, the devotion of a scribe who came on pilgrimage to the Shrine, preserved a copy of them. This latter copied the whole of the depositions, word for word, upon sheets of beautiful paper or bombacine (**dictionary : bombazine = a type of fabric**), and in clear ornamental characters. The whole was then bound into one volume, which remained in the possession of the religious of Santa Maria, until the spoliation of their convent by the French, in the beginning of the present century (**i.e. 19th century**).

This valuable Codex was epitomised (**reviewed**) by De Orgio in 1747. It was critically examined by the experts already referred to in 1774, and it was pronounced to belong, in point of age, to at least the end of the fifteenth century. Calistus Marini is of opinion that it was written in the very year of the apparition (**1467**). It was always well known to the devout visitors of the Sanctuary. It narrates the particulars of no less than one hundred and sixty one miracles, performed through the sacred Image from the 2nd day after its appearance, April 27th 1467, to the 14th day of August in the same year. It gives the names of the witnesses and all other circumstances which were necessary for the notary to transmit.

Then, as to its internal evidence (**as to the relevant information that this document contains?**), it mentions Paul II as being the reigning Pontiff, and Cardinal Arbitratensis as then living. It mentions another very notable occurrence, namely, that the people of Segni came in the June of the year 1467, in procession, to ask of the Madonna that the plague which desolated their city might cease. We know that in the

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - I have omitted this footnote, which was the original Latin version of what Coriolanus said.

Summer months of that year several towns of Italy were laid waste by pestilence. There is, therefore, great probability that such a pilgrimage was, in fact, made. Then it narrates other facts bearing upon contemporaneous events. A soldier suffering from a wound of seven years standing, received in the Marches, is said to have been cured; and history informs us that in 1660 Sigismund Malatesta of Rimini went to war in that locality, to favour the designs of Charles of Anjou upon Naples. Indeed the language, the style, and all the circumstances of the composition, demonstrate the truth and genuineness of this valuable record. The preface of the author which, like the rest of the work, is written in the quaint old Italian of the period, when the language still held much more of the orthography and the style of the Latin than it does at present, will give an idea of its tenor, and show the deep, loving piety of the author. The following is a translation of it : -

*“Hail Queen of Heaven. Behold here is the copy, and the copy from it, of the miracles performed by Thy prayers for the devout of Thy most sacred Image, which appeared in the church of St. Mary of Genazzano, the oratory and place of the Friar Hermits of St. Augustine, in the year of Our Lord 1467, on the 25th day of April, performed and written down, I say, by hand and testimony, in three months and seventeen days of the above mentioned year; that is from the twenty seventh (27th) day of April to the thirteenth (13th) day of August. **These being scattered in many parts**, I have reduced them into one, copying them word for word, not as I ought to have done, but as best I could. I confess to Thee and demand (**request**) of Thee pardon for the negligence I have been guilty of in this, that I should be much more brief in copying than I have been. But however, as these are so badly written, be pleased to accept them, together with myself dedicated to Thee, and with heart desiring with Thy aid, to see once more before my death, Thy miraculous and most sacred Image with corporal eyes, as I now contemplate it with mental eyes. Finally, kneeling before it, I beseech Thee earnestly to pray for me now chiefly, and at the hour of my death”.*<sup>1</sup>

8. As to the existence and condition of Petruccia, the archives of Genazzano preserve some most interesting records. We have in them the original Will of her husband leaving her sole heiress. We have her own Will leaving her house to the (**Augustinian**) convent of Santa Maria, in order to carry out the darling idea of her life. And we have, moreover, records that her husband, John of Nocera, held the position of proctor for

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<sup>1</sup> Callistus Marini in his critical examination, describes this codex as “a little book written by pen in bombacine paper elegantly bound in gilded Cordova, composed of three quaderns only, or of 32 sheets, not numbered, and written in characters well executed and elegant. The order of the writing commences from the second sheet and continues to the thirtieth. In the first page is written the prayer of the writer”. This prayer is as follows in the original Latin -

**Note added by Eugene Shannon** - I have omitted the Latin version.



the church of Santa Maria del Buon Consiglio; and that, probably, his wife continued to care for its needs after his death. These, however, are not necessary to be adduced in face of the testimony of Coriolanus, and of the inscription placed over the remains of the good tertiary, after she had completed the building of the church and convent, and had passed to her Patroness in heaven. She was buried in the chapel of her beloved Madonna, and the Fathers of the Augustinian Order caused the following lines to be inscribed to her memory in the church when renewed by Father Felix (**Leoncelli**) of Cave<sup>1</sup>.

**PETRUCCIA DE GENAZZANO  
MULIER SANCTISSIMA  
MONASTERIUM HOC SANCTAE MARIAE BONI CONSILII  
VETUSTATE COLLAPSUM  
ADMIRANDUM IN MODUM RESTITUIT  
NAM CUM IN PARIETE ECCLESIAE  
DEIPARAE VIRGINIS IMAGO  
DIVINITUS APPARUISSET  
TANTUM PECUNIAE EX FREQUENTIA CHRISTIANORUM  
AD IMAGINEM  
VISENDAM CONFLUENTIUM COLLEGIT  
UT OPUS CONSUMMARE POTUERIT  
QUOD MONASTERIUM UNA CUM ECCLESIA FUT POSTEA  
PER FRATREM FELICEM LEONCELLUM CAVENSEM  
OPE TAMEN ET AUXILIO PHILIPPI COLUMNA  
A FUNDAMENTIS IN PULCHRIOREM FORMAM REDACTUM**

It will be interesting to know that in the year 1734, when Cardinal Albano undertook the renovation of the Sanctuary of the Madonna, the bones of Petruccia were found. They were then interred in the outer portion of the church and were rediscovered in 1882 on the occasion of laying down the present marble pavement. Before being re-interred, the Prior of Santa Maria and his community thought it best to call in the services of the Notary Public, a Government Officer, so that, for future historical purposes, an authentication might be found in the records of the municipality as well as in the archive of the convent. The following is a translation of the legal instrument or verbal process, executed on that occasion :-

<sup>1</sup> It is very probable that this inscription repeated the words of another, which must have been placed immediately over her remains, or in some portion of the church adjoining the sanctuary.

The second restoration - a **very complete one** - warranted the introduction of the reference to Father Felix Leoncelli of Cave and Philip Colonna, through whom it was effected.

## VERBAL PROCESS

At the instance of the Revd. Custodians of the Sanctuary of Mary Most Holy of Good Counsel of Genazzano, to attest and preserve the memory of the finding and of the new deposition of the bones of the Blessed Petruccia.

The year 1882, the 9th day of March, in the church of Saint Mary of Good Counsel, Humbert I reigning.

In the year 1734, the ancient altar of the chapel of the Madonna of Good Counsel being about to be displaced, in order to construct another of marble given by the Most Eminent Cardinal Albani, three sepulchres were found under it in the shape of caskets, and in each one of them was found a head and other human bones. As tradition, supported by the testimony of the Augustinian Father, Ambrose of Cori, called Coriolanus, who, in the chronicles of his order published in 1481, related that the Blessed Petruccia, an Augustinian tertiary and great benefactress of the church and convent of the Augustinians in Genazzano, who died in that commune in the fame of sanctity, about the year 1471, had been buried in the above mentioned chapel, so that it was held as certain that the bones found in the centre sepulchre, which by physical professors were found to be remains of the skeleton of a woman, were precisely (**definitely**) those of Blessed Petruccia, and therefore were placed in another casket of wood, which was deposited under the pavement of the same church near the balustrade of the baptistery, and of the wall of the façade opposite the chapel of St. Monica, as the whole appears from an instrument of the notary Francis Antony Paoletti, of the date of the 28th of June 1734, the original of which is preserved in the notary archives of the commune.

Now the whole of the pavement of the church being renewed in marble by the care of the custodians of the Sanctuary, while destroying the old pavement of brick, the casket deposited on the 18th of June 1734, was found precisely in the spot indicated, containing the above mentioned remains of human bones, piously (**sincerely**) believed to be those of the Blessed Petruccia, and extracted from that place in the presence of me, the notary, and of the witnesses who here with me are undersigned, enclosed in another casket of zinc, which then being well closed with a soldering of lead, were newly replaced under the pavement of the said church at a little distance from the place where the said bones were found, close to the wall of the near façade close to the great door of the church, on the right as the church is entered.

In the casket together with the remainder of the bones there was also deposited a glass bottle well corked and sealed, in which was enclosed a sheet containing the memorandum of the rediscovery, and of the new location of the said bones.

Of all this, at the instance of the Rev. Father Aurelio Martinelli, son of Cosmo of Lucca deceased, and Stephen Berio, son of Michael of Oneglia deceased, and Fulgentius, son of Joseph of Montecossaro deceased, all of the above, guardians of the Sanctuary residing in this commune, and in the presence of Masters Philip Anelli, son of Franciscus, and of Alexander Lanzi, son of Fabricius deceased, a proprietor, who were with me at the act of excavation, and who with me have drawn up the present process verbal,

which I have caused to be written by a person confided in by me, and after having read it in the presence of all who were assembled, all of whom have affirmed and subscribed as at present. This act consists of a folio in 4 pages.

Signed,

Prior, Aurelio Martinelli; P. Stephen Berio, Aug; P. Fulgenzio Fulgenzi, Aug.

Philip Anelli and Alexander Lanzi, Witnesses.

Vincent Mary Giorgi, Notary.

The present copy is conformable to the original.<sup>1</sup>

VINCENT MA. GIORGI.

Genazzano 30 March 1882.

In the improvements just being effected, a new monument has been placed over these remains, with the following inscription -

D. O. M.  
BEATA PETRVCCIA MULIER IENAZZANENSIS  
INTER DOMESTICAS ORDINIS S. AVGVSTINI MONIALES  
SANCTITATE CELEBRIS  
TEMPLVM HOC VETVSTATE COLLAPSV  
IN AVGVSTAM MAIESTATEM RESTITVIT AERE PROPRIO  
ELEEMOSYNIS ET MVNIFICENTIA POPVLORVM  
AD SANCTAE IMAGINIS APPARITIONEM  
VISENDAM  
MORTEM LAETA OBIIT MCCCCLXX  
RELIQVIAE VERO EIVS EFFOSSAE RECOGNITAE  
NOVAQVE ARCA INCLVSAE HIC SVB PAVIMENTO  
EODEM LOCO REPOSITAE SVNT DIE IX MARTII  
MDCCCLXXXII<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The care, which the guardians of the Sanctuary have manifested in getting this formal legal authentication effected by the public notary of the government of the day, appears to have characterised the Augustinians in charge of the sacred Image from the very commencement. The first registry of miracles is a case in point. Yet this registry would have surely perished, but for the providential copying of it which the zeal of a devout client effected. The French occupation caused many valuable documents to have gone astray. The coming of the Piedmontese \* has done the same, at the present moment. How much easier it must have been in the wars and commotions of the turbulent times of the Colonnas and their feudal adversaries.

\* See <https://history.state.gov/countries/issues/italian-unification>

<sup>2</sup> See Endnote 7 - What Senni says regarding Petruccia.

9. The church built by Petruccia, though a wonder for its time, had to be improved in many ways, and enlarged in the course of four centuries. The chapel of marble, however, erected over the sacred Image, and the main entrance of the temple itself, remain as she left them to this day (**1883**), and Senni shows that these must have been constructed by the architect of the Colonna family. They are both exquisitely designed and well executed. They give every evidence of the renaissance of art which set in so vigorously in the reign of Pius II (Æneas Sylvius), and continued as vigorous in that of his immediate successor (**Pope Paul II**), in whose pontificate both works were completed. The Column which forms so conspicuous a feature in the arms of the Colonnas, is carved in many places upon them; and this shows that they were executed, mainly at least, at the expense of the Princes of Genazzano. Both the portal and the marble chapel bear inscriptions which are of great value as proofs of the miraculous apparition of the sacred Image. On the latter is carved, in a style peculiar to the last half of fifteenth century, the following words.

DIVINITUS . APPARUIT  
HAEC . IMAGO . A. D. M.  
M . CCCCLXVII . XXV . APRILIS

( « *This Image divinely appeared on the 25th of April, 1467.* » )

And on the former.

M . CCCC . LXVII . SUB . ANIS . IDIV . FESTO  
MARCI . HORA . VESPERI . DEI . GENITRICIS  
MARIÆ . QUAM . IN . HUIUS . PHANI  
SACELLO . MARMOREO . VENERAMINI  
EX . ALTO . FIGURA . PROSPEXIT

(“At the hour of Vespers, on the feast of St. Mark, in the year of the Incarnate Word 1467, the picture of Mary the Mother of God, which you venerate in the marble chapel of this temple, looked down from on high”).

The chief of the house of Colonna, living at this epoch, was the famous Antonio, created Prefect of Rome by Pius II. He died in 1472. An old list of subscriptions entitled — *retractum pecuniarum recipienidarum*

*Capellae B. Mariae* — pronounced by the experts already mentioned to belong to the period of the translation (**of the sacred Image**), has the name of this prince as one of the contributors. He is known to have also erected a chapel in the Church of San Pio in commemoration of the visit of his patron Pius II to the convent, then in construction for the Conventual Franciscans, on the site of the ancient Antonine Villa.

These inscriptions are most valuable, not only for their antiquity, but also because they clearly prove the tradition, which details the manner in which the sacred Image miraculously appeared, to be correct (**to be as believed at that time**). The words, — *divinitus apparuit* — attests the miracle of its coming. It was not brought, but it appeared itself to the people. The words, — *ex alto prospexit* —, clearly suggested by (, **but not the same as**,) the psalm which says, — *Deus ex coelo prospexit* —, proves that it came not from heaven but from on high, — through the air without human interference (**alto - high : coelo - heaven**). Any such inscriptions carved on a church porch, and over a sacred altar, must have had, of course, the sanction of the highest Church authority. One existed already, not improbably, when the delegates of the Pope arrived. If placed in position immediately after (**the event**), the proof is all the stronger. And it is surely impossible to conceive that the house of Colonna, the Cardinal Bishop of Palestrina, the officials of the diocese, the whole Augustinian order, the entire people of Genazzano, and those thousands who gave their alms (**contributions**) for the building of the church and convent, could be deceived or could desire to deceive posterity, about a fact so very plain (**Faulty Logic - E.S.**).

**10.** The spontaneous ringing of the church bells and the celestial music, which tradition, resting on the testimony of the crowds who heard both, affirms, accompanied the arrival of the sacred Image, are not mentioned in these inscriptions. The same care which provided that the notary public of the borough, should record the miracles worked at the Shrine, no doubt, also took care that, in the same legal manner, every circumstance of the coming should be recorded. Unfortunately, as has been already stated, all those records have perished, or have been lost. But as independent testimony like that of Coriolanus and the copyist of the registers, like that of the delegation of Paul II, and these ancient inscriptions, prove beyond question the main facts of the wonderful apparition, so also the minor circumstances may have written historical proof. The documents regarding them, lost, as we have indicated, may yet be found. As it is, they rest upon an unbroken tradition, which has many important arguments in its support, while not a single circumstance has been brought forward opposed to it (**More Faulty Logic - E.S.**).

For instance, although no documentary evidence exists with regard to the miraculous ringing of bells which tradition states accompanied the

coming of the sacred Image, we have the fact that, from time immemorial, the church bells of all the town are rung for an hour, for eight days previous to the 25th of April, to perpetuate the memory of the spontaneous ringing during the hour, (from three to four in the afternoon,) in which it first appeared.

With regard to the white cloud and the celestial music, there are very many circumstances which confirm the tradition. For instance, an ancient offering in silver, presented to the Sanctuary by Philip Colonna, Duke of Paliano, in thanksgiving for the cure of his wife, Lucrezia Tomacelli, represents the sacred Image of the Blessed Virgin surrounded by the cloud, and coming exactly as the tradition states, to Genazzano. Underneath was engraved the following inscription: *Divinitus apparuit in terra Genazzani A.D. MCCCCLXVII Die XXV Aprilis*. This must have been engraved in the century after the apparition, or very early in the following one. It was executed by order of the donor, a prince of the house of Colonna, and one who could have known persons who were intimate with those who witnessed the coming of the sacred Image. The slab of silver was very large, and remained in the Sanctuary until all the precious offerings found there, were confiscated during the occupation of the country by the French Republic and by Napoleon. We find from the records of his family that this Philip, Duke of Paliano, died in 1639, aged sixty one years.

**11.** Moreover, as happens in the case of all other events of a similar kind, the devout (**devout Catholics**), in all parts of Europe, had available to them accounts which were written by those who had visited the Shrine and had examined its history.

As early as 1569, Jerome Roman, in his — **Chronicles** —, published that year in Salamanca, gives the history of the coming of the Madonna to Genazzano in Italy, just as we have narrated it. In 1581, the Bishop, Joseph Pamfilo, in his *Chronicles of the Order of St. Augustine*, published in Rome, gives the same, (page 88 of his *Chronicles*).

We have a number of wills, going back to the same period, where money was left to the Sanctuary, and in all these, the evidences of the same invariable tradition is found. For instance, in the will of a certain Bartholomew Biscia, means are left to keep a lamp of silver burning night and day for ever, “*before the altar of the Most Glorious Madonna, which*” the testator says “*appeared divinely, in the place of the Fathers of the Augustinian order*”. This will is dated 1596, when Biscia was very old. One or both of his parents may have been amongst the numbers who witnessed the coming of the Madonna. At all events, the circumstances connected with the wonderful apparition that he refers to, were as fresh in the minds of people in his day, as the circumstances connected with the

apparition of Our Lady at Lourdes are at this moment (1883).  
(Mons. Dillon is employing Suspect Logic yet again - E.S.)

12. But to return to written narratives. There are many worthy of every reliance which give, if not direct documentary proof of all the circumstances narrated, at least the strongest possible indirect arguments. (No they don't..! - E.S.).

Many accounts come from historians of the Augustinian Order, whose scope was merely to write the simple annals of each year. Amongst these, Nicholas Crusenio in his *Monast. Augustin.* p. 3, cap. 29, pag. 176, printed in 1623, gives a full account of the miraculous apparition of the Image (which he calls most beautiful and made by no human hand). He tells us, moreover, that the immediate successor of Paul II, namely Sixtus IV, together with his intimate friend Cardinal D'Estouteville, through their devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, built or rather enlarged and restored, two edifices. The one, the Church of St. Augustine in Rome, and the other, that of Santa Maria del Popolo. This is an overwhelming proof (No it's not..! It merely "suggests". - E.S.) that the inquiry ordered by the predecessor of Sixtus was, in every sense, satisfactory; and that all the circumstances connected with the sacred Image were believed in by the Pontiff and the French Cardinal William de Estouteville, his close friend<sup>1</sup>. The occurrence referred to by Crusenio (in 1623) took place eight years after the miraculous coming of the Image to Genazzano (in 1467). The Turks had, at the time, seized upon all Albania, and so there was no further use for a policy of reticence regarding the (possible explanation for the) departure of the sacred Image from Scutari. We shall treat of this important argument at length in the next chapter, where the proofs of the miraculous translation will be examined.

Works still more voluminous than that of Crusenio appeared in Madrid in 1644<sup>2</sup>, in Brussels in 1654<sup>3</sup>, and in Bologna in 1681<sup>4</sup>. One of those writers, and one of great weight, Luigi Torelli, in his *Secoli Agostiniani* for the year 1470<sup>5</sup>, narrates the death of Petruccia in that year, and her sepulture (interment) in the chapel of the Madonna, says of the sacred Image and its Sanctuary, "*which she herself had by her prayers caused to appear miraculously, and by a stupendous prodigy, to rest upon that new wall, where it is yet preserved and venerated . . . and although the church has been once more renovated, by the great labour and industry of Father Felix Leoncelli of Cavi, nevertheless the ancient*

<sup>1</sup> See Endnote 8 - Pope Sixtus IV and Cardinal D'Estouteville

<sup>2</sup> *Alfabeto Agostiniano*, Madrid 1644. p. 2, p. 447.

<sup>3</sup> *Encomiastico Agostiniano*, Bruxelles 1654. p. 658-559 (659 ?).

<sup>4</sup> *Scuola del Cristiano*, Bologna 1681. c. 47. n. 56.

<sup>5</sup> *Tomo VII dal 1454 al 1513*, Bologna 1682.

*chapel is preserved intact, just as it was at first with the sacred Image*". We may mention that Torelli was an ocular witness (**to how things were understood during his own time**), having, as he tells us, been in Genazzano in 1630. From that year to the year 1784, the following inscription existed in the chancel of the church, close to the high altar at the Gospel side.

D. O. M.  
 PERANGUSTUM . OLIM . ET . QUAM . RUDITER . ERECTUM  
 TEMPLUM . HOC . VETUSTATE . CORROSUM  
 B. PETRUCCIA . MULIER . JENAZZANENSIS  
 INTER . DOMESTICAS . ORDINIS . S. AUGUSTINI . MONIALES  
 SANCTITATE . CELEBRIS  
 IN . HONOREM . DEIPARÆ  
 QUAM . IN . DIES . ADVENTURAM . PRÆSAGIEBAT  
 NOVIS . INCËPTIS . AERE . PROPRIO . PARIETIBUS  
 COLLECTISQUE . IN . SUPPLEMENTUM . ELEEMOSYNIS  
 ET . MUNIFICENTIA . CIVIUM . AC . POPULORUM  
 UNDIQUE . RELIGIONIS . CAUSA . CONFLUENTIUM  
 AD . VIRGINIS . HUIUS  
 SANCTÆ . IMAGINIS . APPARITIONEM  
 HORA . VESPERI . XXV . APRILIS . MCDLXVII  
 IN . AUGUSTAM . QUA . REFULSIT . ID . TEMPORIS  
 MAJESTATEM . RESTITUIT

It would be easy, if it were necessary, to prolong this mass of evidence by further documents. We may, however, conclude by stating that all we shall have to say in the rest of this book will be more or less confirmatory of that which is here proved. We would remit the reader specially to the chapter which treats of the Proper Mass and Office (**Chapter XIX**), to show that the Church herself has believed in the Miraculous Apparition, and has also taken the most effective means to warrant us in holding that belief<sup>1</sup>. The indulgences with which she has enriched the devotion, and the favours which she grants to spread it, especially by means of the Pious Union, are additional reasons to show us

<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon (2015)** - It is my opinion that the proofs that Mons. Dillon speaks about would not be accepted by a Court, and that the proofs of miracles that he presents would all be rejected by such as the Lourdes Medical Bureau. However, that is not to say that these things are not true. The accounts of these things given in this book by Mons Dillon are, appropriately, unproveable, as is always the case with all alleged Apparitions and Miracles. This unproveability, or secrecy, is part of how God protects us from having our Free Will prejudiced by such proofs. If our Free Will is prejudiced, then we are diminished.



her gratitude to Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, for coming in so marked a manner to the relief of her children at a season (**at a time**), when Good Counsel and help is so needed by the world (**reminder - this book was written in 1883**).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Although the principal depositories of records both in Genazzano and in Palestrina have been destroyed by fire or otherwise, yet there remains some grounds for hope that many documents bearing upon the Miraculous Apparition of the Sacred Image will yet be brought to light. The archives of the Colonna family, which have been removed from the castle of Genazzano only since they ceased to inhabit that building, are at present in Rome. The Fathers of the convent of Santa Maria have made repeated application for permission to examine these archives, but though the permission has not been refused, it has not yet been granted. It is, of course, easy to understand the reluctance of a family with such a chequered history to grant permission to overlook documents which bear upon property and, very possibly, upon repute. But if this difficulty could be met, there can be no doubt that many things of interest connected with the Sanctuary would come to light. For instance, it is known that the Colonnas took the deepest concern in the controversy which sprang up between two rival confraternities and which, as we shall see in the next chapter, had the closest connection with the narrative of the pilgrims Georgio and De Sclavis. Immediate descendants of the latter were employed in offices of trust by the princes of Genazzano. The family tried to re-assert its Juspatronatus over the church of Santa Maria which Giordan Colonna had conferred for ever on the Augustinians. This claim, which the Pope disallowed eight years after the coming of the Sacred Image, implied nearly every fact asserted concerning both the wonderful apparition and the miraculous translation. Patient research may yet also bring to light those documents which are said to have been sent to Tivoli and other places of safety, in the same way that the documents quoted by Buonanno were found in Genazzano.

## Chapter X

### PROOFS OF THE TRANSLATION (from Scutari)

1. Quality of the testimony of the **(two)** pilgrims. - 2. Silence of written, co-eval **(contemporaneous)** documents - Examination - Papal delegation. - 3. Agreement between the pilgrims' narrative and that of other Albanians. - 4. The two parties in Genazzano - Quotation from Senni in reference to them. - 5. Regarding the action of Sixtus IV. - 6. Deductions from the action of the Pope. - 7. Value of the different titles of the Madonna as evidence. - 8. The tradition in Genazzano - Devotion of the Albanians in Italy - Early writers. - 9. Pilgrimage of Urban VIII. - Testimony of Colonna, Duke of Paliano and his secretary. - 10. Testimony, on oath, of the oldest inhabitants of Genazzano in 1779. - 11. Family tree of the descendants of the pilgrim, Giorgio.

1. We have seen in the previous chapter<sup>1</sup> that, notwithstanding the vicissitudes to which the Sanctuary of Our Lady in Genazzano was exposed, nevertheless, an overwhelming mass of documentary and monumental **(inscriptions mainly)** proof existed for the wonderful apparition **(coming)** of the sacred Image. Now let us examine the proofs of its, no less wonderful, translation from Scutari in Albania to Genazzano in Italy. Our knowledge of the fact of this supernatural transmigration **rests entirely upon the testimony of the two pilgrims**, who, as we have seen in Chapter VII<sup>2</sup>, arrived in Genazzano some days after the miraculous coming, and they stated how and from whence the Image came.

Their story of the translation **(from Scutari)** was certainly a most extraordinary one but, at the same time, it was no more extraordinary than the accounts of the happenings which all the people knew to be connected with the subsequent appearance of the sacred Image in Genazzano. On the one hand, the story rests upon the credibility of the two pilgrims themselves. On the other, it could **(perhaps)** be examined and proved to be either true or false. While there were no other witnesses of the miraculous leaving and the journey of the sacred Image except Giorgio and De Sclavis, a starting point could, however, be to find out if any such Image had existed in Scutari; and, if so, whether or not it still continued to exist there. The Venetians were, at the time, in possession of both the city of Scutari and of the sanctuary from which the Image was said to have departed. The Venetians continued in possession for a sufficient

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter IX - Proofs of the Apparition (to Genazzano)

<sup>2</sup> Chapter VII - The Miraculous Translation

time to allow every inquiry to be made, before they surrendered to the Turks<sup>1</sup>.

2. We have here, however, an initial difficulty to dispose of. It is this - that in such co-eval documents as do exist, and which we have already quoted in proof of the miraculous apparition, nothing is said of the translation. But it must be remembered that not one of these documents treated **explicitly** of the coming of the sacred Image. Coriolanus spoke of the connection which Petruccia had with the occurrence only as proof of her sanctity as a member of his Order.

Canesius had for objective, only to tell of a mission sent by Pope Paul II. (The register of miracles had its own definite scope; and similarly of the rest.) If the tradition be true that the two Albanian pilgrims really existed, then they must have been examined by the delegates of the Pope, who came expressly to investigate every circumstance connected with the wonderful apparition. We have seen that the result of the inquiry must have been either given *viva voce* (**orally**) to His Holiness, or if any records were left behind in Genazzano, these must have perished, or have been lost together with the other records of the Sanctuary, in the manner explained in the previous chapter.

There is, however, much force in the fact that one of the papal delegates was a bishop belonging, it may be said, to Albania, - the Bishop of Fara, off the coast of Dalmatia. The selection of this prelate may be indicating that, concurrent with the report of the coming of the sacred Image to Genazzano, there was another report that it had come from Albania. The Bishop of Fara then, could, better than any Italian or French inquisitor, examine a case in which Albania was so much concerned. We have also seen that the Pontiff, both as a Churchman and as a Venetian, was much inclined, then at least, that silence should be observed with regard to an occurrence (**the departure of the sacred Image**) which would produce such a disastrous effect upon the defence of Scutari.

In any case, though the facts of the miraculous translation come down to us by tradition, it is a tradition well authenticated, and supported in many particulars by facts which cannot be gainsaid (**contradicted**).

3. In the first place, the story given by the two Albanians, clear and simple, and told in the same manner without a particle of variation, could not be reasonably doubted by the people of Genazzano, who had witnessed for themselves the wonderful apparition (**coming**) of the sacred Image, an event which was, in every sense, just as strange; or by the multitudes who beheld the wonders worked every day, and who, as

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<sup>1</sup> 25th April 1479 (Twelfth Anniversary of the Miraculous Apparition)  
See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Shkodra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Shkodra)

tradition tells us, saw the continual miracle of the **visibly unsupported Image** they came to venerate.

And then, neither Giorgio nor De Sclavis could have any possible motive for deceiving the people of Genazzano. Both were at least able to make their own living, and, in all probability, brought means with them from their own country. This is evident from the fact that, when settled in the town, they intermarried with respectable families of the locality, determined never to move far away from the Image they so much loved.

Again, though many of the people of Genazzano disliked their story (**some people wanted to believe that the Image came from Heaven**), and would have gladly contradicted it if they could, it never was contradicted upon any point whatever. Giorgio and De Sclavis remained all their lives in Genazzano and left families after them. Nothing could be easier than to find a flaw in some portion of a narration so extraordinary, if a flaw could be found. Other Albanians who came to Latium in great numbers after Scutari had fallen finally into the hands of the Turks, some three years after, would have been able to give a different version, if that of Giorgio and De Sclavis were false.

4. And then, it may be well to bear in mind that two distinct parties arose in Genazzano. One of these parties desired to get the management of the revenues of the Sanctuary, immense at the time, because of the offerings of the pilgrims, on the plea that Our Lady came from Scutari to be protected by the military force of Italy; and the other party denied their right to interfere, insisting that Our Lady came because of the want of attention to religion in Albania. The first party wished to have the management of the church of Santa Maria and of the Shrine for the seculars. Amongst them were the princes of the house of Colonna, who, it would appear, desired to resume the Jus patronatus, which, as we have seen, the prince, Pier Giordano conferred perpetually upon the Augustinians. The second, the party of prayer, as they called themselves, resented this. Pope Sixtus IV had to interfere (**intervene**), and by a bull yet extant (**still in existence**), confirmed the donation of Pier Giordano, at least so far (**to the extent**), that the religious should not be disturbed in the possession of the church, Sanctuary, convent, or of the benefice of the hospital of the Holy Cross, **without the express consent of the Holy See**.

All that we have advanced is well described by Senni in his *Memorie di Genazzano*. Giving the history of his native city, under the reigns of Paul II and Sixtus IV, Senni thus writes -

*“The Turks did not delay in laying siege to the fortress, as indeed everyone foresaw, and already the Venetians had well garrisoned Scutari, and continued to increase its strength. The citizens, upon seeing that the sacred Image of Most Holy Mary was wanting (**missing**), had serious thoughts, and still more serious doubts of our people. But whether*

*they believed that the Image was taken by human or celestial means, the wise, who were not wanting there, could easily persuade all that, however the case stood, they ought take it as a warning from heaven to do penance and amend their ways; and that if they should repent and amend, they could hope in the divine goodness better than before. We shall see that they did not hope in vain. The Turks really believed that God favoured the Christians. This confidence displeased them greatly, because it rendered their adversaries more courageous and daring, as they not infrequently experienced with fatal effect. They therefore, in order to take away from the people of Scutari every hope of assistance from heaven, endeavoured above all things to batter down their temples (**churches**). The temple of St. Nicholas of Bari, being either the most exposed to their fire or the most venerated, was the first assaulted, but the first cannon ball that touched its sacred walls, was cast back by the Saint against the sacrilegious invaders . . .*

*. . . “While such a war was being waged round the city, out of which the sacred Image had departed, the infernal enemy excited another contest in a certain sense still worse, in the place where it had arrived. This I ought not disguise (**downplay**), because a history is bound (**obliged**) to tell that which is evil as well as that which is good; and because this contest adds much light to enable us to judge concerning the narrative of the pilgrims. In sight of the miracles wrought by the Most Holy Virgin, the zeal to rebuild Her church was universal, and presently (**very soon**) (in Genazzano) a confraternity of collectors was instituted, which I find mentioned in a will of the very same year of the Apparition, with these words. **Item reliquit Societati Beatae Mariae nova inventa.** The title of the company newly founded. These brethren, in good accord with the Augustinian religious, not only completed the building of the temple, but assisted also in the construction of a new and beautiful convent. Both were terminated in the space of three years and a few months, and while Petruccia was still living. (Coriolan. Defens. p. 2). But after the completion of the church and the convent, and after the servant of God (Petruccia) had passed to eternal life it happened that, either because their aid seemed useless to the religious, who therefore treated them coldly, or that they were too forward and arrogated (**to themselves**) a joint dominion over the temple, the harmony was destroyed. There arose over the oblations of the faithful, a reciprocal want of confidence, and, in addition, the animosity proceeded so far that the religious and the members of the confraternity could hardly suffer each other to remain in the church together. The arrogance of the confraternity men did not want (**lack**) support. The princes of the house of Colonna, had, or at least pretended to have, the Jus patronatus over the church of the religious as well as over the other churches, although we have seen how, in the past*

(*previous*) century, Giordan Colonna exercised that right by placing there the Hermits of St. Augustine, and assigning another church to the (*secular*) priests. Antonio Colonna engraved his double coat of arms in the tribune of the holy Chapel, where the sacred work was commenced, and the same double stemma, where the work was finished. Meanwhile the church given to the religious was the old one, and not the new. It was pleasing then to our princes, that their subjects and dependants should have some charge (**control**), nor could the same be displeasing to the bishops or to the rest of the clergy.

But that which enkindled the controversy most, was the doubt of the Albanians whether the sacred Image, when it first appeared in Scutari, came from heaven or from far distant countries. Those who believed that it came from far distant countries considered, from its various passages, that the Lord wished it to be venerated in a place which was both distant, and secure from the fear of the Turks; and hence, that the custody of so sacred a deposit should be given to those having charge of the public security, that is to the military citizens. The others, however, who believed the sacred Image to have descended from heaven, abhorred such thoughts as sacrilegious which would presume to help Omnipotence. They said that the celestial appearance of the holy Image reminded us of our duties, one of which was to venerate it, without giving ourselves further trouble. Of these latter, there was formed another society called the **Confraternity of Prayer**, named many times by our notaries in the following century. The place is known, destined now for other uses, where they used to assemble in order to go together to the holy Chapel. There remains still the marble architrave with the inscription **In te Domine speravi . . .** All these great events happened both before and after the examination ordered by Paul II, and renders his pontificate, which ended in the year 1471, memorable in Genazzano.”

5. Under the heading of Sixtus IV, Senni proceeds -

“The same year when Sixtus IV ascended the pontifical throne, the city of Scutari was in great trouble and danger, in consequence of the siege and assaults of the Turks. The Pontiff gave all the succour in his power to the city. Whilst there were fears of its fall, the military party in Genazzano continued to talk, while the others attended in silence to prayer and hope. In the year 1474, however, while **Loredano** valorously defended the fortress, it pleased God to cause **Peter Mocenigo, the Venetian admiral**, to come to his aid. The Turks being assailed by his forces on two opposite points were, after an immense loss of men, forced to fly from Scutari and also to abandon the fortress of Croja and almost all of Albania. Mocenigo, by means of this victory, obtained in the same year the vacant post of Doge (**Duke of Venice**) (pronounce - dohj). Barletti, in describing these victories, states that they were proceeded by

*prayer and by celestial portents.* When the news arrived in Genazzano, everyone understood the triumph which the Brethren of Prayer would have from the victory. But it was found that their adversaries equally triumphed at it, because the victories came certainly, by the will of God, through the means of the combatants. From both sides (**of the debate**) came insulting expressions; and those coming from the military party were accompanied with threats, not always vain. Amidst this excess of fanaticism, the Augustinian religious thought well to have recourse to Pope Sixtus IV. They obtained from him a bull dated 16th July, 1475, by which he confirmed for the benefit of the Augustinians of Genazzano, the donation before named (**previously referred to**) of Giordan Colonna, of the church of St. Mary of Good Counsel, and another of the Holy Cross and of the hospital, and of the goods annexed (**which went with them**). Father Feroci and Father De Orgio speak of this Papal Bull in their histories of the Sanctuary. The religious gained nothing by this bull beyond the rights which they possessed already. It was simply provided that the Augustinians could not be deprived of these benefices without the consent of the Holy See. There afterwards followed other changes in matters, which rendered prudence necessary on the one part and on the other.

“Selim II (Mahomet II), in no way cast down (**depressed**) by the discomfiture he received in Albania, ordered that every time he left his palace he should be reminded that Scutari was not yet taken, and a good stipend was given to the person charged with this duty. A new army was collected (**by the Turks**) and sent against that fortress which was besieged once more. The Venetians, being then involved in other wars more dangerous, made peace with the Turks, and in the year 1477<sup>1</sup>, they surrendered Scutari on good (**favourable**) conditions, amongst which was the power (**right**) to go to the city and sell, and take away the price of whatever property they held there. The Turks used great promises and caresses (**dictionary - to treat with favour, kindness, etc.**) to the citizens, on account of which they were more reluctant to depart. But **Florio Genomina**, the better to understand the bad faith and the treachery of the Turks, had invited his fellow citizens to pass to the neighbouring dominions of the republic of Venice, promising in its name, a warm welcome and assistance. They all changed, therefore, their determination; and while some accepted the invitation, others came to our Latium as Barletto relates, **Tunc Scodrenes omnes . . . in Latium tetenderunt et in sinum florentissimi Veneti Senatus confugerunt**. Now all hitherto narrated shows us, that the two pilgrims of Scutari were not

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<sup>1</sup> Surrender of Scutari - Sources say 1479 and not 1477 (By Treaty dated 25th April 1479)  
See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Shkodra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Shkodra)

*the only ones to tell us that our holy Image was that of their country, but there was besides, a great number of Albanians who had worshipped it in Scutari, to say the same; and these inflamed the people of Genazzano and its neighbourhood in the contest already related, and the same was confirmed by those citizens of Scutari who had emigrated to Venice as well as to Latium.*

*There was in these times an opinion, or general impression, that the provinces of the East, and Constantinople itself, which had fallen into the hands of the Turks, were abandoned by God in punishment of their sins and obstinate schism. And when it happened that so sacred an Image had abandoned Scutari, it could and it ought to be concluded that that fortress also, and all Albania, had been abandoned by God. And very unwillingly those of that country ought suffer this evil opinion of them, and very unwillingly they should confess the wonderful passage of their sacred Image. The history, by Barletto, of the siege of Scutari is altogether directed to show that his country and his fellow citizens, in all these ten years of war, were always protected by heaven. He could not be ignorant of the report (about the sacred Image) spread about in Latium by his fellow citizens and fellow countrymen. If it was a falsehood, he had the genius and the power to deny it. And instead of that, he closes the history of his abandoned country, confessing that all his fellow citizens inclined to go to Latium, in **Latium tetenderunt**, where they found the double object of their devotion, the Blessed Virgin and St. Nicholas of Bari.”*

6. From this it appears that Scutari remained in the hands of the Venetians from the death of Scanderbeg to the year 1477, - a period of ten years. Sixtus IV ascended the pontifical throne in 1471. The first siege of Scutari ended in a complete victory for the Venetians in 1474. The city, and indeed the whole of Albania, remained unmolested by the Turks for three years. Now it was precisely in the first of these three years, in 1475, that the Pope was called upon to decide between the litigants in Genazzano. The confraternities, in common with all of Italy, knew well, of course, the nature of the victory obtained by the Christians. The Pontiff sent large aid to the defenders<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore absolutely impossible that he could have been ignorant of the story of the miraculous translation any more than of the story of the wonderful apparition, when called upon to decide a controversy intimately bound up with both the one and the other. He was himself a Franciscan, and had even been General of his order. He

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<sup>1</sup> Panvinio, in his lives of the popes, writes of Sixtus IV under the marginal note *Scutari combattuta dai Turchi* « Mentre che passano queste cose in Italia, era Scutari terra de' Venetiani combattuta da' Turchi, e Sisto, perche non venisse quella fortissima rocca in potere de' Barbari, e ne havessero con questo mezzo potuto poi occupar l'Albania e la Schiavonia, di vettovaglie e di denari la soccorse. » P.458. Ed. Ven.



was one of the first (**foremost**) theologians and scholars of the age in which he lived. He was very acquainted with the General of the Augustinians, Coriolanus, who wrote the account of Petruccia given in the previous chapter. It was this Pontiff then who, with the fullest possible knowledge of Scutari, and of all the alleged circumstances connected with the miraculous Image of Genazzano as made known by public report, by the investigation ordered a few years previously by his predecessor and made by prelates then living, by the influx of the unfortunate citizens of Scutari who flocked to his dominions after the last siege, who not only gave his decision in favour of the Augustinians, but did much more. He rebuilt the church of Our Lady del Popolo and built next to it a magnificent convent, and he gave all this over to the Augustinians. Why? The principal historian of that order and their own archives tell us, simply because of his devotion to the wonderful Image which the Mother of God had transferred so miraculously from that city of Scutari, in which he took such interest (**because he had to**) and for the defence of which he spent so much treasure, to the little town of Genazzano.

It cannot of course be expected that historians of Scutari would themselves publish their own shame. It is sufficient that they admitted the fact. That they did not deny it, that not only in Italy but still more in their unfortunate country they preserved the memory of it, will form the subject of the next chapter.

7. It is very true that for many an age, the people of Genazzano persisted in calling their sacred Image “**Our Lady of Paradise**” without however denying the narrative of the Pilgrims. So long, indeed, as the ancient bass-relief already referred to remained in the church, there was some reason to have distinct titles for each representation of Our Lady. But when the old one (**the bass-relief**) was removed on the occasion of the reconstruction of the church of Petruccia, the will of Our Lady in selecting the church which had the title of Virgin Mother of Good Counsel above all the other churches dedicated to Her in Italy<sup>1</sup>, as the place where the most wonderful of all Her Images should be worshipped, was respected by all. The reason was seen why She loved, more than other places, the locality of Her triumph over the foulest rites of Paganism; and why, by ways so wonderful, She desired to commence to spread throughout the world, devotion to Herself, under that most expressive title of the Giver of Good Counsel<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> **Reminder** - The sacred Image takes its name from the church, not the other way around.

<sup>2</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - I believe that this is a very important point - “She desired to commence to spread...”. Whatever may have happen on 25th April 1467, it succeeded in creating a major focus on the particular title and rôle of Our Lady as Giver, in Her own right, of Good Counsel.

8. Then, from the second day after the wonderful apparition of the sacred Image to the present hour, there comes an unbroken tradition in Genazzano which as distinctly gives the narration of the pilgrims as it does the facts of the wonderful apparition. Old pictures, votive offerings, the intense devotion of all the Albanians settled in Calabria, Venetia, and elsewhere, to the Sanctuary, the circumstantial narrative of the earliest historians who have written any professed history of the sacred Image, all contribute to confirm the tradition.

9. In 1630, a very remarkable and most public proof of this tradition was given, during the famous pilgrimage of Pope Urban VIII to the miraculous Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel in Genazzano. The good pontiff desired to obtain from Our Lady Her protection for Rome against the pestilence which then was devastating Italy. If ever a Pope was more averse than any other Pope to reports of miracles not well founded in truth, it was Urban VIII. **He had issued the strictest regulations to curb misguided and fanciful zeal.** Yet he made this special pilgrimage with all the devotion and publicity in his power. At the period John, Duke of Paliano, the son of Duke Philip, who had offered the silver slab to the Sanctuary for the miraculous cure of his wife, was chief of the Colonnas. He received his sovereign with all possible pomp. He assembled his armed retainers, to the number of eight thousand, infantry, artillery and cavalry, and met the papal cortège at Cave, some three miles from the Sanctuary. At the entrance of Genazzano, he presented his liege lord with the keys of the town, and made to him the following address which had, of course, special reference to the Shrine that Urban came to venerate. He said -

*“The Queen of heavenly and human beings and the Mother of God, has been pleased to desire to be worshipped in this locality. Her Image which is here, was not brought hither by the hands of mortals, nor painted here by human art, but was seen suddenly in the temple, and, as it is believed, was fabricated by a celestial artist, so that Latium may not seem to be deprived of its Loreto”*<sup>1</sup>.

Francesco Cirocchio, the secretary of the Duke, who likely also composed the Latin oration made to the Pontiff, is yet more clear in his printed account of this celebrated visit. He says. *“His Holiness desired to expose himself to this journey . . . urged on by his devotion and by his desire to visit, in person, the so much celebrated picture of the Most Holy Virgin . . . which transferred itself by a clear miracle from remote countries to Genazzano, seeming in this to have renewed the example ever-to-be-admired, of the transmigration, which by angelic ministry the*

<sup>1</sup> « Coelitum hominumque Regina ac Dei Mater coli heic se voluit, non mortalium manibus huc advecta, non hominum pennicillo picta; sed repente in Templo conspecta, ac coelesti, ut creditur, artificio fabrefacta, ne scilicet videretur suum Latio deesse Lauretum. » *Nuovo Sommario*, p.28, n.6.

*holy House, since called of Loreto, made from Sclavonia to Piceno on the 10th of Dec. 1294*"<sup>1</sup>.

It would be utterly impossible to have made these statements — one in the hearing of, and the other with the knowledge of such a Pontiff as Urban VIII, without their being a real and well-grounded foundation for them. We shall see further on what great devotion and entire belief he manifested in the whole tradition. And indeed, a still greater enemy of anything like exaggeration in the narration of supernatural occurrences, Benedict XIV, plainly indicated his belief in the wonderful narrative of the pilgrims, by referring to it in no obscure terms in the bull which he issued for the establishment of the Pious Union. He says. "*In the church named under the invocation of Holy Mary of Good Counsel, in the town of Genazzano and diocese of Palestrina, there is found a chapel where is venerated an effigy or image of the same Immaculate Mary of Good Counsel, formerly translated, as pious tradition teaches, from the city of Scutari by the ministry of Angels*"<sup>2</sup>.

10. Finally, in the year 1779, a commission of the Sacred Congregation of Rites empowered by the Holy See to inquire into all the circumstances connected with the coming of the sacred Image, interrogated, on oath, the principal inhabitants of the town. These affirmed as the constant tradition of their ancestors, not only the principal facts already proved of the appearance of the Image, but further deposed to the tradition relative to the account given by the two Albanians. The following is a translation of the attestation given on that occasion.

"We, the undersigned and cross-signed of advanced age, under and above eighty years, citizens of Genazzano in the diocese of Palestrina, for the pure and sincere truth, and not for any other motive or reason whatever, attest how, by a continual tradition, as it is also continued to the present, we have heard from our old ancestors, and these from their own old ancestors, that this most holy Madonna of Good Counsel, which is worshipped, always miraculous, and venerated, as well by immemorial tradition, as by our own happy experience, came into this our country from Albania, and, more precisely, from the city of Scutari, brought by Angel hands, as its pictures and images printed or painted since that time, according to the form and design of that visible picture of it, painted upon the tribune of its church in the beginning of the present century, and which

<sup>1</sup> « Volle sua beatitudine esporsi a questo viaggio ... sospinto dalla divozione e dal desiderio di visitare di presenza la tanto celebrata Immagine della SS. Vergine, che . . . si trasferì con miracolo elucente da Paesi remoti in Genazzano; parendo in ciò rinnovellato l'esempio sempre ammirando della trasmigrazione, che per ministero Angelico da Schiavonia al Piceno alli 10 di dicembre 1294 fece la Santissima Casa, che poi denominossi Loretana. »

<sup>2</sup> « In Ecclesia sub invocatione sanctae Mariae de Bono Consilio nuncupata Monasterii eiusdem Ordinis S. Augustini in Oppido Genazzano dicto Dioecesis Praenestinae reperitur Cappella, in qua colitur Effigies, sivo Imago eiusdem Immaculatae Virginis Mariae de Bono Consilio sicut *Pia fert traditio* per angelorum ministerium ex Scodra Civitate illuc olim translata. »

appeared on the 25th of April, the festival day of St. Mark the Evangelist, in the year 1467, at the 21st hour (**said elsewhere in this book to be the equivalent of 4 o'clock**), with sudden and miraculous ringing of all the bells of the town, in memory of which there is a constant tradition, with the continual custom and practice to ring loudly, and with jubilee (**celebration?**), all the bells of the town eight days before its festival on the 25th of April, even until the present day; with the sole difference that, for a few years at this time, not only the bells of the church of Santa Maria, but those of all the other churches of the town, collegiate and parochial, are rung both in sign of joy and in memory of its coming the 21st hour and that, amidst a general concourse of the people, the *Te Deum* is intoned in the church.

"There is also another tradition of the same nature as that above, to the effect that such apparition **was predicted by** our fellow townsman, the servant of God, **Petruccia**, who merited, as is also preserved, the title of "*Blessed*", and that, in the following of the said miraculous Image, came two pilgrims wonderfully advised and guided, one being of the house of Giorgio, which still exists, and the other of de Sclavis, now extinct, but the last members of whose family were known to be persons of great probity and respectability.

"We furthermore depose that it is not only a tradition, as above, but also a practice never interrupted, that, in memory of such wonderful apparition, during the three days preceding the feast, in all the town there were made, and are made, fires with wood and other festive fires, together with torches and lights in the windows, accompanied by firing off guns and pistols, but that there has never happened the slightest accident, notwithstanding the crowds of people who enjoyed themselves, and that the children went about at this time tripping with joy and singing the following refrain.

"The Madonna of Good Counsel has left Albania, to come to our land - Long live, Long live the Madonna of Good Counsel !

"Of the continual numerous concourse of the devout, and of the most stupendous continual prodigies, beyond the traditions of our ancient ancestors authenticated by so many votive offerings hung upon the walls of the holy Chapel and the church, we testify to have been, and to be ourselves, either the daily ocular spectators or assured hearers by infallible relation. That therefore to prove this, the incontestable truth, we have made and do make this present attestation for conscience sake, corroborated with our oaths in the cause of knowledge, as our own act, by the tradition left to us, and by the continuance and practice of as much as we have expressed. In faith of which we have signed etc. this 21st day of July 1778."

I, the Priest, Charles Senni de Leoni, canon and parishioner of the collegiate and parochial church of St. Nicholas, aged 76, with my oath affirm, as above with my own hand.

I, the Priest, James Buccabella, chaplain of the parochial church of St. John, but parishioner of the church of St. Paul aged 70 years and over, attest with my oath, as above by my own hand. .

I, the Priest, Sante Ascenzi, aged 66 years, beneficed clergyman and parishioner of the parochial church of St. John, attest as above by means of my oath, with my own hand.

**(dictionary - benefice = a position granted to an ecclesiastic that guarantees a fixed amount of property or income)**

I, John Baptist Moraschi, of the parish of St. John, attest as above with my own hand.

Cro†ss of Signor Julian Conti aged 80 years, who could not write because of a tremor in the hand.

I, Francis Ferro of the parish of Santa Maria, aged 81 years attest as above with my own hand.

I, Signor Augustine Spina, of the parish of St. Mary, aged 85.

I, Signor Joseph Bosca, of the parish of St. Nicholas, aged 77 years attest etc. etc.

**11.** With regard to the younger of the two Albanian pilgrims, Giorgio, his family, a very numerous one, still remains in Genazzano and in Latium. They keep amongst them the tradition of their descent with considerable pride. One of his direct descendants holds the office of Syndic or Mayor of the town at the present moment, and is also Archivist and Notary Public of the district. From him the following family tree has been obtained. It is a valuable proof of the existence of the younger pilgrim, and also of the credibility of his story, which is preserved with family pride by all his descendants. It is as follows.

**OMITTED    DELIBERATELY - Not absolutely needed..!**

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## Chapter XI

### THE ALBANIAN TRADITION

1. Reasons why no evidence of the miraculous translation was obtained after the fall of Scutari. - 2. Nature of Turkish conquests - Condition of the vanquished. - 3. Surveillance over Scutari. - 4. Its relaxation - Immediate information regarding the sacred Image. - 5. Letter of Count Stephen Medin regarding the translation. - 6. Inquiries made this century. (19th) - 7. Letter of Father Mariano of Palmanova. - 8. Letter from Monsgr. Radojà, V. G. of Scutari. - 9. More recent and hitherto inedited (**dictionary - unpublished**) documents. - 10. Conclusion.

1. In this chapter we shall conclude (**our look at**) the proofs of the miraculous translation by an examination of the tradition which must have subsisted amongst the Catholics of Albania after that country had fallen under the dominion of the Turks. It is but just to say that, if there was a reason why Scutari should be silent during the progress of its sieges, this reason would not hold good after the Christian cause had become hopelessly lost. On the contrary, such an ominous occurrence as the departure of the sacred Image must have deeply sunk into the minds of those unfortunate Albanians who could not emigrate. Those who refused to be perverted must, in their humiliation, have acknowledged the just judgment of God upon their country and have clung faster than ever to their religion. They could not be ignorant of what was said all over Italy and throughout Europe regarding the appearance in Genazzano of the Image, (**which was**) once theirs. Taking all these circumstances into consideration, it may, at first sight, seem strange that no proofs were obtained after the surrender of Scutari by the zealous guardians of the Sanctuary of Genazzano, or by the many other devoted clients of Our Lady of Good Counsel. But then we must also take other things into account. Those who remained were not the most literate of their nation. The whole of the country was in a state of confusion. And finally, the kind of masters they had to deal with (**the Turks**) were disposed in a manner not favourable to such investigations as would throw light upon the subject. The Turks might like to prove that the sacred Image had departed. But they feared Christians from without, and they had other objects in view also.

2. If we consider the reasons of their unceasing activity at this period, we shall find that a motive more powerful than any that could be supplied by religious fanaticism, urged on their hosts (**military**) to fall upon Christian lands. They were a fast multiplying people; and, because of the practice of polygamy, the destruction of the male population by

war, did not produce amongst them the paralysing effects, which the same destruction would, in a military point of view, produce in any Christian country. In fact, war became a necessary outlet for surplus increase amongst a people who did not care to turn land or commerce to account, and amongst whom women were reckoned as goods and chattels. War meant for them that which emigration means for the British Islands. Those who left, relieved those who remained. They carried with them high hopes, not only of serving their spiritual concerns by a work esteemed to be in the highest sense agreeable to Allah and the Prophet, but of benefiting their earthly condition by coming into possession of rich domains and cities.

The conditions imposed by **Mahomet II** upon the vanquished were conversion, tribute, or extermination. Conversion secured the goods and civil rights of apostates. Consequently, the rank and file of the invaders generally preferred that the conquered should hold fast to their religion. That course secured the largest amount of spoils to the victors. Christians, worsted in war, and unable to fight further, had therefore, either to expatriate themselves, or to descend into a condition not far removed from slavery. As a rule, those who could do so, fled as soon as it became certain that resistance was useless; and so it often happened that the Turks, on becoming masters of a city, found it deserted by its Christian inhabitants. Sometimes, policy caused Christian traders and artificers to be kept, but generally, jealousy led to their exclusion altogether, more especially when their presence might prove dangerous.

3. This was, to a great extent and for a long time, the case with Scutari, one of the strongest fortresses in Albania. Every stranger was regarded with suspicion. Inquiries about religious matters always met with instant repression. Therefore, after the Turkish occupation of the city, it was clearly impossible for the Fathers of Genazzano, to learn anything regarding the condition of the little church out of which the miraculous Image had departed.

4. About the middle of the last century (**18th**), however, this surveillance, though still strict, relaxed somewhat, and this enabled the agent of the Catholic missions of Albania in Rome to give most interesting information regarding the Madonna of Genazzano.

From this source it was gathered that, not only had the people of Albania known of the existence of the sacred Image, but that they had never lost their devotion to it. They all knew that it had departed from its original temple (**church**). Many had heard of its having gone of its own accord to a town in Italy. The remembrance of their last great king, and of his deep devotion to it, still subsisted. Even the very walls of the sanctuary in which it once stood, were deemed sacred, and whenever the Turks permitted, were most piously visited in pilgrimage by the

surrounding country people. Furthermore, it appeared that no power of the Turks was able to convert its temple into a mosque - a fate which befell all the other Catholic churches of Scutari - because of supernatural prevention. Neither could they, though they often tried, convert its materials to profane uses. Lastly, it was believed that many miracles and supernatural occurrences took place in its ruins. The first account furnished comes from the Albanian nobleman, Count and Captain Stephen Medin, and was written as early as 1745, to Signor Count John Baptist Medin.

5. This document, published by De Orgio, throws considerable light upon the fact (**fact? - a bit strong!**) that the Image, so long venerated in Genazzano, is none other than that which Georgio and De Sclavis represented it to be; the one venerated by Scanderbeg and all Albania.

The following is a literal translation of the document, from the Italian, as given by De Orgio, preserving the titles, adjectives, and quaintness of phraseology common to formal documents in the last century (**18th**).

“Copy of a letter written by the Signor Count and Captain Stephen Medin on the **25th of July 1745**, to Signor John Baptist Medin.

“With regard to the charge which your Illustrious Worship gives me, to examine whether there yet exists in Scutari any church dedicated to the Most Holy Madonna and whether there may be in it any niche or other position where it could be known that there was at any time an Image of the Madonna.

From what I could learn from the oldest inhabitants of the country, persons worthy of all faith, they say that there is in the suburbs of that city a church almost in ruins, which is called the **Most Holy Annunciation**; and where continuous and frequent miracles do not cease to take place, amongst which the most considerable are the following -

(i) How often soever the Turks wished to reduce that church to the condition of a mosque, they never could succeed because it always happened that what they built up by day, fell of itself by night.

(ii) As many times as the **Hosa** or priest of the Turks has attempted to get upon the walls, to cry out in their manner as he would to call the people to the temple according to custom, a certain wind came like lightning, and the **Hosa** or priest was blown by it into the river Bojana and submerged there.

(iii) A few years ago the **Mufti** or their chief priest came to the said church and desecrating a sacred Image painted upon the wall by scraping out the eyes and by giving it certain gashes through contempt, found when he returned to his home that seven of his family were dead, and he himself became insane.

Such past and still continued miracles, have caused that, though the door of the said church remain open day and night, no Turk has since



attempted any further irreverence to the said temple, which stands nearly ruined: nevertheless two beams, suspended almost in the air, sustain a certain portion of the roof: in this also we see an evident miracle. Moreover, on the night of the Most Holy Annunciation, a lamp is seen burning in front of that deserted Altar. The place in which was the Image of the Blessed Virgin, not now to be found, is certainly seen there; and (as we know from tradition) some say that this holy Image was taken away, and others firmly assert that it went away of itself. If by chance these accounts be not sufficient, command me and I will make further inquiries etc.”

Copy of the attestation (**sworn statement**) of Signor Nicholas di Antonio Cambsi, Noble of Scutari.

“In the name of God. Amen.

“In order the more to promulgate the glories of the miraculous Image of the Most Holy Virgin called of Good Counsel, venerated by an innumerable concourse of people in the celebrated district of Genazzano etc.

When, in the year past, the octave of the Canonisation of San Pietro Regalato was celebrated, there happened to be present **Signor Nicolas di Antonio Cambsi**, a noble of the city of Scutari, and procurator of the nine churches which are found in the neighbourhood of the aforesaid city for the Missionaries Apostolic and Bishops sent by the Propaganda. He (**Cambsi**) having been seen by the most Illustrious **Signor, Antonio Giulii Mondi**, a citizen of Genazzano and a Roman, the latter (**Mondi**) was moved by curiosity, on seeing the aforesaid Signor Nicolas di Antonio Cambsi dressed as an Albanian, to ask whence he came. But as the same did not then know how to speak Italian, a clergyman who accompanied him and served as interpreter, answered that he came from the city of **Scutari**, and the said clergyman was named **Signor Don Gaspare Azuri**: and he said that the above-mentioned Signor Nicholas related the underwritten notices, as at present he the same Signor Nicholas upon his oath deposes, before the undersigned witnesses -

“He deposes, therefore, that the church (**of the Most Holy Annunciation**), where anciently was venerated the above-said holy Image, before the city (**Scutari**) fell into the hands of the Turks, was and is still situated outside the city, almost half an Italian mile. This church is held in great veneration by the Catholics, because of the tradition that in the wall opposite the door of entrance, stood the holy Image, and all the more this tradition is confirmed by the fact that the empty space where it stood is plainly seen with the pictures of certain saints at each side. And the same Signor Nicholas, having seen a copy of the Blessed Virgin of the same size as that of Genazzano, has asserted that it corresponds exactly with the spot left bare in the wall, although that is partly injured by the infidelity of the Turks. The said church, he asserts, is in the power of the Turks, who will not permit the Catholics to enter.

“He further deposes that the Catholics in the same city have it as true tradition that a Turk in high position amongst those infidels, with the title, in

their language, of **Effendia**, wishing to convert that church into a mosque because of its proximity to his residence, ascended by means of a ladder upon it, to call the Turks to perform their functions there according to their sect. In which act, his head was twisted round, and he commenced to bleat like a goat, and so descended from his position and desisted from his attempt.

“He likewise asserts that not many years ago, another principal Turk called **Vegliada Zerde**, in order to make a bridge across the river Bojana near the church, having dared to take stones from the wall of the same, to load several mules with them, and transport them to the river, the mules were hardly unloaded when they fell dead. Notwithstanding this, he persisted in his attempt. He caused the bridge to be built; but when it was finished, it fell into a complete ruin. After which he took care to return the stones to the church, where, near the walls, the deponent saw them about three years since (**ago**), at the time of his departure from Scutari. So great is the fear struck into the Turks by such events that they will not even touch some trees near another church not far distant from the said one.

“The same Signor deponent asserts, moreover, that he has heard many times from Catholic inhabitants who dwell close by the church that, at certain times, with their eyes, they have seen at night, a light descend upon it and there burn miraculously.

“He further deposes that the aforesaid church having remained without a roof upon its walls, the concave portion of the vault remains in the air, covering that part of the wall where are found the pictures of the saints and the bare space between them, (**from**) whence the holy Image detached itself. And he asserts that, for all the above reasons and occurrences, the subjects of the most Serene Republic of Venice and other merchants, come to venerate these walls, where once stood an Image so holy; and thus with open mouth proclaim these citizens fortunate, who have it near them.

“He, Signor Nicholas, affirms that, when he was asked from whence he came, he neither knew nor understood Italian, but that at present having learned it sufficiently, he has in that Italian idiom deposed as above, and has given to me, the undersigned, permission to publish the whole present attestation, by him equally subscribed with his own hand, in the presence of the undersigned witnesses, this ninth day of February and above named year 1748. (**9th February 1748**)

I, Paschal *Regoli*, Roman Priest and Rector Jubilated of *San Pantaleo a Monti*.

I, Nicholas *di Antonio Cambsi* of Scutari in Albania.

I, Nicholas Mary *Conto Piccini*, was present.

I, John Angel *Pasquasmi*, was present.

The above is then followed by the instrument of recognition by the Notary Capitoline.

6. The inquiries of last century (**18th**) were followed up with greater ease and effect by the Very Reverend Father Belgrano, (**who is**) at present (**1883**) Chaplain to Her Imperial Majesty, the Dowager Empress of Austria, and was, for many years, Prior of the Convent of Genazzano.

Through the aid of the Fathers who have charge of many missions in Albania (the Minor Observantine Franciscans) and through the aid of Monsignor Radojà the Vicar General of Scutari, and of a Parish Priest of the same city, both natives of Albania, he has in **the following two letters**, which are translated in extenso (**dictionary - at full length**), completely established the fact of (a) the tradition in Albania being identical with (b) the statements of the pilgrims Georgio and de Sclavis in Genazzano.

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7. Letter of *Father Mariano of Palmanova* (Minor Oss.) regarding the tradition yet existing in Scutari of the translation of the Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, directed to Father Peter Belgrano, Prior of Santa Maria, Genazzano (*incorporating letter from Father Giampiero da Bergamo in Italics*) -

**Letter N°. 1.**

“Praised be the Lord and Mary Most Holy that at last I am able to transmit to you the result of the investigations made regarding what you wrote to me about in your esteemed letter of the 29th of May. My office as Superior of the Missions of Epirus, not permitting me to make a delay in the city of Scutari long enough to attain the scope in view, I thought it best to have recourse to, and on many occasions, to make application to the **Most Reverend Father Giampiero da Bergamo**, Prefect Apostolic of the Missions of Castrati and Superior of the Hospice of the Franciscans of that city, to whom I intrusted (**entrusted**) the memoranda and the inquiries of your Very Reverend Paternity, begging him to consult the traditions and the historic facts relative to the church of the Madonna of Scutari and also to those inquiries proposed by you in your memoranda; and to induce the Most Rev. Monsignor D. Angelo Radojà, Vicar General of the Archdiocese, and other competent persons to make accurate researches for that object; and also to visit ~~on~~ (**for that**) purpose the locality where tradition and historical memoirs indicate the said church to have been.

Here then, very Rev. Father (**Peter Belgrano**) is the letter of the above mentioned Father Giampietro (**da Bergamo**), relative to the duty committed to him.”

MAP / DRAWING ----- NOT ESSENTIAL

“My dear Father Mariano,

*“I have the pleasure and the honour to communicate to you that the Most Revd. Monsignor D. Angelo Radojà and the Revd. Father Paschal Junchi have taken up with great interest the labour of making researches regarding the facts connected with the church, which once possessed the venerated and loveable Image of the Madonna now honoured in Genazzano; and with real pleasure they also condescended to accept the invitation of going upon the spot where the time-honoured church is believed to stand, and to make the most minute and accurate examination. Therefore, on the 8th of the present month, together with the above named Monsignor and the Rev. Father Paschal, I went behind the fortress (**of Scutari**) at the extremities of which are the ruins that the faithful venerate by pilgrimages and vows as relics (**the ruins**) of the church of their Madonna. I brought with me our own **Fra Anselmo da Gorle**, because, as a skilled architect, he would be of use in the difficult examination of these ruins; and the aforesaid Monsignor Radojà and Don Paschal also brought with them **a native of Scutari, well instructed in the traditions and history of his country.***”

*The result of our researches, and of the skilled inquiry made in the locality, and especially regarding the ruins which exist at the extremity of the wall upon which rises the fortress of Scutari, has been in accordance with our most sanguine expectations.*

*It was agreed upon by the judgment of all and with the most perfect accord : -*

- 1. That the place where the ruins stand is really the place, and the only place, where tradition and the historical memoirs of Father Angelo Mary De Orgio both say that the fortunate church of the Madonna of Scutari existed: and*
- 2. That those ruins existing there at present, and which every day receive marks of the devotion of the faithful, are precisely the remains of the cherished little church.*

*The following observations of the locality and of the ruins themselves, compared with the written account of the above named historian (**De Orgio**), conducted us to this happy and consoling result.*

*And firstly, it is observable that the site taken to be examined, namely that in which are found the ruined walls of an edifice, at the distance of about half an Italian mile from the ancient city of Scutari, stands quite close to the river Bojana, where a bridge is seen overturned and ruined, (likely that which the rich Mussulman tried to erect with the stones from the church of the Madonna). On the opposite side and not far distant, stands a small mosque, once a church dedicated to St. Lawrence, and before which are two large and majestic trees, looked upon as sacred by the Mussulmans themselves. These are evidently to be considered as the ones which the above named writer asserts to have been situated before "a church not far distant from that of the Madonna, respected by the Turks themselves."*

*Secondly then, the ruins which arise in that place, and which in their actual external appearance have the aspect of a secular house, considered attentively in their internal disposition, and in the marks of antiquity and of scope, demonstrate themselves to be really and undoubtedly the remains of that little church which the narrators of Scutari, referred to in the history of De Orgio, visited 130 years ago, and declared to be the ruins where once stood the blessed Image of Genazzano. In fact, after a minute and skilful examination we noted -*

- 1°. That in the middle compartment, (the edifice is composed of three compartments) there is some difference from the two lateral ones, both in the size and style of the doors, and of the two windows opened in the two walls of the side; and that upon the principal wall of the same there are three square niches, of which the smallest is in the middle, and corresponds precisely with the entrance door still observable to have been in the wall opposite, which in part already (**still?**) exists.*
- 2°. That over the niche in the middle, the wall yet preserves the signs of a vault or of an arch as an ornament of the same niche.*
- 3°. That the windows opened in the middle of the compartment, in the same manner as the two doors close to the wall where the entrance door stood, and by which people passed to the two side compartments, have*

for architraves an acute arch of the gothic style.

- 4°. That the walls of the said (**middle**) compartment have, here and there, still the signs of a plastering bright and red in colour.
- 5°. That the two side compartments are each perfectly alike, both in size and in the form of the part surmounted by regular arches worked in the wall. All this persuaded us that the central compartment was used as a church; and that the two side ones, served as tribunes, where the devout could be gathered together on days of concourse or on feast days.
- 6°. We noticed besides, that, in relation to the testimony given by Signor Nicholas di Antonio Cambsi of Scutari, the little niche made in the primary wall of the compartment, stands precisely opposite the principal entrance door; that above it, at a proportionate distance, there was an arch in the form of a vault; and that the size of the niche corresponds with that of the venerated Image of Genazzano.
- 7°. We noted finally that before the three above mentioned compartments ran an atrium as long as the edifice, by which the church was entered from two opposite sides by two doors, large and spacious.

From these evident indications and marks, which to a hair (**precisely**) correspond with the notices referred to by us, and from authentic historical accounts we agreed to pronounce that these ruins are the remains of the church which at one time possessed the blessed Image of Genazzano.

Then with regard to the age of the said ruins, and as to whether they go back to a period anterior to (**earlier than**) the occupation of the Turks. Beyond the form of the edifice, the like of which is not to be found in any locality of Albania, and the ferruginous (**dictionary - reddish brown; rust-coloured**) and the bronze colour of the stones with which it was constructed; this fact proves it sufficiently that, from the time when the persons of Scutari made the above-referred-to relation (**narration**) to our day, the Turks never built in that place either houses or mosques, but preferred to leave the locality in perfect abandonment. Another fact further proves their antiquity. The Turks would not certainly have permitted foreigners to build houses for their use according to the European style, and if any such had the idea of building a dwelling house, they forced then to erect it in the barbarous style in which they built invariably their own dens. Moreover, in the 130 years which passed from the time that those authoritative and indigenous persons declared the ruins of the church of the Madonna to have existed there, and since the Turks from fear of misfortune, desisted from the thought of reducing that ruin into a mosque, and from putting forth a hand to damage the same, there was not anyone, either Christian or Mussulman (**Muslim**), who could recollect the construction in that spot of houses or other edifices for secular or religious purposes. Tradition instead, informs us that the faithful Catholics of Scutari, and of all the surrounding country, far and near, have always and constantly manifested by pilgrimages their devotion to these ruins; and to such an extent that the Mussulmans have attempted from time to time to prevent those religious demonstrations. The belief referred to that these ruins have been once the fortunate church, is now strong not only amongst the Christians, but even amongst the Mussulmans themselves; and both the one and the other frequently go there for their spiritual and temporal needs, with

penitential pilgrimages, and with a devotion intense and ardent beyond belief. Women of all conditions (**status in society**) and of every age, even those of a high and elevated class, go there with bare feet, and prostrate themselves before the spot where yet exists **the little niche above noticed**, and there remain whole hours in prayer, after having several times made the circuit of the whole building. Nor do many go away without having poured out fervent prayers in tears. And then, frequently, the fact occurs that many draw from these pilgrimages not only spiritual and temporal advantage, but return home moreover consoled.

**Signor M.** your Paternity knows well to have a son of ten years affected with the rickets in such a manner that he could not walk. Having found every remedy useless he yielded to the advice of his pious consort (**wife**) and made a vow to the Madonna of Scutari to complete a pilgrimage to the above named place, bringing with them their sick son. The devout parents did in fact bring with them the child in their arms, and having completed their promised devotions, they saw to their surprise and unexpected consolation that the boy stood upon his feet, and was in a condition to follow them to their distant house in the city.

**A poor Turk** was for several years blind of both his eyes, and not having being able to obtain any relief from medical skill, he resolved to go within the ruins of the church of the Madonna, where he prayed in his own fashion. Three days after this visit, he was able to see without any difficulty whatever, and boasted to have had that grace from the Madonna of the Christians.

Beyond these special signs by which the Lord rewards the faith of those who are devout and suppliant to His Holy Mother, and approve of their pious confidence in Her intercession, it is worthy of mention that he punishes with manifest chastisements those who, through contempt or even inadvertence, attempt to profane by secular and indecent uses, these holy precincts. It often happened that **some Turkish shepherds** decided to put within these walls their flocks to pass the night, although dissuaded from doing so by the neighbouring people. But the Lord permitted that the following morning, the shepherds could not compel their beasts to go from the enclosure, being taken with a mysterious malady which prevented them from standing. And then, only when sorrowful for their fault, they were forced to declare that place holy, by lighting wax candles at their expense, and by beseeching with fervent prayers its Supreme Protector, could they find their beasts whole and sound.

**Mehemet Cialacud**, a celebrated Turk of this city, in building his house gave directions to transport the stones taken from the walls of the church; but scarcely had the carts which carried them arrived at his dwelling, when suddenly all the oxen fell dead. A Christian yet (**still**) living tells that when **Hams Agà** built his hotel (Han) he himself, by order of that powerful Turk, carried several stones from the aforesaid church, but on the following day they were all found in the place from whence they were taken.

Such, most dear Father, is what I have been able to gather and convey to you both with regard to the minute (**detailed**) and conscientious researches upon the traditional and historic fact of the locality in which the little church of the Blessed Image of Scutari, (**the one**) now venerated in Genazzano, existed; and with regard also to the results of the visit made by me, by the

Most Rev. Monsignor D. Angelo Radojà, Vicar General of the Archdiocese, and Parish Priest of Scutari, and by Don Paschal Junchi, Curate, upon the locality itself of the venerated ruins.

In fine, I give you in the last place, a few details regarding the worship with which that blessed Image is at present honoured in Scutari.

1. **Every third Monday of October** in the city of Scutari is solemnised with extraordinary pomp and, amidst a very great concourse of people from all the neighbouring towns, and from many towns at a great distance, the feast of the above-mentioned Madonna of Scutari. The holy Image of Good Counsel, which is **an authentic copy of that venerated in Genazzano**, which the chief gentlemen of Scutari had had painted, I do not know at what time, is exposed upon the high altar. **The sermon on that day**, turns upon the sorrowful fact of the departure of the holy Image from that city, and upon the necessity of praying the Most Blessed Madonna that She would reconsole (**console again**) this land with Her protection. During the sacred function the people defile (**march in a line**) in numerous and devout processions. Then follow the many confraternities with their standards, all (**of these standards**) representing on one side the Madonna of Scutari. Amongst these Confraternities is preëminent that of the Madonna of Good Counsel, **Whose magnificent standard represents the blessed and venerated Image of Genazzano**, transported by Angels, and, beneath the Image, the historical fact of the flight of the Madonna from Scutari. An immense crowd of young boys and young girls sing in their own Albanian tongue a sacred canticle, in which, at every verse, they repeat with moving words the desire that the Blessed Virgin should return again to these places; and they pray the holy Image not to protract the abandonment of Her penitent children.

2. **This feast**, solemnised with such effective and public pomp, **goes back to an ancient date**, and even to a period when it was not permitted to the oppressed Catholics of Scutari, by Mussulman fanaticism, to manifest externally their religious sentiments and to attest their devotion. It is stated that even then, from time immemorial, in their chapels, oratories, and even in their houses, there existed and were venerated Images of the Blessed Virgin of Good Counsel, under the common title of Our Madonna of Scutari; and that in the place where the faithful assembled for Holy Communion and the sacred services of the Church, they always exposed the holy Image, etc. etc.

*From the heart embracing you, I am etc.*

B. GIAMPIERO da BERGAMO.

*Pro Prefect Apostolic*

*Copy conformable to the original*

*I, B. Giampiero da Bergamo, attest the truth of the above written copy.*

*I, Don Paschal, confirm the above*

*I, Don Angelo Radojà, V. G. of the Archdiocese confirm the above.*

*Seen for the purpose of legalising the foregoing signatures*

*CHARLES, Archbishop of Antivari and Scutari.*

Before publishing the present relation (**account**), I (**Father Mariano of Palmanova**) also visited those favoured ruins, and I was able to prostrate



myself before that niche where formerly remained the blessed Image of Most Holy Mary, now worshipped in Genazzano; and I have been able to make myself assured of many things which tradition keeps always alive amongst these people regarding **the truth of the occurrence**. Having examined at length the relation (**the account**) by myself, I caused it to be subscribed by those composing the commission, and to be legalised by the signature of Monsignor the Archbishop, **who with pleasure interested himself in the matter**, and we all congratulated ourselves on the happy result obtained for the greater glory of God and of His Divine Mother.

I hope, sincerely, that this answer to the inquiries made by your Paternity, will be in accordance with your desires, and I hope that you will extend to me your forgiveness for having been obliged to leave you up to this (**now**), in such long and painful expectation.

Receive, Very Revd. Father, the expression of my profound esteem, whilst I, with great pleasure, have the honour to subscribe myself,

Your Most Revd. Paternity's

humble, devoted, and most obliged servant,

B. MARIANO DA PALMANOVA

Minor Observant

and Prefect Apostolic of the Missions of Epirus.

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8. Letter of the Vicar General of Scutari, the **Most Revd. Monsignor Angelo Radojã** with regard to the value of the tradition in Scutari of the holy Image, directed to **Father Mariano Pizzocchini da Palmanova**, Minor Observant, Prefect Apostolic of Epirus.

**Letter N°. 2.**

"Very Revd. Father,

"Your Very Revd. Paternity, in permitting me to read the esteemed letter of the Illustrious **Fr. Peter Belgrano** O.S.A., has desired so far to honour me with your confidence, and I am grateful to you for it, but I wish to tell you frankly that I have experienced in my heart great pleasure in reading in the same that the aforesaid Father has been satisfied with the relation (**account**) sent to him of the ancient church of the Madonna of Scutari. But as the zealous religious desires to have from us, who find ourselves upon the spot, some fuller information, I willingly, to please your Reverence, am ready to grant it to him.

"The same **Father Belgrano wishes to know if the little church is found within the precincts of the ancient city of Scutari**. Certainly, this little church was then, as it is now, situated in one of the suburbs called, from the first years of the terrible Turkish invasion, Ali-Begh-Mahàlasi. This suburb, sixty years ago, was full of houses and inhabitants, all Mussulmans.

"The ancient city of Scutari was much smaller and embraced the castle and the fortress, and once was crowded with houses, inhabited in great part by gentlemen and nobles, and also included the actual market, called by us the piazza, and the street called Ciafa, places situated partly towards the North and partly towards the East, while Ali-Begh-Mahàlasi, on the opposite side, looked towards the South and the East. It is clear then that the places above named are distant about a mile from Ali-Begh-Mahàlasi. The point most difficult to be cleared up seems to be this: whether it is true or not that the tradition in Scutari regarding the miraculous Image of which we speak, is vague; for if so, the tradition would be of little value. We, most dear Father, who are the children of the ancient Albanians, at one time the glorious defenders of the Catholic Religion both against the Schismatics and against the Turks, are able to say with all frankness, (a quality which is characteristic of this nation), that we have heard not only from priests, but much more from our ancestors who certainly had not the least necessity to deceive posterity : that, in the little church at the foot of the fortress of Scutari between the two rivers Drino and Bojana, there existed the Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel - **Fuguria e Eois Schkodres** - and that, some years before the Turks took possession of Scutari<sup>1</sup>, it departed from that little church and was transported miraculously to a foreign city, that of Genazzano. These precise words are preserved by the Scutarians, and in general by all the Albanians, as a precious memorial transmitted to us from our ancestors, who in their turn

<sup>1</sup> 25th April 1479 - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Shkodra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Shkodra)

heard it from those who were old in their days, and thus again those latter from others, until it lost itself in long passed generations. Your Paternity, who has remained twenty years in Albania, knows well the character of the Albanians. Are these not most tenacious in preserving religiously the important notices handed down from their own ancestors, and are also disinclined to admit things novel in contradiction to their traditional ideas? How then could a man of sense go contrary, in any manner, to a sentiment constantly preserved from generation to generation even to the present. This sentiment is so profoundly Impressed and rooted in all classes that he who would dare to sustain the contrary or would wish to place it in doubt, if one born in the country, would expose himself infallibly to public indignation and execration (**loathing**), and also would run the risk of receiving some evil treatment. If he were a foreigner, he would be regarded with an eye of commiseration, whose company all would fly, in order not to hear from him such a scandalous novelty.

"We are deprived, it is true, of inscriptions and of histories written by Albanians, allusive to this tradition. But, in truth, who amongst us is ignorant of the long and disastrous siege which our glorious ancestors have sustained against the immense army of barbarians and who, after such a profusion of blood, had at last to surrender this famous city. The Turks, then, exasperated for the loss of innumerable soldiers, had scarcely become masters of Scutari (**in 1479**), when, worse than Vandals, they destroyed all inscriptions and marks of the Christian Religion, and burned books and other scientific and religious objects.

"But what of this? It is an incontestable fact that they (**the Turks**) themselves, in their fury, left intact to the Christians the two churches, namely, the little church dedicated to **Our Lady of Scutari**, and the other to **Saint Mary Magdalen of Tebuena**, four minutes walk from the market, which yet subsists in our power (**is still under our jurisdiction**). They turned the other churches into mosques; but nevertheless, they could not succeed in obliterating from the memory of the Christians that in the little church at the foot of the fortress, in the suburb of the Turks, called Ali-Begh-Mahàlasi there did exist the miraculous Image of which we speak. It is not true then to assert that (**all of**) the Christians, after the invasion of the Turks, either apostatised, or that those who wished to persevere in their religion repaired to the mountains or fled into Italy. This is true of some, but not of all. To many it was permitted to dwell in Susa, Tebuena, Berdizza, Cucci, and at Remagni, places very near the city. The Christians of these places in such proximity (to the church), even from the first years of the memorable invasion, have had continual relations and business with the Turks, who were not then so numerous. They therefore, as today, frequented the dear little church, although then furtively for fear of the Turks, to the eyes of whom they were indeed but too exposed. But why did these poor Christians go into that sacred place? Perhaps the priest excited them to go there.! The few priests in those dark times could not speak openly for fear of exposing themselves to greater dangers. By all means the Christians went there, because they knew with certainty that there the venerable Image had made a long stay, whose loss their descendants now deplore; and they offer up, many times, most fervent prayers to Our Lady that She would be pleased to console them by causing to return to its ancient home, their deeply desired Image. Can it be possible, my

dearest Father, that an entire people, commencing from the highest, to the lowest labourer, also an entire nation, retaining with such tenacity from age to age such a belief, could be led into error.? And can such a tradition be called by any person in his senses **very vague**.? If this, our tradition, can be qualified as **vague**, tell me what other in the world can be admitted as true.?

Scutari December 17th 1878.

Receive the assurance of my profound respect.

Your Very Revd. Paternity's  
Most devoted servant  
ANGELO RADOJÀ P. P. Vic. Gen.”

9. To these documents, which have been printed in the histories of De Orgio, Buonanno, Belgrano and others, **we are able to add the following two documents** which have not as yet been published even in Italian. We, therefore, give the original (**omitted - E.S.**) and the translation; and with them close the very abundant proofs of the tradition in Scutari regarding the existence and the translation of the miraculous Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel to Genazzano.

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**First Document (in ITALIAN - omitted)**  
**(See English Translation Below)**

Nota dei documenti che esistono, per l'esistenza in Scutari della Chiesuola ove stava la B. Immagine del Buon Consiglio di Genazzano, prima della prodigiosa sua traslazione.

**First Document - Translation**

To what has been already described, the following are to be added.

1. A pious and devout lady **of Scutari** of distinguished position, having heard in the July of 1878 that inquiries were being made to prove that the walls now existing behind the fortress of Scutari, and venerated by the people as sacred, are the precise remains of the little church in which remained the Image of Good Counsel, narrates how she, in her frequent pilgrimages to these venerated ruins, was accustomed to make the circuit many times about them, and to kiss each time a small Image of the Madonna sculpted on a stone which was inserted in the external part of the wall, wherein was worked (**formed**) the niche which sustained at one time the blessed Image of Genazzano; and that the figure of the little sculpted Image was similar to that which is venerated **in the Cathedral church of Scutari**. She said then that, to her very great regret, about two years before the above-named time (**July 1878**), that the little Image was not to be found; and she thought that some client of the Madonna had taken out of the wall and carried away that stone upon which the Image was sculpted.

This fact, an indication not to be doubted, that these walls are the remains of the little church where was once **the Image**, so-called, **of Scutari**.

2. The Very Rev. Don Paschal Junchi, Assistant Parish Priest of the church **of Scutari**, asserts that he had seen, a few years back, a stone worked with the chisel and of a form oblong or square, upon which was sculpted a dedicatory inscription in capital letters: **D. O. M. et Beatae Virgini (To God most great and the Blessed Virgin)**. This stone lay, from time immemorial, upon the ground, and not far distant from the ruins above described: and unfortunately it was taken away by the Mussulmans and used in the restoration of the neighbouring bridge upon the Drino. It will be of use to observe that in the neighbourhood no other churches exist, nor were there any, in times more or less remote, dedicated with the title of the Blessed Virgin, and that tradition only ascribes it to the church of which the venerated walls remain. We may well reason then that this stone belonged in fact to the edifice of which the ruins remain.

3. From history and tradition it is clear that upon the incline of the hill upon which stands the fortress **of Scutari**, and in the vicinity of the ruins above described, there existed many houses of private and distinguished Turkish families. The Government in the beginning of this century (**19th**), for political and military reasons, ordered the above families to remove elsewhere, and the houses to be thrown down. The nonagenarian, Don James Vassia, yet living, witnesses to have seen, in his youth, many of

these houses yet (**while they were still**) inhabited and that, about his fortieth year, he was witness of the absolute abandonment of the same. At the present moment these edifices are destroyed and, of almost all, there does not remain even the foundations. The reason for this is that both the Government and the proprietors who went to establish themselves elsewhere, emulated each other in using up the materials for works of public and private advantage.

Now comes spontaneously the demand (**the following question**): How is it that those walls, venerated by the Christians as sacred ruins, subsist intact even to a considerable height, and did not meet the fate of the other houses so near to them.? Why did not the government comprise them in the order given for public utility and security.? Why did not the Mussulmans, then make use of the material of these walls, which, certainly, comparing it with that of the houses destroyed, would have been much better for constructing their new and not distant habitations. For a long time past, both the Government as well as the private Turkish families, composing the suburb of Baciàlik, have not ceased to carry on works of construction. In the course of thirty years they have built an immense number of houses; they have made encircling walls of defence for the fortress, and sepulchres and other like constructions. At present also, they erect, from time to time, new buildings in places very near to the aforesaid walls, and the material for these works is purchased at a high price and is transported on the backs of horses from places considerably distant. But neither before nor now has the thought occurred to anyone, to throw down the remains of the edifice in order to avail himself of the material which it would yield in stones squared, and fitted for building. Moreover, it is well known that the Turks are accustomed to turn to account every thing left in abandonment : and especially when they can even suspect that these appertained to ancient Christians, they consider it meritorious to appropriate (**seize**) them.

Now, how is this fact, evidently in opposition to the avaricious disposition of the Mussulmans, and to their very religious and fanatical aspirations, to be explained.? It is, then, necessary to affirm, either that the Turks did not understand the advantage which they would derive from the material of these walls, and overlooked it for the space of more than fifty years, (which should be attributed to a miracle) or that they respected these walls and did not attempt to touch them for fear of being severely punished, as their fathers were punished, when they dared to profane them. Let it be noted that the tradition that the place cannot be profaned without provoking castigation, still subsists alive and powerful amongst the Mussulman population of Scutari.

Genazzano 26 February 1879

B. GIAMPIERO DA BERGAMO Minor Observant.  
FERRARI Prefect Apostolic.

MAP OR DRAWING ----- Omitted ----- NOT ESSENTIAL

**Second Document (in ITALIAN - Omitted)****Second Document - Translation.**

J. M. J  
DECLARATION.

We, the undersigned Catholics **of Scutari**, expressly called in to the parochial residence of Monsignor Don Angelo Radojà, V.G. declare to all whom it may concern, or who may desire to interest themselves, that we testify with all knowledge and conscience that, in the external wall, facing the fortress, of the little church called from time immemorial of Our Lady of Scutari, (Madonna of Good Counsel) with our eyes we have seen, venerated, and kissed many times, a stone about the size of a palm, in the middle of which was to be seen carved, although somewhat worn by time, an Image of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary with Her Divine Son Jesus at Her breast. Of this we are so certain that, if it should be needed, we are ready to confirm the same with our solemn oaths.

We further declare that the Image of which we speak, was of the size of a large medal, and that the stone seen by us and kissed, has not existed for a year and a half in that church, being taken away either by malice or by indiscreet devotion, and that from that day to this, we have not been able to point it out, though the devout deplore its loss.

Scutari in Albania, 6th Oct. 1879.

I, George, son of Michael Beltoja, Witness.

I, Mark, son of Giok Blinishti, Witness.

I, Antonia, wife of Lazzarus Palok Vassa.

I, Agatha, wife of John Mark Sciani.

I, the undersigned declare that the foregoing witnesses are Catholics of this city, worthy of all faith etc, etc.

Scutari in Albania, 11 Oct. 1879.

ANGELO RADOJA P. P. V. G.

Seen for legalisation etc.

Scutari in Albania, 11 Oct. 1879.

CHARLES, Archbishop of Scutari.

The feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel is still (**1879**), celebrated in Scutari as the principal feast of Albania. In a private letter, Father Junchi, who joined with Monsgr. Radojà in the examination of the ruins of the ancient church of the Annunciation where the sacred Image remained so long, has written an account, to the Very Revd. Father Martinelli, of the celebration of this feast in 1879, from which, with the Prior's permission, **we give the following extract.**

*"Very Revd. Father . . . .*

*"Yesterday the solemn feast of Scutari, that is the feast of your Most Holy Madonna, took place. Vespers were sung on the previous evening. There were illuminations about the church, and the high altar was adorned with two hundred and fifty wax candles. An immense number of persons were present. At the procession there was an extraordinary attendance, seventeen confraternities with their respective standards and Crosses having taken part in it. The clergy secular and regular numbered forty. The seminarists and all the schools of the city also marched. Before the sacred Image (of Our Lady of Good Counsel copied from that in Genazzano) the national band played. Pieces from classic authors were selected for this function. Amidst the great concourse of people, there were not wanting Turks and Greeks. The day was a most brilliant one, for which reason Scutari was full of joy. Pray dear Father to the Holy Virgin that She may bless Yours etc.*

*"Scutari, 21st Oct. 1879.*

*"D. PASQUALE JUNCHI V. P."*

**10.** We here (**at this point**) close the mass of documentary and other proofs which so clearly manifest **the tradition of Albania** relative to the existence and the translation of the sacred Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, now, for so many centuries, venerated in Genazzano. If the knowledge of the loss is so general in that country at this moment, and the grief for the departed treasure so great, we can well imagine what must have been the state of the feeling of its people when the Image first left them. Necessarily, it was considered, not only by the Albanians themselves but by all their contemporaries also, not only to be a misfortune but also a disgrace. It was a fact which no one of common charity at that time would care either to note, to glory in, or to write about, when the Christians in Scutari were sustaining such a sanguinary and unequal struggle against the Turks.

Least of all could we expect that such writers as did write about the coming of the Madonna, would mention a fact (**the departure from Scutari**), which would negatively affect, with such cruel severity, the tenderest feelings and the dearest interests of their unfortunate fellow Catholics. The charity which always characterises the public acts of the Supreme Pastors of God's fold would, while bowing silently to the will of God in the face of evidence, such as that disclosed by the coming of the miraculous Image beneath the shadow of their own Chair, certainly not permit any act of man to use that fact to the detriment of the afflicted. This alone accounts sufficiently for the silence of contemporary writers. (**Note added by Eugene Shannon: Mons. Dillon is really stretching it here. This would not stand up in any Court**). But we find, as soon as the susceptibilities of the Albanians in exile could no longer be wounded, through the soothing influence of time, that all the circumstances stand



forth in their full truth. Meanwhile comes the fact that the first migration of the people of Scutari, after the surrender of their town to the Turks, was to Latium. The Papal States had other and much nearer lands for them to find shelter in. They preferred to cross the Apennines, to brave the bad air of the Campagna, to pass by the Eternal City itself, for Latium. Why? Senni and every historian of the occurrence tell us, because there they found their beloved Madonna. To Genazzano their people come today (**1880s**), just as then, when the chance presents itself. Their descendants in far distant Calabria still turn with fond looks to that Sanctuary, regarded by them as the dearest spot on this earth. This we shall see in the chapter which treats of Rodotà. And at home, amidst the songs of their father-land, the most moving and the most melancholy are those which they address to Mary to come back once again to Her ancient dwelling place in Scutari.

The following verses, taken from one of the poems of the country, will manifest how vivid amongst them is the remembrance of the sacred Image, and how earnest is their desire for Mary to return. The author was a native Albanian priest of the Franciscan Order, named Leonard Martin Da Greci. The whole poem appeared in a very beautiful Italian form in the *Missioni Cattoliche* of Milan, in May 1878. It would be very difficult indeed to give a translation that could in any sense do justice to the original which, as a poem, is a masterpiece. Speaking of Albania, he says

Ch'ella si abbevera d'amaro duolo,  
 E ancor, nel vortice de'crudi affanni,  
 Non v'ha chi rendale pace e consuolo...  
 Tu pure, O Vergine, l'abbandonasti  
 E al cielo italico a vol migrasti;  
 Fu questo il cumulo del suo periglio,  
 O santa Vergine del Buon Consiglio :  
 Allor d'un lugubre vel si coprì,  
 Rimasta orbata di te, o Maria.!

Deh ! parla a Dio di tante pene  
 Che ognor la opprimono; e voglia alfine  
 Pietoso infrangerne l'aspre catene  
 Onde l'avvinsero l'orde ferine.  
 Se i figli errarono, ben caro il fio  
 Pagaro in piangere pel suol natìo;  
 Al suolo armigero de'miei maggiori  
 Oh fa che arridano giorni migliori;  
 Fa tu risorgere la patria mia!

Ave, Maria! Ave, Maria!

È tale il grido, Vergine bella,  
 Che misto ai cantici del suo paese.  
 Su i vanni ai zefiri di stella in stella  
 T'innalza supplice ogni Albanese.  
 Ve'come Scutari, da te negletta,  
 Ancor ti venera, ancor ti aspetta. . .  
 Garzoni e vergini, madri dolenti  
 Come richiamanti con caldi accenti :  
 Torna, ripetono, ritorna, o pia,  
 Unica speme de l'Albania!<sup>1</sup>

Or vieni adunque, non più tardare;  
 La cara Immagine tra noi ritorni;  
 E là sui ruderi del prisco altare  
 - Sacra memoria de'lieti giorni -  
 Uno più splendido t'innalzeremo;  
 Più fidi e docili a te verremo :  
 E sveli ai posterì quel nuovo ostello  
 Del Ver gli oracoli, del Buon, del Bello;  
 Sia fonte altissimo d'ogni armonia :  
 Ave, Maria ! Ave, Maria !

Vieni !... e de'prodi l' antica sede  
 Ravviva al fascino de'tuoi portenti;  
 In dolce vincolo d'Amor, di Fede,  
 Rannoda gli animi di queste genti.  
 Cessino i vindici atti inumani,  
 Cessino i luridi canti profani. . .  
 Le valli, i fioriti campi, i burroni  
 Soltanto echeggino di pie canzoni;  
 Dal Drino ad Okrida con melodia  
 Solo ricantisi l'Ave Maria !

Divina Musa, tu al cor m'inspira  
 E fa che innumeri ciechi fratelli,  
 Riscossi al sonito della mia lira,  
 Di Cristo al làbaro non sian rubelli:  
 Fa che rigettino l'orbo Corano

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<sup>1</sup> This is an allusion to a pathetic Albanian ballad frequently sung in Scutari, and the burden of which is an appeal to Our Lady to come back in Her holy Image from Genazzano to Her old sanctuary.

E al Sol ritornino del Vaticano;  
Lume benefico del Redentore  
Che irradia i popoli nel fosco orrore,  
Che addita agli uomini la retta via.  
Ave, Maria ! Ave, Maria !

Having so far considered the history and the proofs of both the Wonderful Apparition and the Miraculous Translation of the sacred Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, we shall now go on to see what She has done for Her clients in Her new Sanctuary and in the world at large.

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## Chapter XII

### MIRACLES AT THE SHRINE

1. More wonderful than in Scutari. - 2. Grace-producing power. - 3. Temporal benefits. - 4. Objections against Shrines met. - 5. The first 161 miracles and others registered. - 6. Impossibility of registering all. - 7. A miraculous cure witnessed by the writer at the Shrine in 1882. - 8. Difficulties of finding proofs - obviated. - 9. Documents attesting sickness and cure of Lydia Vernini. - 10. Another miracle. - 11. Proved by time. - 12. Other miracles. - 13. Incredulous punished. - 14. The arrow of the Hungarian. - 15. Preservation of the Colonnas. - 16. Resurrection of the dead. - 17. Release of a criminal condemned to decapitation in Sienna. - 18. Liberation from devils - Records of unregistered miracles. - 19. Miraculous liberation of Cardinal Acton. - 20. Remarkable preservation of Genazzano from cholera and plague. - 21. A pilgrimage saves Capranica from cholera. - 22. Genazzano freed from many public calamities.

1. What we have hitherto written regarding the Translation and the Apparition of the Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, forms a series of miracles. In addition, its position as it stands, detached from the wall<sup>1</sup>, the preservation for over four hundred years (1467-1884) of the thin and brittle sheet of plaster upon which it is painted, the surprising freshness of its colours, and its wonderful changes of aspect, may also be said to be miraculous. But there is far more than this to be told of the wonders worked by the Mighty Hand of God, in favour of those whose love and confidence in His Mother have been excited and strengthened by Her beautiful Image in Genazzano. All the mercies which the traditions of Albania tell us were poured forth upon that land while the precious treasure remained the object of the devotion of its people, were shown to a far greater extent in the new and fairer land that Our Lady had chosen for its Sanctuary.

Nor were these mercies to be confined to the Shrine only, or to one country or to one race. They were destined to pass amidst signs and wonders to all nations and throughout all time.

2. And first we may remark, that the Image of Our Lady is in itself a miracle, producing grace in every soul coming in love to its Shrine. Being the reflex (**Dictionary - a thing which is determined by and reproduces the essential features or qualities of something else**) of Herself - the best, certainly, the world has ever seen - it is necessarily calculated to draw all hearts to its most beautiful Original, and therefore to God, to peace, and to heaven. All who have experienced the mercy of

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding the position of the Sacred Image - See Endnote 9.

the Virgin Mother in this Sanctuary tell of a joy and a consolation, of a wisdom and of a strength obtained, which are beyond the power of language to describe, and only the soul can fathom. It gives a calm and perfect rest to the weary, like « the shadow of the great rock », and the spring and the date tree, to the sinking traveller in the desert. To the persecuted, it is as the walls and the towers of David, against the face of the enemy.

At its feet, the pain of the spirit, the most terrible that can afflict man, is infallibly relieved. The troubled, find repose; those in anguish, balm; the afflicted, consolation. A calm and holy peace is infused into the soul, which seems a foretaste of that rest which the blessed enjoy in paradise.

This peace must come to the sinner through Mary, or not come at all. It would be impossible to tell how many have received it at Her Sanctuary in Genazzano. There, a mission continually progresses, where the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel Herself is the only preacher; but a preacher so powerful that miracles of conversion are continuously worked by the secret, ineffable words, which She speaks to the soul from Her sacred Image. Under Her influence, the pent up secrets of an overburdened breast are poured forth with a strange ease in the tribunal of penance, even by those who desecrated that healing sacrament for years through the terrible influence of the dumb devil. Inveterately bad habits, are corrected. Difficulties, thought for years to be insurmountable, disappear. The power to make restitution, to forgive deep injuries, to repair scandal, to effect reconciliation, is obtained. And finally, the sinner, besides reconciliation with God, receives that living, loving and ceaselessly increasing devotion to Mary, which is a mark and a sure one of predestination.

3. Then, as in matters great, so in matters smaller all are sure to experience, in this holy Sanctuary of Mary, that true compassion, that quick and tender feeling of a Mother, so kind, so thoughtful, so interested in the smallest want, that She is ready, always ready, to alleviate the slightest pain, by employing, in and out of season, all Her power with God. As ready now as at the wedding of Cana to say to Jesus, « they have no wine, » and always as certain to obtain now as then, whatever She may demand. So it has happened, that amidst the multitudes who flocked to the little chapel of St. Biagio from the beginning, there were many who asked visible miracles; and living, visible miracles accordingly were granted in an abundance unsurpassed in the annals of miraculous shrines, since or before.

4. Before, however, proceeding to speak of these, it may be as well to anticipate an objection which we hear sometimes urged, even by persons who call themselves Catholics, against such wonderful favours as

those which we are now about to relate as having been obtained through Our Lady of Good Counsel in the Sanctuary of Genazzano.

Could not Our Lady grant these favours as well elsewhere? Where then, is the use in going to a particular locality for them? Is not God and His Most Holy Mother, everywhere? Cannot people pray as well to Her in their parish church, or in a church of Hers in their native town, or at the altar dedicated to Her in their dwellings? Why can it be of use to go to a distant, out of the way place, in order to get miraculous favours, etc. etc.?

No doubt, Our Lady can, and does hear Her suppliants everywhere; and, no doubt, also, Her suppliants can have recourse to Her when they please. But it is always the case, that such suppliants are the foremost to honour all that belongs to Her, - Her churches, Her altars, every place or thing that was sanctified by Her presence, Her shrines. They never are found amongst the number of minimising Catholics who find pleasure, interest, or advantage in reducing within the limits of their own narrow views, or within the limits of the narrow views of others in or out of the Church, the magnificent, heartfelt and true devotion, which the Spouse of Christ not only allows, but even encourages in her children to Immaculate Mary. They are not, in one word, ashamed of the Mother of Jesus Christ, even in the sanctuaries where She accepts the homage of God's faithful people. They can find no blame for rosaries, scapulars, images, medals, altars, shrines, pilgrimages, wayside oratories, or any other means which the faithful everywhere practise, and which the Church of Christ, « the Pillar and ground of truth » not only permits, but even defends and encourages in honour of Mary. There is something grand in the plenitude of their faith and love for God's Virgin Mother. And in proportion as their devotion is grand and Catholic, in the same proportion is that miserable truckling (**kowtowing**) to the enemies of Christ, wretched and detestable. It is a truckling to the spirit of heresy; a truckling which would reduce the fullness of Catholic devotion to Mary within limits that are not Catholic in practice, and that cannot be proved to be Catholic in theory.

True, it is well that we should endeavour to attract Protestants inclined to renounce their errors. But it is necessary too, that we should state as fully as possible the Catholic truth - so as to leave no misconception in their minds as to the nature of our worship of Mary, - to tell them that we are as far from making Her a God, as She Herself is far from permitting such an infamy; that there is no expression meant by Mary's most fervent, loving child, that has not this meaning; that, for instance, if we call Her « our life our sweetness and our hope, » we do so because of Her relationship with Her Son; that if we call Her, potent, it is because of the practical power of Her influence with Him, in obtaining our requests.

But when we explain all this, there is no reason to conceal our heart-felt and external worship, or to cover by excuses, much less to blush for, the devotion of Catholics to Her, in all the forms they adopt. The kind of reasoning then, which goes against, and not for, the exhibition of the devotion of others to Mary is not Catholic, for it has blame for that which the Church praises. It may be true, that some one could just as well pray and be devoted to the Mother of God in his chamber, as he could at any of Our Lady's shrines. But the expression of that sentiment, as an argument against Her shrines, is a censure in a very plain manner upon them, and is tantamount to saying that the Church has done a useless thing, and it insinuates that the Church has done a worse than useless thing, in blessing them. It is an expression never used by the saints or perfect servants of God. It comes from that kind of Rationalism, which, if carried to its logical extent, strikes at the root of all religion, and of all the dealings which it has pleased the Deity to establish between Himself and man. In its "reasoning" it differs nothing from that of the Infidel who tells you, as a means of doing away with churches and public worship, that he can worship his Creator in the fields and by the sea-shore, as well as, if not better than, in any church. The Infidel who uses this argument knows well enough, that the person who adopts his principles will soon end by worshipping his Creator nowhere. And the Catholic who tells you as a reason for his disinclination to visit holy shrines of Our Lady, on the plea that he can worship Our Lady as well in his bedroom or in his home, is precisely the Catholic, who in time will not worship Our Lady at all. His argument is the argument of indifference, not of generous love. Mary Magdalen - in the opinion of Judas, be it understood - would have done better to have sold the precious ointment which she poured on the feet of Our Lord, and to have given the proceeds to the poor. But if Mary Magdalen had not the love of Jesus in her heart, the poor would be as far as ever from getting the price of the ointment. The love of Jesus in the heart will always, as it did in her case, who afterwards gave her life to the poor, produce something for them; the absence of it will get them nothing whatever. It is the very same argument used the other day, by a member of the secret societies against the collections in Ireland for the imprisoned Successor of St Peter. « It would be better to give the money to the poor in Donegal ». That is a lie. If the hearts of those whom religion causes to be generous to the Pope, were closed by the want of religion - which would be implied by a want of consideration for the Vicar of Christ - the poor of Donegal would be as far from getting relief as they are from getting it from the irreligious anywhere. Those who have enough to give to the Vicar of Christ, have also wherewith to give to the poor, for they have charity, without which the poor are far from being considered. It is so with worship of Our Lady. Those Catholics who frequent Her shrines,

who use the means of devotion, scapulars, beads, images, in their houses, who join in novenas, processions and other practices blessed by the Church, are those who pray most to Her also in their chambers, and in the secret of their souls. Those who reason against the pious practices of others, on the plea of doing as well if not better elsewhere, are not a little in the way Judas went, and not unfrequently finish with him. Love, like that of Magdalen is always manifested in active generosity. It is love in deed and in truth, and the love that obtains the reward here and the eternal reward hereafter.

5. With this digression, which an incident in the sad fate of one who ought indeed to have known better than reason against devotion to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel, led to, while the writer happened to be engaged upon this chapter, we shall now see that those who have come in faith and love to the feet of the Virgin Mother in Genazzano, have been abundantly rewarded. The first record to which we have already referred, and a synopsis of which we shall presently give, registered no less than one hundred and sixty one miracles in the space of three months. The keeping of this list eventually ceased, probably when the necessary proofs were obtained for the delegates sent by Pope Paul II, and also in consequence of the multitudes which the good fathers of the convent had to attend to spiritually. Another register was opened at the suggestion of Canon Bacci, during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It continued for four years, that is from 1744 to 1748. In that period, a large volume was filled with proofs of miraculous cures. Between these distant periods, records were kept of some miracles, which either the condition of life of the recipients, or some other notable circumstance, warranted. But, except in the multitude of votive offerings, (so numerous that they had, from time to time, to be used for the benefit of the Sanctuary or destroyed), no formal register appears. Miracles and signal favours, however, incidentally recorded, are numberless. For instance, the miraculous cure of a young Roman lady, which caused Canon Bacci to visit the Sanctuary, and led him to be the Apostle of Our Lady of Good Counsel that he afterwards became, etc. etc.

6. The want of the continuance of these records is much to be regretted; but there was really no help for it. The fathers on the days of the greatest concourse of people, are, together with all the clergy they can secure from the surrounding country, engaged from early morning to the hour of night, in the work of the confessional. As will be seen in the chapter which treats of pilgrimages, it would be physically impossible for them to take note of what occurs amidst the throngs which continue to come from all parts of Italy to visit the Shrine on these occasions. Crowds succeed each other from the moment the church opens until it closes. Cries of thanksgiving for graces received, mingle all day long with cries



of supplication. A crutch left behind, a heart in silver sent by some wealthy recipient of a favour, honoraria for masses in thanksgiving, are in general the only means the guardians of the Sanctuary have of knowing anything of these miracles. Even then, the full particulars of each case are not given.

7. A wonderful cure - two miracles indeed of a very high order - witnessed by the writer and by many others on the eighth of last September (**1882**), will illustrate what is here stated. As it afterwards happened that these miracles were proved by documentary evidence, he wishes to give all the details of the occurrence - to him wonderful indeed, although by thousands of others present, regarded as a mere matter of course. (Note that the author, George Dillon, writes in the third person.)

In the chapter which treats of the great public pilgrimages to the Shrine (**Chapter XV**), it will be seen that the numbers flocking from every quarter **on the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady (8th September 1882)** are very remarkable. The little town of Genazzano presents a very lively appearance. The coming of innumerable bands of Pilgrims chanting their hymns, and with their Image of Mary of Good Counsel borne in front, is to the stranger unaccustomed to such sights, exceedingly interesting. On the eve of the festival, and, indeed, some days before, the church is crowded with these fervent bands, all intent upon the object of their devout journey invariably undertaken to get some favour from Our Lady for themselves or others, or to thank Her for some graces already received. These pilgrimages appear to increase annually. That of the past **September (1882)** was unusually large. The writer with other visitors from afar who happened to be then in Genazzano, made many visits to the Sanctuary. **On the morning of the 8th**, the feast itself, he noticed on coming to the church, that the excitement and devout exclamations of one little body of pilgrims became unusually demonstrative. He thought that someone amongst them had fainted, or had been suddenly taken ill. And yet this could not be, for the cries were cries of joy, *Evviva Maria! Evviva Maria, la madre Nostra del Buon Consiglio!* repeated again and again. At last after a lengthened stay before the sacred chapel, this band had to make way for others, and its members retired in the usual manner, backwards, as if from the presence of royalty, from before the sacred Image. When they passed the principal entrance of the church, something of the reason for the excitement could be known. In their midst was a young woman, apparently about nineteen or twenty years of age. Her face was bathed in tears, and upon emerging from the sacred edifice, she gazed with an indescribable look of mingled bewilderment, joy, and devotion, upon the multitude that filled the piazza and thronged upon the large stone stairs leading to the platform before the great door. She gazed at the houses of the square, upon the fountain, upon

the lofty facade of Santa Maria, at the bright sun in the clear morning sky. With delighted amazement, she then lifted her hands, as if involuntary, to heaven and sobbed outright, while her companions, all in tears, cried aloud, their « *Evivas* » and « *gratias* » to their beloved Madonna of Good Counsel, Who had shown another favour to Her people. The crowd outside, accustomed for years to see and hear of miracles at the Shrine, took up the cry, though probably none of them knew the precise nature of the new wonder. It was enough for them to understand that there was fresh reason for thanks; and therefore, the desire always in their hearts, readily rose to their lips, that Mary may live and reign long, over, and for the benefit of the people of Her Son. Such is the meaning of their “*Evviva Maria*”.

As soon as the party cleared the thickest of the crowd, the writer had an opportunity of learning the cause of the young woman's excitement, and of her tears of joy. It was this. She had completely, and as the best medical testimony had declared, irreparably lost the sight of the left eye, through an acute and most painful neuralgic affection. Her agonies, which were excruciating, brought on the terrible disease of epilepsy. After being treated by the municipal physician of her native city for a considerable time without effect, she consulted three of the best oculists and physicians in Rome. The latter, however, could do nothing for her, and only showed more clearly to her widowed mother how improbable was a cure. Gradually she grew worse and the fits of the falling sickness became violent, painful, and long continued. She was utterly useless. Her sufferings had increased to such an extent that death would have been a relief to her and to her family. There was continual danger that in the madness and pain of her convulsions she would cast herself from the window of her dwelling, and be crushed to death on the pavement beneath. The Parish Priest in expectation of the worst had done all he could, and was, together with the Doctor, in daily attendance upon her. There seemed no hope on earth for her, when she took the happy thought of going to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel for relief, during the approaching feast of Our Lady's Nativity. Notwithstanding the well grounded fears, which her friends entertained of the danger and inconvenience likely to arise on the journey from her usual fits, she became fixed in her resolution to make the pilgrimage, and that too on foot, to Genazzano. Her mother consented. It was well she did. Mercy from Mary came at once. To the surprise of all, the fits of epilepsy never once molested her upon the road, nor during the following day. Of course, no one could determine in such a short time whether this was a cure or only a cessation. Her pains ceased too, although her sight remained as defective as before. She was, however, able to perform all the penitential works imposed upon themselves by the most fervent

pilgrims. She advanced upon her knees from the great entrance of the church to the rails of the Sanctuary, and licked the marble pavement the whole way. Then, after she had been to confession and communion, and just as she knelt in earnest supplication before the altar of Our Lady, she felt as if a soft hand gently passed itself before her eyes, and instantly she obtained her lost sight. **The first object she could see distinctly was the beautiful, miraculous Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, smiling most lovingly and benignly upon her, and surrounded with innumerable silver lamps and lights.** Hence the excitement, the tears, and cries of joy; and surely under the circumstances there was reason. The date of this miracle was 8th September 1882.

8. More, at the moment, could not be ascertained. The party pushed its way through dense throngs of pilgrims in the street and was soon lost among the assembled thousands. But the writer was anxious to know something more of the nature of the cure. If it was permanent? - If it was real? - If the whole story could be corroborated? Only time could tell whether the epilepsy and the blindness had passed away. The Parish Priest and the Doctor mentioned, could, of course, tell everything. The writer, unfortunately, knew neither. Nor did he think of asking from whence the party of pilgrims came. He applied to the Prior of the convent for information. But though only some hours had passed, the zealous Prior knew nothing whatever of the occurrence. He applied to Father Berio, Sub-prior, the oldest father in the convent, who for forty years had served the Sanctuary. The good father pleaded total ignorance and said: « *We are not thirty confessors here in all, and already there are twelve thousand communions made. The Madonna works miracles all the day long, and works them always. How could we hear the confessions of so many and attend to all the details, the examination of witnesses, their quality and the other circumstances required by canon law. We are without men or means for the purpose. These good people receive graces well known to themselves and to their respective neighbourhoods, and therefore they come in such ceaseless crowds now, as they have come for the last four centuries. All we can do on these occasions, - and it is more than we can do, - is to attend to their spiritual concerns.* » With no better result several other fathers of the community were applied to. None of them knew anything of the matter.

However, fortunately, some time after the feast, a communication was received from **Zagarolo**, a town about 14 miles from Genazzano, which led to further inquiries. The zealous Archpriest of that city had thought it proper to inform the Prior of Santa Maria, that a young woman of his flock, named **Lydia Vernini**, had been, to the inexpressible joy of the whole community, miraculously cured of blindness and epilepsy at the Sanctuary of Genazzano. This was ample corroboration of the writer's

report. The Prior wrote back at once for a more formal and explicit statement in detail, both from the Archpriest as the chief ecclesiastical authority, and from the physician in attendance, who also happened to be the medical officer of the municipality. The letters he received in reply will speak for themselves. We give them in the original Italian and in English. They bear out, as the reader will observe, in every particular, the information received upon the day the miracles were performed.

9. They are as follows -

**N.º 1.**

**Letter from the Archpriest of Zagarolo to Very Revd.M.A.Martinelli,  
Prior of Santa Maria, Genazzano.**

**(Italian omitted-----See TRANSLATION Hereunder)**

**Translation.**

ARCHPRESBYTERY OF  
SAINT PETER THE APOSTLE  
ZAGAROLO

Most Rev. Father.

I have not replied before to your favour for the certificate of the Doctor which I received yesterday.

I ought to add to it, that the mother, having seen that the care bestowed upon her daughter by the faculty here was of no avail whatever, brought her to Rome, towards the end of last July, to seek a remedy; and there consulted the professors Mazzoni, Siring, and Feti. From the whole three she had discouraging results. One of them stated that a cure might be attempted, but it would be both long and expensive. The other two affirmed that the sight of the eye was irretrievably lost.

This much being premised (**concluded**), the poor young woman returned home. From day to day the pain in the eye increased continually. To all this, and to add to her torments, in the month of August epileptic fits came on, so as to keep her, for the greater part of the day, in a state of terrible agony. In the intervals of peace which she had, she expressed a desire from time to time to go to the Mother of all Grace, Most Holy Mary, and see if She would free her from such torments. The feast of the Nativity of Our Lady then drawing nigh, she resolved, although so ill, to go to Genazzano, to the most miraculous Image. In fact, on the 7th of the month (**September**) she got out of bed in the morning with courage and confidence, not caring for attacks of her convulsions which, according to their usual course of other days, would attack her. After several hours, in company with some relatives and neighbours, she

arrived there wearied indeed, but free from every attack of epilepsy; and with all fervour, more than once with tongue to the pavement, she passed through the temple (**church**). On the morning of the 8th, still free from convulsions, she, with great difficulty, succeeded in forcing her way through the dense crowd and in reaching the rails of the Sanctuary. She demanded with a loud voice and repeatedly, the desired grace from Mary. After some time, she tells me, she felt as if a hand passed before her eyes, and she became able to see and could distinguish perfectly well the beautiful Image of Mary. She related the fact to her relatives and neighbours, and all the people with one voice, thanked the Mother of God for so great a favour. Oh how good and merciful is Mary towards those who invoke Her with confidence! Now, as the certificate of the Medical man will prove, she finds herself in perfect health.

Zagarolo 18th Oct. 1882.

With all respect and esteem  
I remain etc. etc.

VINCENZO MANNUCCI  
Archpriest.

N<sup>o</sup>. 2.

### **Statement of Medical Officer in attendance.**

**(Italian omitted-----See TRANSLATION Hereunder)**

#### **Translation.**

#### **Statement of Medical Officer in attendance.**

Lydia Vernini of Zagarolo aged 18 years, of good constitution, was attacked at the end of June of the current year (**1882**), by a very strong neuralgia in the left eye, which went on progressively increasing and causing damage to the sight in such a manner that, in the course of about two weeks, it was lost altogether, as the infirm person stated. The eye, however, presented no alteration apparently, as on many occasions I had to ascertain.

She was also visited by expert oculists in Rome. But none were found, as far as I know, who gave a reason for the want of sight; wherefore, I believe it is to be attributable to a nervous malady, always difficult to be cured. In consequence of spasm she also became attacked by epileptic convulsions which, in the beginning, tormented her once a day. Then they became more frequent, assailing her almost constantly twice every day. And the same fits caused for a period of from three to four hours, a total loss of sense, agitation of the members, and, when they became aggravated, they left the infirm girl in a state of stupidity. Various remedies were tried, tonic as well as general, without any favourable result. I went to visit her continuously, but on the 7th of September I did not find her at home, and was told by the neighbours that she had been taken to Genazzano to visit the Sanctuary of the Madonna. I went to

visit her on her return and I found that the sight was restored to its normal condition. The spasms and convulsions had ceased entirely as the patient informed me, without making use of further remedies. This state continues to the present. So much I can attest as the pure truth.

Zagarolo, Oct. 17th. (1882)

ERNEST, DOCTOR ORDESCHI  
Medical Officer

**10.** The above testimony was ample in every respect, but the writer was further curious enough to know whether the cure continued, whether it was complete and permanent. He therefore, in company with the venerable Father Berio of the convent of Santa Maria in Genazzano, went to Zagarolo in the January of the present year (1883?), and visited the good Archpriest of that city, who fully confirmed all he has here written. He also kindly sent for the mother of the cured girl, a widow with eight orphans, whose husband, a man of good family and means, died some five years ago.

She gave an excellent account of her daughter Lydia who, being the eldest girl, had been, she said, of the greatest use in the management of her large family. The long sickness with which the child was visited was, therefore, no small trial to the poor mother. She was, naturally, full of gratitude to Our Lady of Good Counsel.

She further stated that the cure of Lydia was the second miracle, for which she had to be grateful to the Madonna. The other, not less remarkable, occurred in the case of her second son. At the mention of the name of this boy, the poor woman cried bitterly, for he had just recently been taken forcibly by the Piedmontese government to be a soldier. She spoke of him with all a mother's pride and all a mother's love. He was the mainstay of her family, but the Piedmontese, she said, not content with reducing her to misery by a load of taxes, which left but a bare margin to keep life on the plainest food, took him too from her. The mention of the good times when the gentle rule of the Pope made the people of the States of the Church the happiest and the lightest-burdened people in Europe, affected her deeply. And surely, if the arms of the widow Vernini could effect it, Leo XIII would rule Rome and the Patrimony of St. Peter tomorrow.

**11.** But to return to her son. In his youth he suffered to such an extent from a nervous disease that he could not stand upright.

The poor mother did all she could for him, but the skill of man was as powerless in his case as afterwards it was in that of his sister. And so to her grief he pined away before her eyes until he was worn to a

skeleton, and only waiting for death to relieve him. In her deep distress she bethought of Our Lady of Good Counsel, a copy of Whose beautiful Image, so generally seen in all the towns of Latium, was affixed to the external wall of a house in the street. This Image she managed to get hold of, and with all the love and reverence of a devout client of Mary, she brought it to the bedside of her son. There she besought the Madonna, with all the agony of a mother's heart, to look upon her child. Scarcely was her prayer, she said, ended when, on a sudden (**all of a sudden**), the boy vomited a large quantity of very fetid matter, as if from something which had burst within.

After this, he rapidly rallied and asked for food. In a few days he was out of bed in the enjoyment of a good appetite, and fast recovering his strength. The poor mother sobbingly added that he had been all her consolation and strength afterwards, and that she never had another day's trouble with him until the Piedmontese forced him off to the army. There, of course, her loving solicitude followed him. The fare of an Italian soldier is as wretched as, or perhaps worse than, that of his class anywhere in the world. He is, moreover, exposed to the most demoralising (**corrupting**) influences. The temporal wants of her son she tried to alleviate by her little remittances, and his spiritual dangers she endeavoured to ward off by a weekly letter reminding him of his duty to God and to religion and then, above all, of devotion to the Madonna.

But the object of the visitors was to see Lydia Vernini, the subject of the wonderful cure wrought at Genazzano. She was found at some distance from the city, employed, together with the other children of the family, according to the custom in Italy, in the work of the vineyard. She was in excellent health. Her sight in both eyes was as good as ever. She never experienced the slightest return of the terrible *mal-caduco* or falling sickness (**epilepsy**). She stated that, before she left Zagarolo for Genazzano, she was perfectly confident that Our Lady would cure her. It was true that she licked the pavement, but this was entirely from her own devotion, and not advised by her confessor or any other ecclesiastic. She had vowed, moreover, that, whenever she was able, she would go on a yearly pilgrimage to Genazzano, in thanksgiving for her cure. She had a large bronze medal of Our Lady of Good Counsel on her breast. There was also a picture of the Madonna in every room of her house. By the way, the good Archpriest had the same in his residence. Already her brother and male relations had gone on foot and in procession to Genazzano singing the Litany of Our Lady in thanksgiving; and she herself, being now strong, intended to go with her mother in a little time for the same purpose. In truth, the good fathers of Santa Maria saw both of them as late as January 14th 1883, making this act of thanksgiving, and then Lydia Vernini was in a state of perfect health.

The writer has deemed it of use to give all the particulars connected with this miracle, because it was one which he did not find in books or learn from witnesses, however trustworthy; but one which came directly under his own observation, and was not only authenticated by those deserving of every confidence, but examined by himself in every material particular. Possibly, but for his desire to find out these particulars, the community in charge of the Sanctuary might be as ignorant of the existence of this miracle, as they are of thousands of other miracles worked by God's Virgin Mother at Her Shrine of Good Counsel; and only known to the happy recipients, and to Heaven. During the September devotions, he observed what he supposed to be another cure of severe epilepsy; and he has heard through the country of many miraculous favours received from Our Lady at the Shrine, which he is persuaded, if inquired into, would prove as capable of being substantiated as that of Lydia Vernini of Zagarolo.

**12.** Such favours have never ceased from the moment of the Miraculous Apparition until this hour. Scarcely had the Image appeared upon the wall of the chapel of St. Biagio, when miraculous graces began to pour out in extraordinary measure on the people of God.

From the first register taken we find that ten persons suffering from malignant fevers, were suddenly cured; six individuals paralysed, were restored to the perfect use of their limbs; twenty blind persons received their sight; six women were cured of dangerous uterine diseases; two dumb received the use of speech; three the use of hearing; three were cured of dropsy; five of leprosy; four of fatal wounds; two of haemorrhage; two of epileptic fits; three insane and two possessed by the devil, were liberated from their terrible misfortune; two Infidels obtained the grace of faith; one unfortunate man was freed from capital punishment; four bitten by venomous animals were healed; eighteen in the agonies of death were raised up; and one absolutely dead, arose through the powerful intercession of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

In all, there were no less than one hundred and sixty one cures verified; and verified, it must be remembered, in the reign of Paul II, by the Notary Public of Genazzano, a few years only after Pius II had established such admirable regulations for the States of the Church, that it would be utterly impossible to make false statements - if indeed any of those concerned with the Sanctuary could be supposed to be guilty, for no reason whatever, of such a crime - without being detected and severely punished. Furthermore, such an act could never occur at a period when all Italy, as we know from Coriolanus, were visiting the locality; and when the Episcopal Delegates of the Pontiff were about to make their canonical investigation.



A few of these miracles are so specially interesting that we cannot pass them over. First comes the strange punishment of an incredulous witness, which happened as follows.

**13.** It must not, of course, be supposed that all received the news of the Apparition of the miraculous Image with equal faith, even when Italy rang with the news of its appearance. Then as now, there were incredulous people, and people with little respect for anything supernatural. One of this class was a certain Antony, of Cirrone, a little town about eight miles distant from the Sanctuary. On the 5th of May 1467, business brought him amidst the crowds which then filled all the streets of Genazzano. He heard, of course, as all else did, the wonderful things the people had to say regarding it; but he chose to laugh at their story, and turn it into ridicule. He determined, nevertheless, to make his way inside the church and see what could be seen of what they had been talking. But his incredulity and mockery were speedily punished. Like St. Mary of Egypt, when trying to visit the church of Jerusalem, he was repelled from entering by some invisible hand. He was seized with a fit of trembling in all his members, and remained in that state until, repenting, he turned to those whom he had scandalised by his language, and confessing his fault, obtained through God's Virgin Mother his pardon, and as a pledge of it, complete freedom from his sad state.

**14.** On the 6th of July, a no less remarkable circumstance occurred. One Mark di Stefano, a Hungarian, came on that day to visit Genazzano amongst the crowds of pilgrims then coming from the most distant parts. He was dressed after the picturesque fashion of his countrymen, with a bow across his shoulders, and a quiver full of arrows by his side; and of course, he did not escape the jocose remarks of the idlers found in all great gatherings of people. Some of these latter, it is recorded, snatched off the hat of a poor man, and, suspending it upon a wall, provoked the Hungarian to fire at it. He did so in an angry mood, but to the horror of all, the arrow rebounded from the hat and struck the archer, wounding him severely. All hastened to find out the reason, and to their astonishment discovered that inside the hat the owner had placed an Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel. At a time of such miraculous cures as were then taking place at Genazzano, the wounded man would naturally apply at once to Mary for relief. He was accordingly brought to the feet of the Madonna, when having implored pardon for his anger and his involuntary injury to the very Image he came so far to venerate, he was instantly cured.

**15.** From the various records of the past, which as the ages rolled on were here and there preserved, we may also mention the following. In the annals of the house of Colonna it is related that, in 1685, the family of Prince Philip were all together in their castle overlooking the Sanctuary,

when, suddenly, a tremendous flash of lightning fell in their midst, setting fire to the rich furniture of the room, and causing an arquebuse (**a type of gun**) that happened to be loaded to explode. The clothing of the lady of the house was burnt, and a youth named John Baptist Pronde, was struck to the floor all but dead. A little oil taken from the Sanctuary lamp of Our Lady of Good Counsel instantly cured the latter, and the family, who might have been all destroyed attributed their safety to the devotion they always displayed for the Image and Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

No wonder they should do so. Some thirty years previous, the whole kindred of the Colonnas were preserved even more remarkably from the terrible contagion, which then, (in 1656 and 1657) desolated Italy and more especially Rome and Latium.

According to the Notary (**Notary Public of Genazzano**), Luke Giovanni, Cardinal Colonna, Constable Colonna, and the princes Lawrence and Philip Colonna, together with many Roman nobles sheltered themselves in Genazzano under the protection of Mary, when the contagion raged in Valmontone, Montefortino, Palestrina, Subiaco, and Seroni, places in the immediate vicinity of Genazzano, while the latter, of all the towns in Italy, alone escaped the plague.

**16.** Even the dead have been raised to life, through the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel. An instance of this is recorded in the first registry of miracles. De Orgio relates it thus. « *Constantine de Carolis, of Castelfollie, the faithful servant of Signor Antonietto, of Castelnuovo, being taken with a great and most dangerous malady, at length went the way of all flesh (**he died**). He was given over by the physicians. He received the last sacraments of the Church and expired in the presence of many who assisted his soul in its last passage. Afterwards when he was vested in his grave clothes, and laid out as the dead are, his afflicted master went to invite the clergy to celebrate for him the usual funeral obsequies. On returning to his house the latter looked upon the corpse of his faithful servant who tenderly loved him and broke out into a downright flood of tears. He then threw himself upon the ground and, as was afterwards expressed in the public act by solemn oath, he exclaimed «O Most Holy Virgin of Genazzano I supplicate (**Dictionary - ask or beg for something earnestly or humbly**) Thee, if it be for the better, that Thou wouldst pray to God for me, to give me back my servant, (il mio garzone) and I promise Thee to bring him to Genazzano before Thy Holy Image.» The Sovereign Empress of the Heavens, Mary, the Most Holy Mother of Good Counsel, Who was invocated (**called upon**) with such living faith heard this fervent and sorrowful prayer. Hence, with universal and unusual wonder, the dead servant, in an instant lifted his head, opened his eyes, and overcome with unusual stupefaction*

*commenced to get up. He saw his grieving Master, and unloosening his tongue he said «for charity sake give me a little nourishment» Afterwards he stood up and turning to those about, declared himself free from every inconvenience and pain. Then, having heard of the manner and the reason of his miraculous resurrection, he instantly, with his master, commenced his journey to Genazzano, where both presented themselves in the church and in the chapel of the holy Image, and there, with joyful voices, praised and thanked the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.»*

**17.** Another very touching miracle, also related by De Orgio from the first attestations at the Shrine, was the liberation from a condemnation to death of a criminal sentenced to be executed at Sienna. The day was fixed for the last penalty of the law to be inflicted in the case of two others, as well as in his own. On the eve of the fatal morning, his confessor, a Franciscan Father - who was tired of his entreaties to save him and who could not reconcile him to his justly deserved doom, - at last, to get rid of his importunity, or from some internal inspiration said. *“If the miraculous Madonna, who recently appeared in Genazzano, will not liberate you from death then you most certainly will pass to eternity tomorrow.”* The Father then in anger departed, but the moment he had gone, John cast himself with his face to the ground and commenced to weep bitterly and to exclaim *“O Most Holy Virgin if You give me this grace I will presently come to your feet to thank You for so great a miracle.”* This being said, he found all of a sudden that the chains on his legs were broken. Full of wonder, he endeavoured to make his escape. He saw a window placed so high that by no means could he reach it. He however made the attempt, and as if an invisible ladder was placed beneath his feet, he ascended to it. Here he was surprised to find a terrific precipice, which if he fell into, he would be dashed to pieces. His companions cried out *«fool that you are, come down and prepare for death or otherwise you will go to ruin.»* He, however, having taken courage and full of living faith at having seen his fetters broken miraculously, made the sign of the Cross and without further delay cast himself down, crying out repeatedly. *«O Holy Mary of Genazzano help me»* And Oh what a prodigy! Something like a celestial cloud had brought him downwards. He found himself upon the earth unhurt and unbroken, just as if he had not fallen. Whence, in sight of this great miracle surrounded by so many others, even human justice relented and left him in liberty, since the mercy of God wished to leave him free for the greater glory of Mary and of Her most wonderful Image which came to Genazzano two months previously. Hence on the following morning, his two companions having been decapitated he, full of joy, set out for Genazzano and there arrived on 11th July 1467 to thank his heavenly

Liberatrix, and to depose on oath upon the holy Gospels, in the presence of the Fathers, and of Benedict Marroco Altobello of Genazzano, and of Melchior, of Rancilluni and others, to the great miracle which had taken place in his case.

**18.** The individual cures recorded meanwhile are very numerous. Amongst them, the cure of Andrew Scavola, of Milan, who came to the Sanctuary and was instantly cured on the 30th April 1740, of an extraordinary disease which the physicians declared incurable; and the cure of the noble lady, Martha Poli, freed from a terrible malady surpassing human power, are very remarkable, as illustrating the power of Our Lady of Good Counsel over devils. Hundreds of such miracles as these were acknowledged in grateful recognition by the multitudes of **votive offerings** which crowded the church towards the close of the last century. Many of these were of precious metals, but many more, the gifts of God's poor, were of simple wax or wood. The crutches left by the lame and the bandages by the maimed were so numerous, and so filled the church, as to become a veritable nuisance; and were, with due permission, destroyed or converted into the uses of the Sanctuary, in the beginning of the last century (**1700s**). Towards the close of the same century and the beginning of the present (**1800s**), the gifts more precious so accumulated, that the French and the municipality of Infidels formed by them at Genazzano, secured an immense booty, even after the Fathers had given a large share of the silver and gold offerings of the Shrine to enable the Pontiff, Pius VI, to pay the terrible load of tribute (**levy or tax**) imposed upon him by the greed of Napoleon.

**19.** The Revd. J. Spenser Northcoat, President of St. Mary's College, Oscott, in a very interesting notice which he has given of the sacred Image of Genazzano, in his « **Celebrated Sanctuaries of the Madonna** » gives the following account of the miraculous preservation of the late Cardinal Acton and some companions while on the way to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel in 1845. He says of Genazzano. « *It has always been a favourite place of pilgrimage for our own ecclesiastical students in the English College at Rome, and Cardinal Acton had a special devotion towards it. On the occasion of his visit to the Shrine in the autumn of 1845, he met with an accident which might well have proven fatal both to himself and his companions. He was travelling from Palestrina with his chaplain, and servants, and three students of the English College<sup>1</sup> (a party of eight in all), when the carriage was upset in a very dangerous part of the road. Carriage, horses, and passengers were precipitated over a bank to the depth of twenty feet; "yet", as one of the party writes, "not one of us had so much*

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<sup>1</sup> All still surviving (**in 1883**), and priests in the dioceses of Liverpool and Salford.

*as a scratch, as far as I know; and I never heard mention of injury to any, except that the butler, who was more frightened than hurt, complained of being much shaken. Of course, he and the others outside were flung some way into the field; we who were inside fell on one another, the Cardinal being immediately below me. The carriage windows were thrown up by the fall, but were unbroken until men came and broke them to drag us out. The carriage was not much injured; some of the ironwork twisted, and the pole broken which caused a deep flesh-wound in one of the horses. We walked on, saying the rosary, to the neighbouring town, where the Bishop received us, and sent us on to Genazzano. On our arrival there, the Rector and students and the religious community all joined us in the **Te Deum**, which was repeated on the following morning, for the miraculous deliverance which a good God had given us." The Cardinal had a copy of the painting executed, which he always retained for his own private devotion, and which is now in the sacristy of the Church of Our Lady of Angels, Stoke-upon-Trent. Another copy, or rather a very beautiful painting (by Seitz), suggested by it, and retaining the same general idea and attitude of the Mother and Child, is in the chapel of the Convent of St. Catherine, at Clifton. »*

**20.** To all the other miracles, must be added the remarkable preservation of the town of Genazzano from pestilence of every description since the coming of the sacred Image within its walls. All attribute this wonderful immunity to the protection of Our Lady, and to the possession of Her miraculous Image. We have seen that, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the house of Colonna with many others experienced the benefit of this immunity during a plague, which elsewhere scarcely left the living the power of burying the dead. One reads to this day with horror, the account of this pestilence in the lives of St. Charles Borromeo and of other remarkable personages of the time. In the eighteenth century, so well known was the protection extended to Genazzano, that Pope Urban VIII made his famous pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady there, principally in order to obtain from the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, a cessation of the pestilence then threatening Rome. It has never, in fact, been known that anyone sick of plague or pestilence, of any kind, died in Genazzano. And this is all the more remarkable because many were brought there in a dying state from infected localities. In no instance has it been proved that even one of these extreme cases succumbed to their malady in the town.

But the most surprising exhibition of this miraculous exemption was witnessed in this 19<sup>th</sup> century, the era emphatically of infidelity (**loss of religious faith**) and materialism, of atheism, and its brood of irreligious systems. With all the improvements that science has effected in the arts subserving human comfort and convenience, men in this

century have had to die just as in times more barbarous. Science has been unable to invent a remedy for a plague as bad as any that, in the ages of ill-understood sanitary laws, desolated Europe. The terrible Asiatic cholera has swept again and again over all the nations of Europe and over all the islands of its seas. No land has escaped its ravages. It has levelled rulers and subjects with impartial severity. Italy was, of all the countries it devastated, the most severely visited. In 1832, in 1857, in 1867, its population was more than decimated by the fearful scourge. Strange to say no city or town in all its extent, completely escaped its ravages but one, and that one was Genazzano. Stranger still, no part of Italy was more desolated than Latium. Its vicinity to the Campagna which indeed forms part of it; its vicinity to the Pontine Marshes, and the undrained condition of its ancient towns, made it an easy prey to the devouring epidemic. Genazzano nevertheless, escaped, though not nearly so well situated as Albano and other cities which suffered severely. In the latter town both the Cardinal Bishop and the Dowager Queen of Naples, fell victims; the former through zeal for his people. The streets were covered with corpses, which the living, for fear of contagion, were afraid to bury. The gallant Zuaves<sup>1</sup>, at the call of their commander, performed for many corrupting bodies that last Christian office. So it was also with Palestrina, but seven miles distant from Genazzano. So it was with Olevano, Paliano, and San Vito, the latter but three miles away.

**21.** So it was with Capranica, a small town on the mountain at the foot of which Genazzano is built, and which in a direct line is not a mile away. There, several were dying each day. And this continued until nearly the whole population came in solemn pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. They advanced on their knees from a considerable distance outside the town, and through the streets until they came into the presence of the miraculous Image. There, suppliantly they besought Our Lady to have compassion on their unfortunate and desolate township. They made, as people in their condition might be naturally supposed to make, many vows and prayers. Mary in Heaven heard them, and from that day the dreadful scourge completely ceased its ravages in Capranica.

**22.** At this and at other such times the houses in Genazzano were filled with persons suffering from the disease, or fearing to be afflicted with it, who had flocked there from near and distant cities. Not one of these suffered. As with cholera, so with every disease of a general epidemic nature. It has been further remarked by all the historians of the town and Sanctuary, and especially by Senni and Vannutelli, both natives of the place, that even the political visitations which have made such

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zouave>

frightful ravages in other parts of Italy, have visited Genazzano with a singularly partial effect (**less damaging**). Garibaldi obtained few or no recruits from it, and a band of his defeated followers passed through the town without offering molestation. There is no Masonic lodge or known Mason or Carbonaro in the town. Out of some four or five thousand souls, not more than seventeen are absent from the Sacraments, at the times required by the Church. The case of a native of the town refusing the Sacraments in his last moments is unknown. As the accomplished and erudite Vannutelli says, "*It stands in the history of human events, that this Queen of Heaven holds Genazzano exempt from all the ills of Italy, it having never, or but little, felt the overturning of states; inundations of foreign armies; rapine, the burning of cities, secret societies, cruel conspiracies, immoderate ambition, robbing avarice, the unbridled licence of the population, earthquake, drought, penury, desolating malady, public horror, and death from sudden causes.*"

The ecclesiastics and religious, have suffered in their goods, it is true, there as elsewhere; and the small offices going, are given, of course, to friends of the government. Beyond this, the little town carries on its old ways of devotion and faith as fervently as if Leo XIII, instead of Humbert I, ruled in the Eternal City. The citizens are no doubt taxed heavily, and, like all the other towns of Latium and the pontifical states, they long for the return of the Papal Government. But, while Providence imposes these crosses upon them, they remain as Our Lady said they should remain for ever.. « ***Her specially beloved people.*** »

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To conclude this chapter of miracles wrought before Our Lady's Shrine in Genazzano, a synopsis is here added of those recorded in the first register exactly as they were inserted in the document proved to be authentic by the learned critics of the Vatican, at the instance of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and to which we have referred in the proofs for the Wonderful Apparition. It is translated from the Italian of De Orgio, and commences on the second day after the Apparition and is as follows : -

#### APRIL 1467

**First day (of the register) 27th April.** On this day, Domenica di Giuliani was freed from a violent and most painful disease of the womb.

Achilles, of Genazzano, freed from a long and obstinate sciatica, and John Cambellotti of Castel Zangati, from a most painful infirmity of very long duration, by which he lost the use of his voice and could no longer take

nourishment.

**April 28th.** Today, John Giordani of Genazzano, was brought to the holy Chapel. He suffered for three years from such weakness in all his limbs that he could no longer move. Appealing to Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel he became instantly sound, free, and vigorous so that not a trace of his long disease was left.

### MAY 1467

**May 2nd.** Today, Most Holy Mary completely freed Antony de Benedictis of Castel Marsitelli, from the consequences of an apoplectic stroke, by which his whole right side was completely paralysed.

**May 3rd.** Rita de Sanctis, daughter of John Peter, of Castello di Gerano, for a length of time obsessed by the devil, was liberated today in the Holy Chapel.

**May 4th.** Today, Most Holy Mary of Paradise freed and cured Antony Cerroni, of Pisciano, who in penalty of his incredulity with regard to the coming of this holy Image, had become completely crippled and paralysed.

Also John Francianera who, for six years continuously, suffered from a most obstinate quartan fever (**malaria**).

Also Bernardino di Piombino, reduced to a dying and bloodless condition from the same disease. Also Giacomina de Benedictis of Olevano, who after bearing a son, remained for five months, night and day in the greatest agony. Also Bella di Giovan Nicola of San Vito, who from a disease of the internal organs suffered during eight years from continual haemorrhage, so that through weakness she could no longer stand upon her feet.

**May 8th.** Today, was cured Francesca Ceccarelli, of Paliano, who in her childhood became blind, and besides, was much weakened throughout her whole body. Also Minna, daughter of John Capozzo, of Cave, who for a length of time had become useless and almost mummified by dryness in all her members.

**May 15th.** Today, Most Holy Mary restored the sight of Philip Bartolomei, of the province of Borgogna, who for three years had been totally blind. Domenica Tuzi, of Olevano was cured of most severe convulsive pains, which brought her to a dying condition. And Antonio Tomassi, of Sclavonia, who had become completely blind four years previously, having had suppliant recourse to the most holy Image, was instantly gladdened with the full enjoyment of his eyesight.

**May 16th.** Today, Antony di Pietro, of Trano who, for 28 years continuously, suffered from epilepsy, was completely freed by Our Lady at Her Shrine.

James Vestri, of Genazzano, was cured of a general debility and torpor of the whole body, which rendered him impotent and unable even to move. Mariano, son of John the Albanian, having become helpless, was cured. John, son of Angelo Antonio Buzi, of Cicigliano, who for six years had been stone blind, obtained the use of his sight.

Tizia, of Zagarolo, a poor old woman, coming on foot to visit the holy Image, fell in the neighbourhood of Palestrina into a deep intricate chasm, full of stumps and thorn-bushes. In her distress, she called upon Our Lady of Good Counsel, Whose Image she was on the way to visit, and



declared that Most Holy Mary appeared to her visibly and liberated her, so that she was enabled to pursue her way in joy to Genazzano, and narrate her experience.

**May 21st.** Today, Roscietto, of Genazzano, given over by the physicians and fortified with all the sacraments of the Church, lay dying in his last agony. His afflicted wife broken hearted at so great a loss, had recourse to Most Holy Mary, before the sacred Image, and with lively faith made a vow, to come upon her bare knees on the ground from her house to the holy Chapel. She instantly began, with cheeks bathed in tears and with mournful suppliant voice, to fulfil that vow. When behold, the dying husband at that moment sat up in his bed, and stimulated by a sudden fit of vomiting, threw from his stomach seven fetid worms; and after having been strengthened with a little nourishment, he rose up sound and cured from his bed as though he had never suffered the slightest ailment.

**May 23rd.** On this day, Anastasia Arcite, of Cerrara, who, reduced to the point of death, lay in agony five days without taking any restorative whatever. On a vow being made in this extremity by her afflicted mother to conduct her to the feet of this holy Image, in case she should (**in the hope that she would**) escape death, suddenly she gave signs of returning health; she wished to take nourishment and afterwards, together with her mother, went festive and joyful to thank her Holy Liberatrix.

Likewise on this day (**May 23rd**), Antonio Sollato, of Tivoli (about 18 miles from the Sanctuary by the shortest road through the Sabine mountains) who, having become completely crippled, one side being paralysed, having made a vow to come on foot and with a rope around his neck to the holy Image, was instantly cured; so that he was able presently to undertake the journey to Genazzano as he had promised, and according to his vow.

The holy Image also on this day freed a woman, named Bona di Simone, of Cicigliano, who for eight years continuously had been curved, (probably by spinal disease) so that with her face almost touching the ground she could scarcely walk a few steps with the aid of a stick.

Also were cured Maria Angela Fucine of Cicigliano who, for six entire years, had been blind, and Petruccia, daughter of Antonio Comparelli, of Tivoli, tormented excessively by uterine disease, and Catherine Coccetti, of Vicovaro, who was in like manner oppressed for eight and twenty years with the same disease, so that she could not find peace or repose either night or day. Merlino, also of Tivoli, blind for many months, was cured; and William de Orlandis, of the city of Terni (about a hundred miles from the Sanctuary), aged twenty five years, born blind had been scarcely introduced into the Holy Chapel when he suddenly opened two most limpid eyes this day.

Still on the same day (**May 23rd**), Aurelia Palicchi, of Nemi, paralysed for many years, and Santa, of Trevi, obsessed for a length of time by malignant spirits were delivered.

Well does De Orgio call this a great day, happily and fortunately illustrated and signalled by Mary with ten miracles or graces, in a few hours.

**May 24th.** A certain Nicholas Grisanti, of Guadagnola who, returning from Genazzano to his home, and being asked whether he had seen any miracle performed by the holy Image, answered with contempt, « **what miracles? what miracles? I have seen none.** » The following night one of his little sons, named Martin, suddenly oppressed with the most excruciating

convulsive pains, was about to expire. The affrighted father, feeling in his conscience that this was in punishment for his sin of contempt, presently cast himself upon his face weeping and sobbing; and seeing that his tenderly beloved child commenced to get a little better, he took him at once in his arms and walked the whole way (about ten or twelve miles, over the steep mountain on which stands, at its loftiest point, the monastery of Menturella) to Genazzano, to deposit his precious burden at the feet of Our Lady of Good Counsel. There, the poor child was perfectly cured in an instant, and the incredulous father believed, having seen first the chastisement and then the miracle with his own eyes.

**May 25th.** On this day, the Sovereign Empress and Most Holy Mother of Good Counsel cured Joanna, daughter of John Nicholas Petrucci, of Pereto, in the diocese of Marsi, who had become paralysed from head to foot; and Mary her sister, likewise paralysed. Both sisters were brought to the holy Chapel to be liberated, as in fact they were. On this same day, was also cured Stephen Antonelli, of Trapani, afflicted for a length of time with excruciating torments through a urinary disease.

**May 29th.** Peter Nicholas Bucciarelli, of Cerula, having come to Genazzano for his affairs and also to visit the Holy Image, was asked on his return to his home, whether he had seen any miracles, answered as did Nicholas Grisanti in a contemptuous fashion, that he had seen none, and did not believe in any. The following night the Queen of Heaven appeared to him (in a dream), angry and full of indignation, and ordered him to return instantly to Genazzano and that he would see miracles enough to make him believe. The contemptuous and affrighted man woke up to find that his little son Antony, surprised by an unforeseen accident, was upon the point of death. Presently, with his dying child in his arms, he flew to Genazzano, and in the Holy Chapel with sobs and tears he confessed his guilt; and behold in that moment his little son became perfectly cured, festive and joyful; and Peter Bucciarelli, penitent, was corrected, and at the sight of his son cured, thoroughly amended.

This day also, John, the son of John Panenche, of Cantalupo, a child of twelve years, having become weakened throughout his whole body, acquired perfectly the use of all his members.

Thus too Peter, son of Nicholas Simeone, of Cori, a child of eight years, unable to stand upon his feet, acquired this day in the same manner, the use of all his limbs. James Narni Piccinini, blind for four years, today, in the sacred Chapel, reëquired his sight, to the universal delight of all those present.

**May 30th.** Perfetta, a devout lady of Cori, having known of the miracle that was wrought upon Peter her blind fellow townsman, who returned from Genazzano to Cori with his sight perfectly restored, presently she too, full of living holy faith caused herself to be led there, and in fact she also obtained the same grace, after having been blind for six years.

Basilia, wife of Giorgio, of Guadagnola, who for three years had been paralysed, was today also in the Holy Chapel made in one moment vigorous and sound, as if she had never suffered paralysis.

**May 31st.** Today, Angela, daughter of master Nicholas, of Bassiano, who in consequence of a stroke of apoplexy, lost the use of her right arm completely, so that she could not even move it any more than if it were a

senseless log of wood, hardly had she entered the sacred Chapel, when she became vigorous and sound, with the arm as movable as at first. This day also, Francesca Macellari, of Porcile, oppressed with uterine disease for fifteen years, on this same day became free and sound, at the steps of the altar of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel.

### JUNE 1467

**June 3rd.** The lady Antonia, of Castel Sanguigno, wife of the late Signor Antony, Count of Montefortino, who had suffered a severe apoplectic stroke, through which she had lost the use of the whole right side, was conducted with great difficulty to the holy Chapel. The moment she entered, she became at once perfectly cured, after having passed three years and seven months of her life, with that severe malady. Also Antonietta, daughter of Antonio Spine, likewise from Montefortino, who had been deaf for eighteen years in the right ear, on the same day and at the very same hour in which the above-mentioned lady was cured, she also became freed from the inconvenience referred to. The moment she entered the Chapel she heard a sound in the deaf ear, and obtained her hearing completely.

**June 6th.** This most happy day was illustrated by eight miracles or graces. Antonio Catallo, of Sermoneta, dumb without being able to understand anything except by some signs, acquired the power of speech perfectly.

Domenic di Tuziofante, of Olevano, bitten by a most venomous serpent, through which his flesh had become all swelled and blackened, having on this day made a vow to go on foot to Genazzano, to the feet of the Most Holy Mother of Good Counsel, became suddenly delivered from his malady without sign or impediment whatever.

Santuccia di Bartolomeo, of Subiaco, who from the bite of a mad dog, suffered the terrible and fatally incurable consequences, being full of unspeakable agony, and wrenched with convulsions through her whole body, during which she lost an eye completely and strained her limbs. The moment she entered the holy Chapel at the foot of the altar of the holy Image, she was completely cured, and rendered free from her terrible malady.

Felicita di Bartolomeo, of Subiaco, obtained on this day also, most clearly her sight which she had lost by painful spasms, endured for a long time in both eyes.

Catherine, daughter of John Cocci, of Civitella, given over by the doctors and reduced to agony, upon invoking Most Holy Mary, to Whom she had made a vow, presently obtained the use of her senses, and was instantly cured entirely.

Elizabeth, of Anticoli, dumb for seven years, today in the presence of the sacred Image, commenced to the universal astonishment of all, to speak.

Today also, John di Pietro, of Menecone acquired in the holy Chapel, motion and life, which he had lost for many years, in half his body, which became from paralysis as so much senseless wood.

**June 10th.** Signor Francesco di Pietro, of Naples, who seven years previously had been wounded so grievously in the thigh by a lance in battle, that the master nerves were so punctured and lacerated, that he could neither bend the knee, nor move the wounded limb. Having heard in Rome of the

great miracles worked by Our Lady of Good Counsel in Her Image at Genazzano, he instantly caused himself to be conducted thither and there in the holy Chapel, praying with a living faith to Most Holy Mary, he received in the most complete manner the grace he sought, remaining as sound and as free as if that thigh had never been wounded.

**June 11th.** On this day, a Hungarian Priest, named Don John Martini, having become blind of one eye for a year and some months, at the feet of Most Holy Mary, instantly obtained his sight perfectly. And on the very same day, Peter di Giovanni, of the district of Marano, having lost the use of his right arm, became completely cured in the holy Chapel.

Paul, son of John di Belvedere, having become so insane that he wandered in the night through the country, raving and shouting; having confessed and repented of his sins in the holy Chapel, returned Immediately to his proper senses, with a sound and most quiet mind.

Today also, Antonuccia, daughter of Nicholas da Fumone, a young lady who having been so terrified and horror stricken at a horrible apparition which appeared to her in the house, that she trembled frequently night and day, and rejected every species of food given for her nourishment; conducted by one of her uncles to the holy Chapel, the moment she saw the holy Image, she became serene, easy and tranquil, and never suffered after from trembling or fear of any kind.

Bartholomew, the son of John, born blind, on this same day obtained in the Chapel, the sight of both eyes.

**June 12th.** Behold another day illustrated with six miracles. John di Pasquale, of the Country of Cella, who had been two entire years dropsical (**affected with dropsy**), having entered the Chapel, his disease entirely disappeared.

Johanna Petruccia, of Toffila blind of an eye for the space of twenty four years, at the feet of our holy Image became quite cured.

Domenico di Antonio, of the land of Galera, perfectly (**completely**) blind in both eyes, suppliantly praying at Mary's feet, also obtained his sight.

Stephen, son of Juliano, of Morlupo, and Santa his sister, young children, having both fallen through a breach in the flooring of their dwelling into a deep pit of limestone, and having been discovered scarcely half alive, the affrighted father presently made a vow with his whole heart to this holy Image, and behold in that moment both stood upon their feet, and with a serene and joyful countenance ran to their father. He, in ecstasy at so sudden a miracle, immediately conducted them to Genazzano to the feet of the Most Benign Mother.

Lawrence Cicculi, of Nepi, confined for four years to his bed in the greatest agony from pain in the leg bone, laid today at the feet of Mary, was liberated and made sound.

Silvester Pauletti, of Rocca, for three years confined to bed, tormented with a violent and most obstinate sciatica, today having come with a living faith to this holy Image, was at once freed, and came with all speed to Genazzano, to thank the most benign and most amiable Lady of Paradise.

**June 13th.** Today, Bernardo, son of Master Dominic, of Roccantina in Sabina, clouded by a most dreadful horror and fright from having seen a diabolical phantom, already began to get insane. He tore his flesh with his teeth, he spoke immoral and blasphemous words, and the devil under the

most horrible shape, endeavoured to take him off. Finally, the affrighted parents seeing the case desperate, conducted him by violence to Genazzano, and scarcely had they forced him into the holy Chapel, when behold, their son serenely opened his eyes flowing with tears. He turned then to the holy Image and at that precise moment all his fears and all the infestations of the devil ceased.

Likewise today, Vincenza, daughter of Dominic, of Castropignano, blind of one eye, received her sight.

John Nicolas Nardi, of Mont'Acuto, bitten by a most venomous serpent, without being able to apply any remedy, having turned himself to this holy Image (at whose feet he was afterwards seen with a wax candle and lighted torch) was completely cured by this sole celestial balm.

Antony, son of Tanto Paladini, of Sermoneta, suffering dreadful pains through disease of the urinary organs, was this day also cured in the holy Chapel.

And finally, Thomas Mattei, of the province of Umbria, struck with apoplexy, and on that account having lost the use of his whole right side, today conducted to the feet of most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, obtained the cure he so much desired, by an open miracle.

**June 16th.** Santa, daughter, of Dominic Rocce, of Collepicollo, obsessed and tormented for six years continuously by diabolical spirits, today in the holy Chapel on seeing the holy Image, was liberated.

**June 18th.** Paul, son of John, of Colle, so grievously injured in the principal bone of the leg, that he became quite lame and scarcely could move himself, so great was the pain. He was, with great difficulty, conducted into the holy Chapel, but in the presence of Mary and of Her most blessed Image he became perfectly cured.

**June 20th.** This also proved another joyful and propitious day, illustrated and countersigned by Mary with thirteen signal graces.

Today, Antony Giannucci, of Mazzola, who for fifteen days and fifteen nights consecutively, had lost such a copious stream of blood from his nostrils, that he was thereby prostrated by continual swoons. He was at the point of death. Scarcely had he, with vivid faith, had recourse to this Holy Image, but he presently became sound. Hence he came with all speed to the feet of Mary in Genazzano, to render Her fervent thanks.

Clement, the son of a certain David, a Hungarian, perfectly blind, today in the holy Chapel recovered his sight perfectly.

Dominic Niccola, son of Antonio of Riceto, bitten by black serpents, with which he found himself covered after having slept a night in a hay-store in the country, and therefore had all his flesh grown swollen and blue coloured, whence the physicians judged that, on that same day by sundown, he should most certainly die. Having recourse however as best he could in such great emergency, to this holy and most prodigious Image he suddenly took heart, vivacity, and courage; and thence having come to its most holy feet, was perfectly cured.

James Giorgi, of Terra, oppressed with the falling sickness for seventeen years, was here, in the holy Chapel instantly liberated.

Mary, daughter of Stephen, of Colle, having lost the use of her body from the centre downwards, here acquired life and motion.

Margherita, daughter of John Tedesca, living in Rome, who for three

years had lost the use of both legs and arms; having been conducted to the feet of this holy Image, she returned to Rome perfectly sound.

Nicholas, son of John Alici, a Roman, who had his stomach inflamed and hard as a stone, and his head trembling and turning, today in the holy Chapel was freed from every inconvenience. And thus also was freed here today, Antony Niccola, of Turano, who for three years suffered from dropsy in such manner, that even his very eyelids were swollen with the disease, so that he could not open his eyes. Domenico Castaro, despaired of in Rome by the doctors, on account of an obstinate and copious bloody flux, having been brought to the feet of Mary, found there the source of balm and remedy for all evils; as also experienced today Peter, son of John Mattei, who for an entire year passed blood.

And Felix Jerome de Laurentius, son of signor Paulo Romano, who not having taken milk for six days and nights continuously, gasped and expired. Hardly had his noble mother made a vow to this holy Image when at once he re-commenced to breathe and to draw suck. Hence, sound and vigorous, the parents full of joy, conducted him here to Genazzano to the Sanctuary of Mary.

And thus another, Paul di Giacomo, also a Roman, was today cured of a malignant fever with punctures.

And finally today, Flora, daughter of Signor Magno Rellajo, of Padua, who had lost the use of his right side, so that becoming arid and incapable of doing anything, he dragged on a miserable existence. As soon, however, as he had recourse devoutly and suppliantly to this holy Image, the fame of whose miracles resounded throughout Italy, and resolutely caused himself to be carried to the holy Chapel in Genazzano, he found himself perfectly freed from his infirmity and sound in every respect; so that with great joy and much happiness and the pouring out of the tenderest tears, he again visited the holy Image.

**June 25th.** Today, Francesca, daughter of John Tinelli, a child of one year and a half, being reduced to a dying state without being further able to take milk, upon being vowed by her mother to this holy Image, presently began to suck and recovered. Hence, sound and free from any disease, the good mother brought her to the holy Chapel.

**June 26th.** Francis, son of Paul Nardi, of Castelli di Acumino, obsessed for two years on being conducted today to the holy Chapel, was instantly liberated from the diabolical spirit, which however afterwards appeared to him on the following night and gave him a terrible stroke on the face, saying « **traitor I will blind you** » but on the following morning, Francis, having confessed himself with bitter tears, obtained the grace of a complete cure.

Today likewise Stefana, daughter, of Antony, of Tivoli, residing in Rome, who by accident was struck by a great stone on the foot which remained broken in three places; having recourse instantly full of tears and in grief to this holy Image, by a rare miracle, became cured and sound. Thence with all haste, running on foot, she came to Most Holy Mary. Thus also today, Ruggiero, of Taranto, was healed in an instant from the effects of a desperate stab, an account of which he was already given over by the physicians.

Peter Buonomo, of Faenza, obtained two signal graces on this day, in as much as being deaf, and broken in the intestines; here in the holy Chapel,

he was cured of both and departed perfectly sound.

And finally today, Dominic Giuliani, a child of four years, in Rome, being crushed beyond the hope of remedy, was brought immediately by his parents to the holy Chapel; at the same time when the other infirm were healed, he also was rendered perfectly sound and completely cured.

**June 27th.** Elizabeth, daughter of John, a Fleming, having lost for three years her whole right side, on this day, from Most Holy Mary had the grace that she came to seek, and which she so much desired.

Here also today, Margherita, the daughter of Stephen da Bionza, miserably lame, was rendered straight. And Johanna Leoni, a Castilian, who for thirty nine years had lost the use of half her body, was today at once rendered sound and full of life.

Margaret, daughter of Mark, of the city of Ragusa in Sclavonia, having lost the use of her right arm for seven years, obtained its perfect cure.

And Mary, daughter of Dominic, in the country of Canemorto, contracted in all her nerves, was perfectly loosened and freed.

Thus also Gabriel Niccola Mariano, a Roman child of four years, broken internally, upon being conducted to the holy Chapel by his parents, was suddenly restored and cured.

Likewise today, John, son of Arci, of Marino, was favoured with the sight of both eyes, who had come to the feet of Mary blind. And Lawrence son of Peter Paul, a Roman, today finally hung up in the holy Chapel the crutches which he used to carry to bring himself to the Chapel. *Bacula dimisit, et sanus et liber factus est.* It is thus expressed in the public act of the Notary.

**June 28th.** Martina Chiarelli, a Roman, for seven years tormented by obsession of the devil, today was fully liberated from the infernal spirits.

And here likewise Angeletta Nardi, a Roman, obtained the grace of being freed from paralysis, which she had suffered for three years. Whence in the public record it is written: *ex quo intravit Sacram Capellam, illico sana et quieta extitit.*

**June 30th.** This proved another joyful and fortunate day, upon which God was pleased yet more to glorify the beautiful Image of his Holy Mother of Good Counsel. Antonella, daughter of Nicola Pipeo, of Vicovaro, who for five years continuously had been tormented in such a painful manner by uterine disease, that she was frequently on the point of death; on being conducted this day to the holy Chapel was, upon entering it, so perfectly freed and healed that she recovered all her vigour and strength. Angelo, son of John del Poggio, lame of a foot, became perfectly straight.

Bona Narducci, of Alatri, who had lost the use of her limbs, was perfectly invigorated and restored.

John Francis, of Anticoli, a child; broken internally, conducted by Margherita Schiavi, his mother, into the holy Chapel became so wonderfully cured, that not a sign of his ailment remained.

Santo, the son of Salini, of Morlupo, paralysed for many years, having come to the feet of the holy Image was in a moment liberated and made vigorous.

Santa, daughter of Dominic, of Castelnuovo, being useless, having lost the use of her limbs for the space of two years, conducted here today, acquired motion, health, and strength.

Thus Mary, daughter of Bartholomew Stephen de Orlandis of Marano,

obsessed by the devil for twenty two years, was liberated in the holy Chapel from all the bonds of hell. And a certain man of Frascati, called Guastacavalli who having awoke one night found his throat inflamed and with three pustules as large as walnuts in his mouth from whence issued black and putrid matter. He for three days suffered great agony, not finding any remedy whatever for his sudden and most dangerous malady. Scarcely had he made a vow to come to the feet of the most holy Image, than he became instantly cured, as if nothing whatever had happened to him.

And in fine, Gabriel, of Cremona, being one day gored by an enraged ox so frightfully that a large vessel was filled with blood and he was about to expire. Presently with vivid confidence, having had suppliant recourse to most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, he was cured in an instant, and today came to Genazzano, festive and joyful to return thanks. *Ita se incolumem, sanum et liberum invenit, tamquam si nihil eidem accidisset.* Thus was it deposed upon oath in the register within the holy Chapel.

### JULY 1467

**July 1st.** Nicolo Ozzigi, a German, for many years unnerved and deprived of strength, through a most obstinate quartan fever (**malaria**), having come on this day to visit the holy Image, received from Our Lady instantly the graces and liberation he sought.

**July 3rd.** Margherita daughter of Giovanni, a German by nation, having lost the use of her left arm, came today to visit and to recommend herself to the holy Image. In the very moment while she was praying, she felt her arm free and sound.

**July 4th.** Marco, son of di Stefano, a Hungarian, was cured as before related.

**July 5th.** Mary, daughter of John Vecchi, of Palestrina, an infant of eleven months, born impeded in hands and feet and especially in the loins, without being able in any way to sustain herself on her feet, on being brought today by her mother to the holy Chapel and being devoted to Mary, was made sound, free and perfect, to the great joy of all the family. And thus also today, Catharine Alemanna, contracted in such a painful manner in all her members, especially in her hands, which for a long time were completely closed without being able to open them in any way, in the presence of this holy Image she opened them instantly; and instantly also, disappeared her whole painful contraction.

**July 7th.** Dominic Saracini, of San Vito, an infant of ten months, who was upon the point of dying, not having taken milk for the space of six days and six nights, upon being devoted by his sorrowful mother to the holy Image, immediately became sound and hale; on which account they brought him today to the holy altar of Mary in Genazzano, in order to present to Her a little creature with tenderness which was indeed Her gift.

**July 9th.** Onorato Lecchi, travelling with a scythe suspended from his neck, fell precipitately, and the scythe wounded him so seriously in the foot, that a bone protruded from the flesh. Oppressed by a mortal spasm he withdrew the point of the scythe, but he remained weakened in the foot and lame with continual pain. Finally having come today, suppliantly to the feet of this holy Image, he received a favour so signal that the foot became wholly



sound and healed, as if it had never received the least hurt.

**July 11th.** Seven beautiful and most signal favours illustrated and honoured this day.

Nicholas, son of John Muroli, of Anagni, reduced to extremity through a continuous and pertinacious fever, had scarcely made a vow to come barefoot to the feet of the holy Image, than he was cured.

Santo, son of Pietro, also of Anagni, reduced to a languishing and bloodless condition by a most obstinate fever, having come suppliantly to the holy Image, was perfectly cured.

Angelo Pasquale Torre, reduced to death's door, lay three nights agonising. His relations made a vow to bring him to visit the holy Image, and upon this he commenced to grow better immediately; and today, joyful and in haste to fulfil the vow made, they brought him to Genazzano.

Giuliano Migri, of Anagni, likewise languishing from an obstinate fever, scarcely had made a vow to visit the holy Chapel, when he found himself cured.

John Andrew Foreste, of Sarzano, who was liberated from death and from the prison of Sienna, came today to return thanks to Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Graziano, of Nepi, hurt and grievously injured internally, had scarcely arrived at the feet of the holy Image, but he was healed, « *illico viscera intus redacta sunt* », as is expressed in the public testament.

And finally on this day, Ambrose Gasparini, of Stigliano, who having fallen from the position of riches and opulence into extreme poverty, had become furiously insane; being brought with great difficulty to this holy Image today, became sensible, wise and perfectly liberated and resigned.

**July 12th.** Antonietta, daughter of Nicholas del Aquila, affected for three years continuously in such a manner that, raging and howling, she seemed to possess a pack of infernal wolves in her bosom, today in the holy Chapel was rendered perfectly sane and free.

Nicholas Greco, who - deceived by a young girl named Ursuline who gave some infernal mixture to him in a drink - became obsessed and wandered night and day through the country, with a naked sword shouting and threatening; scarcely had he appeared at the feet of the holy Image, whither, with great difficulty he was forced to come, when he was immediately healed.

**July 15th.** Santo Master, of Nepi, having gone into the country at the harvest time, was on a sudden attacked by the pestilence which then raged in the city. Scarcely however did he make a vow to be brought to the feet of the holy Image than the pestilential malady ceased.

Peter Giorgio, a Sclavonian, who had been abandoned by the physicians in a mortal illness, having heard on his sick bed from a companion who had returned from a visit to the holy Image « *Peter why do you not make a vow to the miraculous Madonna of Genazzano?* » At this the dying man turned suppliantly to Mary and made the vow; and as instantly arose from his bed perfectly restored, and speedily set out on his journey to fulfil his promise in Genazzano, where he made the usual declaration on oath, as to the reason of his coming. And John, son of Angelo of Paliano, rendered useless, nerveless and bloodless by a pertinacious quartan fever, today in the holy Chapel was fully cured. In this same most fortunate day, Froila, a beautiful

young lady of twenty years, born however with two unequal limbs, one being shorter than the other, had from Our Lady the signal grace which she asked; and was relieved even from deformity.

**July 18th.** John, son of John di Monteforti, who, having been present in Genazzano when the people of Segni came in suppliant procession to the feet of the sacred Image to beg from the Empress of heaven immunity from the terrible scourge of the plague, was himself suddenly surprised with the pestilence, having a black swelling on his thigh. He immediately flew to the holy Chapel, and was at once freed from the imminent peril of death in which he stood.

**July 23rd.** Daniel, son of Antonio, of Nemi, was so terribly possessed that he tore his own flesh with his teeth; today in the holy Chapel was liberated from the infernal slavery that he had endured.

Sabastiano and Lucia, children of Antonia Marzotta, of Genazzano, who were about to die and in fact expiring, as soon as their mother had vowed to present their statues in wax to the holy Chapel, they rose up festive and joyful from their bed, and accompanied their faithful mother to render fervent thanks to Mary, at the Shrine of Her holy Image.

**July 28th.** John Godfrey of Orleans, who, dwelling in the city of Sutre, met with a dangerous accident, by which his intestines were broken, he was consequently taken with fainting fits and spasms in the stomach. The moment, however, that he made a vow to go on foot to the holy Image, he became whole and sound.

**July 31st.** Angelo Mattopelle, of Serofano, lame in the left foot, having entered today in the Chapel, was cured.

Angelo Mione, of Montegiovitto, being taken with a sudden illness, was despaired of by the physicians. The moment he made a vow to go to the holy Image, he was freed from every danger.

James, son of Orazio, of Agricola, taken by a worm fever, was at extremities; his father made a vow to carry him to the foot of the holy Image, and he was at once relieved.

Thus also, in fine, Francis, son of John, of the district of Serofano, contracted in the nerves and unable to move himself, having turned with vivid faith to this holy Image, found himself suddenly loosened, sound and perfectly freed; whence he soon came to the foot of most Holy Mary of Good Counsel to fulfil his vow.

## AUGUST 1467

**Aug. 1st.** Lucia Spalatri, of Subiaco, having her whole body swollen by dropsy, upon making a vow to send to the Shrine a wax figure of her own size, and to go there herself, was instantly cured.

James Veneziano, a physician of Castel Fajano, being grievously injured by a kick from a horse, as soon as he had with living faith appealed to Our Lady of Good Counsel, found himself cured completely by invisible means.

Gaspar Ciotti, of Avignon, residing in the city of Nepi, infected with the pestilence and having its fatal sign, that is, a black swelling, though stunned by the unexpected calamity, as soon as he had recourse to this most holy Image, he found himself perfectly freed and sound. And Paul di Morlupo,

an inhabitant of Castel Fajano, blind forty years in the right eye, today happily in the holy Chapel obtained its perfect use.

**Aug. 6th.** Catharine Tome, of Nepi, who, while the plague was in that city, found herself attacked by the usual black swelling and was already at the point of death. The moment she had recourse to Our Lady of Good Counsel, a metal Image of Whom was brought to her, she was immediately cured. The black tumour disappeared, she arose from her bed, and joyfully appeared here today in Genazzano, to return thanks at the feet of the holy Image.

**Aug. 7th.** This was, in fine, another most joyful day, illustrated by eight miracles wrought by the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

Nicholas, son of John, of Manfredonia, oppressed for a long time with a most painful sciatica, which had rendered him lame and unable to move in one foot, after having been seven days praying in the holy Chapel without being heard, today, returning to Rome in the hope of finding at least some alleviation; Our Lady however appeared to him on the road, and he was graciously and instantly cured by Her.

James Petrini, of Caprarola, despairing of cure for a putrid fistula between the thighs, for which without the slightest advantage he had received « *many and infinite cures* », from very many doctors, today, while praying in the holy Chapel, was completely cured.

Constantine da Carolis, of Castelfollie, already three hours dead, after being duly fortified by all the rites of the church and given over by the physicians, was, through the intercession of the Most Holy Mother of Good Counsel invoked by his sorrowing master, restored to life.

Angelo Paolo, a Roman, reduced to extremities by a malignant punctured fever, having vowed to the holy Image, left his bed cured.

Antony, son of James, of Mataloni, who whilst bringing lime to Rome for the building of the church of St. Mark, had lost an eye, was today cured in the holy Chapel.

Likewise today, Mathew, son of Antony, of Nepi, who in consequence of a severe blow upon the eyes had become completely blind, was today restored to the use of his sight, in the holy Chapel.

Santo de Angelis, also of Nepi, who contracted the pestilence with four black swellings, was miraculously saved by the holy Image.

Finally (**on 7th Aug.**), Peter Manelli, likewise of Nepi, exhausted by a long fever scarcely had entered the holy Chapel today, when he became perfectly relieved, sound and free.

**Aug. 9th.** Mathew di Camagnola, of Alatri, while standing in his house, found himself on a sudden covered with ruins from the fall of the same. All thought him dead, and laboured only to find his corpse, but having cried out at the first moment « ***Most Holy Madonna of Genazzano help me*** », he was saved and found to the astonishment of all, living, unhurt, and sound in every respect. And on this day also, Angelo di Amica, a Roman, coming with a living faith to this holy Image was freed from a putrid fever, through which he vomited large worms out of his mouth.

**Aug. 14th.** Antony Festa, of Campagnano, for a year and a half, suffered from a flux of blood, so pertinacious that, as often as eight or ten times in the hour on some days, he lost large quantities, on account of which being completely exhausted, he momentarily (**at any moment**) expected death. Being exhorted to have recourse with a lively faith to this holy Image,

vowing to present himself at its feet in Genazzano and having done so, he instantly found himself cured.

In like manner also Nicholas, the son of John, of Civitaducale, a child of tender years having fallen from off the walls of the said city, was carried to his house half dead. The moment, however, that the parents besought with tears the help of Our Lady of Good Counsel, the child became sound, safe and lively; whence in gratitude they speedily set out with the little fellow for Genazzano, and there today, in the holy Chapel, they deposed upon oath the reason of their coming.

The above synopsis was formed by De Orgio from the formal statements found in the original codex. The miracles there recorded might be continued to this day. The same graces and the same scenes of thanksgiving are still witnessed by all dwelling near the Sanctuary. In the next chapter (**XIII**) we shall see that equal mercies are extended to all who anywhere worship Our Lady under the endearing appellation of Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

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## Chapter XIII

### MIRACULOUS COPIES

1. Early copies - Degrees of likeness to the original. - 2. Copy in Genoa - Its history - Its coming saves the city from ruin. - 3. Ancient copy at Modena. - 4. Copies in Calabria. - 5. At Monte Cassiano. - 6. At Frosinone (**Eyes moved**). - 7. In Rome. - 8. Miraculous copy in the Campo Santo of the Vatican (**Unburned Paper Copy**) - 9. In Naples - Buonanno - Fr. Modestino - Holy Cross of Lucca etc. - 10. Outside Italy - Copy at Madrid **which spoke to St. Aloysius** - Honoured by supreme Councils of Spain. - 11. Bavaria. - 12. Austria. - 13. Belgium. - 14. A city with a facsimile of the church and sacred Image and called Genazzano, in South America. - 15. Letter of Father Belgrano regarding the celebrated copy at Prague.

1. When we consider the wonderful devotion excited by the sacred Image of Our Lady at Genazzano, and the number of miraculous favours received at its Shrine, we cannot be surprised that many copies were taken of it, from the very commencement. A people so full of genius, and so art loving as the Italians, were sure to have it reproduced in the best manner possible. In the previous chapter (**XII**), we saw that, even during the first few weeks after the Apparition (**in 1467**), a copy found in a poor man's hat was the occasion of more than one miracle. Copies of a very early date in bronze and marble, in medals, in cameos, in bass-reliefs, in stone and metal, in wood and terracotta, are common in Rome, and indeed in all the surrounding country.

As soon as the printing press came into existence, an immense number of engravings on paper and parchment were scattered everywhere. Thousands of oil paintings on canvass, executed in every degree of art excellence, and in almost every style known since the fifteenth century, are found in the churches of Italy. With the advancement of the mechanical arts of reproduction, copies of every description, photographs, oleographs, lithographs, etc. have increased to a very great extent. Although all of these copies have more or less resemblance to the original, the fancy of the painter, it must be said, very often leads him to take strange, and often unpardonable liberties with the features and surroundings of the figures. Some, however, are beautiful and fairly faithful; but, as we have before observed, in no instance, even where skill is greatest, and desire to succeed strongest, has any artist succeeded in perfectly reproducing the original, either in its beauty or in its power of devotional effect upon the beholder. Nevertheless, it has pleased the Almighty to bless many such copies with the same

miraculous power as He has conferred upon the original wonderful Image itself.

All such copies, more or less perfectly represent Mary in the attitude She so loves, and which we have before described. All are calculated to lift the hearts of Her devout clients to a fervour of devotion to Her, which no other painting, however well executed, produces. But it is at the same time worthy of notice that, as the original is more nearly approached, the devotional power of the copy is increased. Hence we find that copies remarkable for being miraculous, are also remarkable for great fidelity to the original, and in general, have touched it. The latter qualification, however, though greatly prized, does not seem to be necessary in order that copies may possess miraculous power.

2. We may here mention that some of these copies are held in a veneration inferior only to that shown to the sacred Image itself. Amongst them, the one painted by **Luigi Tosi** already referred to, holds a conspicuous place. It was executed for **Genoa**, his native city, under circumstances of a peculiarly interesting nature. In 1774 that city was surrounded by three powerful enemies and straitened (**in difficulties**) upon every side. The previous year its massive fortifications were stormed and taken by the Austrians; however, after a three month's occupation, the heroism of the inhabitants drove out the invaders.

But in 1774 enemies appeared once again in overwhelming numbers. They encompassed the walls and held the noble harbour. The strength of the city, after the effort of the previous year, was spent. No Doria (**Admiral Andrea Doria**) arose capable of coping with the terrible odds which now menaced the very existence of Genoa. Her supremacy on the sea had departed. Her commerce was crippled. Cannon thundered day and night against her ancient, but yet splendid, battlements. Mortars and howitzers from points of vantage on sea and land, battered her towers. Diplomacy was as much against her fortunes as the power of her enemies. There was no friendly hand stretched out to save her. Her independence, her existence as a free and independent state, was at stake. Yet fondly her children loved her. Within was weeping, and without, her scattered sons pleaded at every court in the Italian peninsula for the doomed city of (**Christopher**) Columbus, Genoa the superb. But in vain. Nearer and nearer to her walls drew the fatal cordon of the besieger's lines. Her fall was but a question of time. Europe looked on with indifference. All hope on earth had departed when it occurred to one of her children, **an Augustinian Friar then in Rome**, to have recourse to the powerful mediation of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

He communicated his desire to his fellow townsman, Luigi Tosi, then one of the principal painters in the Eternal City. He ordered a copy, the best the artist's power could produce, of the sacred Image of God's

Mother in Genazzano; and he determined to try, despite the hazards, to get it conveyed to his beleaguered fellow countrymen in Genoa. In the first, he succeeded as already described. The copy made by the Genoese (**Tosi**) in his sorrow, was the nearest likeness to the original, at that time, ever seen. Further, it will be recollected that Our Lady (**in other cases**) gave the surest sign of (**impending**) success. The roseate hue of the features of the Madonna, (**witnessed**) while the copy was being executed, has never (**before**) been known to be witnessed by a petitioner without his petition being afterwards granted. To save a city, an entire republic, in such extremity was much to ask, but not too much for the power of Mary. And Genoa was in fact saved.

The copy, when finished, was introduced into the city, despite the vigilance of the enemy. The Augustinian had not only contrived to elude the blockade, but he had also advised his fellow citizens of the nature of the favour he had procured for them. They received his gift with every demonstration of joy. They met the Image in solemn procession. They brought it by the battered walls, in sight of the hostile fleet, and beneath the falling towers and palaces of Genoa; and most solemnly, amidst hymns of praise and prayer, they placed it before the gaze of kneeling and supplicating thousands, in the church of the Augustinians. That very night, from causes then and since unexplained, the cannonading ceased; the hostile fleet spread sail and moved slowly from the harbour to the open sea; the invading host struck its tents; and before the morning's dawn, the standards of the armies of the enemies of Genoa, were seen passing over the hills that look down upon the city. In four and twenty hours, the last of the invading forces had departed; and the republic, completely liberated, was left in long peace by the power of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

This miraculous deliverance, naturally caused the people of the all-but-lost state, to show great devotion to Our Lady of Genazzano. Her feasts are since celebrated in the city as at the Shrine, and all the country is filled with the fame of miracles wrought at this new sanctuary.

3. We may here remark that the copy in Genoa, though singular in its history and very beautiful, is, in comparison with others held in similar veneration elsewhere, almost modern. The most ancient copy, is probably that **in the parish of St. Francis, in Modena**. De Orgio states that this copy must have been taken at the time of the Miraculous Apparition. At all events, it is certain that it has been honoured by the Modenese from time immemorial. As in Genazzano, its shrine is visited by multitudes from afar on all the feasts of the Madonna; and novenas, attended by crowded congregations, take place before the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, and also before the 25th of April, the anniversary of the Miraculous Apparition. Throughout the year, the devout people of

Modena, and its neighbourhood, are found in devout supplication before the chapel which houses this copy. The graces and favours received there are proved by innumerable votive offerings, left by the fortunate clients of Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

4. Another copy has proved not only that gifts and miracles flow upon those devout to Our Lady of Good Counsel, but has also demonstrated how deep and lasting is the love of the Albanians for the treasure (**the holy Image**) lost by their ancestors. We shall see, further on, how it happened that **a descendant of an Albanian family** adorned Her shrine with rare gifts years after that family had become merged in the Italian people. Another Albanian, in Calabria, proved to be a true Apostle of devotion to the Patroness of the Land of Scanderbeg. This was a **devout Priest, named Rodotà**, a man full of virtue and apostolic zeal. He brought a copy of the Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel from Genazzano to **Calabria** in 1713. This copy, like that of the Genoa copy, closely resembled the original. It was first placed in the church of **San Benedetto Ullano**, and so great was the number of prodigies which immediately took place through it that its fame spread throughout all Southern Italy. By its means such a blessing descended on the apostolic labours of Father Rodotà that, almost in a year, the whole of Calabria became converted and sanctified. Such tender devotion, such secret, ineffable comfort, such internal relief, such strength, such joy possessed the people at the contemplation of this representation of Mary that all the land became disposed to goodness, and all increased in tenderest love for the Mother and for the Son. In consequence, temples were erected in honour of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel everywhere; and to this day, Calabria may be called Her province.

5. In **Monte Cassiano** the devotion was so great for yet another copy that, from the continual miracles wrought at its shrine, Our Lady of Good Counsel was, on the 4th of August 1765, at the earnest prayer of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and in deference to the wish of the whole community, constituted by the Holy See, special Patroness of that locality. The devotion of the townspeople extended to all of the neighbouring cities, and continues, amidst innumerable instances of miraculous graces, to increase in intensity and in extent to this day.

6. But perhaps the most remarkable of all the copies of Our Lady of Good Counsel, is that now venerated in **the church of St. Benedict, at Frosinone**. This town, distant by carriageway some forty miles from Genazzano, sends annually thousands of its inhabitants on pilgrimage to the Sanctuary, both for the feast of the Miraculous Apparition, and for that of the Nativity of Our Lady. The devotion of its people to Our Lady of Good Counsel has been, from the commencement, very great. Scarcely a family is without a representation of the sacred Image. It is found in the



houses of the poorest. In print or on canvass it is equally venerated; but in general those whose circumstances permit, are in possession of copies taken by skilled artists, regardless of expense.

A very beautiful copy happened in this way to be in the possession of the noble and wealthy **family of Ciceroni**, who obtained it from an Augustinian Father named Palladi. It remained a precious treasure with this household, who preserved and honoured it with that care which all Italian families know how to bestow upon the picture or the statue of the Madonna venerated in their homes.

It happened that in 1760, the Ciceronis employed a pious, poor servant, named **Mary Solonie Roma**. It was a great consolation for this devout soul to spend her spare moments before the beautiful picture of Mary. She loved to stay as long as her avocations (**regular job**) permitted before a Mother Who knows so well how to pour the necessary balm of relief into the afflicted spirit, without spoiling the merit which sufferings bring to Her servants, and specially to Her servants amongst Her most faithful friends, the poor. Mary Salonie Roma was a valued domestic, and remained with the family long years, consoled by the Madonna of Good Counsel. It was her delight to cause others to receive at the feet of Mary the comforts she experienced so often herself. And so it came to pass that, when she happened to bring her sister, a girl 15 years old, to pray before the sacred Image **on the eve of the 10th of July 1796 (i.e. Saturday 9th)**, to the astonishment of both, the picture of **Our Lady most distinctly opened and moved its eyes**. If these good souls thought themselves deceived, they were soon put at rest, for **the miracle continued in the presence of the family; and afterwards of the whole city, for no less than six months**. The excitement produced by an occurrence so extraordinary was very great. The crowds that flocked to witness it became so vast that it was found necessary to transfer the Image to the church, where it still remains, and where hundreds and thousands have venerated it. Prodigies of grace and mercy followed such a miraculous manifestation; and though the movement of the eyes ceased, the graces which fall upon all who devoutly visit the Image, do not cease. Conversions innumerable, the healing of the mind and heart as well as of the body, continue to be operated by the love and power of God's Mother, Whom it pleased to so singularly honour this copy.

**7. Rome itself** being so near Genazzano, and being amongst the first of the cities in Italy to hear of the Wonderful Apparition of the Image, and of the miracles which followed, **contains**, as we might expect, **many copies of the Madonna of Good Counsel**. Well executed ones in fresco and in oil may be met with in the streets, and in very many churches of the Eternal City. In shops and in private dwellings, the paintings and prints of various sizes and still more varied pretensions to

art excellence, are innumerable. These are always held in the greatest veneration. Hundreds of oil lamps, kept even by the poor, burn continually before them. Then there are special chapels in many churches, erected to Our Lady of Good Counsel. In that of **St. Augustine**; in the **Pauline chapel of the Vatican**; in the church of **Santa Maria del Popolo**; in **San Lorenzo in Lucina**, and very many others we find either special chapels or altars; and in all these, the records of wonders worked in favour of those devoted to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel are well preserved. In the **Basilica of St. Mark**, the authentic account of miracles is something extraordinary; so much so indeed that, from the continual favours obtained there through an ancient miraculous copy, a special feast is every year celebrated with all possible solemnity, **on the second Sunday of July. (Why that Date? -E.S.)**

8. But, not to spend too much time on a theme which would require volumes, we shall select one from amongst the many miracles recorded of copies of the Madonna of Genazzano in the city of the Popes (**Rome**), to prove how tender and universal the devotion is there, and how richly it is rewarded. This miracle took place on **Sunday the 4th of September 1796**. On that day it happened that the Master of the bakery of Monte Compatri, belonging to the Prince Borghesi, had occasion to whitewash his premises. While preparing to do so, a picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel printed on common paper got accidentally detached from the wall, and, inadvertently of course, became mixed with firewood. With the same inadvertence, the paper was thrown with the wood into the oven. As usual the whole mass was ignited, and in a little while, when the wood was supposed to be sufficiently consumed for heating purposes, the baker looked within, and, to his astonishment, saw a piece of paper unburned amidst the red hot embers. His first impulse was to mix it anew with the burning matter, and he actually did so. To his still greater astonishment, however, his efforts were useless. He therefore withdrew it from the oven, and found it to be the picture of the Madonna of Good Counsel inadvertently mixed with the firewood. His surprise, and that of all who heard of the miracle, may be more easily imagined than described. The picture was immediately placed in veneration, in the chapel of the burial ground of the Vatican, where it may still be seen. There is yet a slight sign of burning at the extreme edges, and a few sparks have apparently alighted upon the figures of Jesus and Mary. The devout Romans continue to visit this picture, now enshrined under a tabernacle, and to pray there for the dead. They call it « *the Liberatrix of souls from the pains of Purgatory* » in memory of the miracle. Much indeed, have the holy souls to thank Our Lady, Who in their favour caused this miracle to be performed. Every day since, it draws from Her innumerable clients, a valuable aid for them in their sufferings. In Rome

also, near St. Peters in Vinculis, is a street called *La Madonna del buon Consiglio*, from a much frequented Oratory there.

9. But even before Rome itself, in the intensity and extent of its devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, comes **Naples**. In that great city, **Father Buonanno of the Oratory**, himself a Neapolitan, and for many years one of its resident clergy, observes that « *there is not a chapel, not an oratory, not a Church which is without its copy of the Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel* », and he further adds « *of which there is not something wonderful or miraculous recorded* ». « *Since* » he says « *it is not possible to mention all, not even the principal of these copies, we shall glance at two which attract the greatest devotion of the Neapolitan people.*

*The first of them is found in the vast and ancient temple named **La Sanità** served by the sons of St. Peter of Alcantara. It is impossible to describe the numbers of people, of every condition of life, who come to the feet of this image to satisfy their affection, to confess their needs, and to beseech Our Lady for graces and assistance. Nor are they deceived, for the walls of the sacred chapel are seen entirely covered with the votive offerings they present in thanksgiving. A fact which in truth inspires confidence, and lifts up the heart to the sweet hope that the Holy Virgin never knows how to deny any favour to him who, with sincere humility, demands (**prays for**) it. How many infirm have been cured before this image and are still cured! How many sinners reconciled to God! How many prodigies of every kind have been performed! So much good and so much glory is owing to that religious man, altogether of God, named **Father Modestino**, who died not long since a victim of evangelical charity, and in the odour of sanctity. Most devoted to Our Lady of Good Counsel he revived Her worship, nourished it with his apostolic fatigues, propagated it by his pious labours, and going with his Madonna from house to house, from the mansion of the noble to the hut of the pauper, whenever sickness or need called him; he inflamed all Naples with such intense devotion to the Virgin of Good Counsel that it became, beyond power of description, beneficent and miraculous, by the wonderful graces which She deigned to obtain for all by Her intercession!*

« *The other wonderful Image is venerated in the temple of the Carmelite religious, known as that of the Holy Cross of Lucca. It is a most ancient picture and always miraculous, and was brought there in 1807, by **Sister Mary Camilla Caravita**, to whom it had been given by her director, **Father Joseph di Maio**, a monk of the Order of St. Augustine. The good religious of this Convent have reason to know how rich in benefits, and in signal prodigies, was this Image, especially in favour of one of their number not long dead, who from 1856 till then, was very*

*frequently favoured with great graces. In that year the picture was transferred from the convent to one of the chapels of the church above mentioned, as it was judged that an object so singular and wonder-working should not remain, as before, solely for the advantage of the religious only; but should be also exposed to the public veneration of the fervent and devout. These now come in great numbers to this church, especially on the day sacred to Our Lady of Good Counsel, to salute their Mother and to ask of Her, aid, counsel, grace and salvation ».*

**10.** So far Father Buonanno. But it is not only in Naples or Italy that we are to look for wonders worked by copies of the Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel. From the first coming of the miraculous Image to Genazzano **the Augustinians, all over the world,** appear to have taken up the devotion most warmly, and to have spread it in every sphere of their influence. So it extended through France, Germany, and Spain. In the latter country there existed a most beautiful copy in the church at **Madrid**, and this, amongst other wonders, was **the one which spoke to the angelic youth St. Aloysius Gonzaga.** The fact is well authenticated, as may be seen from the history of the life of that marvel of youthful piety and wisdom. He had, like all others, his crosses, his troubles, and his temptations. In no other saint's life, save in that of St. Stanislaus of Kostka, do we find such entanglements prepared by prosperity and adversity alike, to seduce young virtue at an age of all ages the most dangerous for the sons of the rich and the powerful.

In all these trials, Aloysius found his strength and comfort in prayer, long, ardent and heavenly, before this copy of the famous Madonna of Genazzano. Our Lady loved the beautiful soul of the innocent boy, and perfected him so wonderfully in a short period that he soon possessed a seat high in heaven near Herself. **From this picture then, She spoke to him not once, but many times;** comforting him in his troubles, confirming him in his vocation, and giving him, it is said, a thousand expressions of her Maternal tenderness.

No wonder he should become a saint and a great one. What he experienced is simply that which is experienced, though perhaps in a less miraculous way, by all who approach the wonderful original. Thousands tell how Mary there appears to speak to them, to unravel the secrets of their hearts, to show them the future, to guide them in their course through life, to defend them against every danger of soul and body; and, in brief, to repay their devotion and love a hundred, aye, and a hundred thousand fold. The life, the destiny, so to speak of each one, is peculiar (**particular to each one**). He must take it as God is pleased to provide it. Some have to guard against enemies, visible and invisible, dangers, trials, and troubles. To these Mary will prove a faithful Counsellor, a shield of invincible strength, provided they approach with filial love to Her

miraculous Image. **Nor is it necessary to go to Genazzano.** St. Aloysius is a proof that Our Lady's favours are not confined to the pilgrims to the original, but are extended to all, who in any church like that of Madrid, in any oratory, or even in their own chambers, show devotion to Her in that representation, which places Her in so touching and singular a manner before mind and heart.

Spain was great at the time when the Supreme Councils of its empire appeared with all the pomp of power before the very Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel before which St. Aloysius prayed, and there implored Her assistance in the discharge of their onerous duties. Spain now, like other Catholic nations, has unfortunately found out, in obedience to « progress », how to dispense with (**discontinue**) this and other holy observances, but not to Spain's glory or advantage. The greatness of that Catholic nation departed with the intensity of its faith. Hopefully a return to that which she once was could yet save her, and restore her former proud position amongst the nations<sup>1</sup>.

**11. Bavaria** has been even more so than Spain in devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. The Fathers of the Augustinian Order introduced, at a very early date, many remarkable copies of the sacred original of Genazzano into the churches of their order in Bavaria. One of these, venerated in the capital (**Munich**), has been so famous for miracles that the Bavarian Princess, Maria Antonia of Saxony, petitioned Pope Clement XIII to establish the Pious Union in all the establishments of the Hermits of St. Augustine in her dominions; and further, to confer upon it the privileges granted to that of Genazzano by Pope Benedict XIV.

This the Pontiff granted by a document under his own hand; and in consequence, on the 25th of April 1761, the sodality was erected with all the solemnities of religious pomp, at which the royal court attended.

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<sup>1</sup> In his history of wonderful copies, De Orgio says, « *In the year 1735 Father Michael Mareschl, an Augustinian, and at the time, assistant to the General for Germany at St. Augustine's in Rome, obtained a copy. This had been brought with the greatest devotion for many years through the states of the Church, through the Abruzzi and through many cities and towns by Father Antonio Socini, an Augustinian, who at that time dwelt in the convent of Sta. Maria in Genazzano, and who had a singular devotion for the holy original, joined with a deep faith. Therefore, in many places, there were worked by the means of this copy, wonderful graces and prodigies. The blind obtained their sight, the lame were cured, the possessed of the devil were liberated, of which wonders the public Archives of various towns contain the attestations in legal form. This copy the good Augustinian afterwards brought to Prague, where was published, in a pamphlet, the wonders worked by its means.* »

Another copy venerated at **Messina** was so remarkable for prodigies that a book was written upon them. In this book reference is made to the wonderful copy of the sacred Original in **Madrid** and to others in **Catania** and elsewhere in **Sicily**. Father De Orgio makes special mention of a copy, which he had himself sent to **Palermo** and which was received with immense fervour.

**12. In Austria,** copies of Our Lady of Good Counsel have had, if that were possible, a still greater veneration. And with good reason. In 1574, a beautiful one which had touched the original was exposed in **the church of St. Roche and St. Sebastian;** and such was the number of miraculous favours granted that, in the space of a year, votive offerings of pure silver, and thousands of less precious material were left as tokens of gratitude. These favours were not confined to the humbler classes. The Imperial Family came to experience the singular bounty of Our Lady of Good Counsel. The massive oil lamp of precious metal, which burns night and day in that church, is an offering on the part of the Archduchess of Austria, for the cure of her first-born child. This miracle was so clear and so extraordinary that it attracted not only all the imperial family, but citizens of the Empire from its furthestmost limits, and from all ranks of life, to venerate an image from which such signal blessings flowed.

**13. From Antwerp, in Belgium,** as late as 1859, we have accounts of wonders wrought by a copy of the Virgin Mother venerated in that city in **the church** of those faithful clients of Our Lady of Good Counsel, **the Redemptorist Fathers.** These fervent missionaries, after the example of their holy founder (**St. Alphonsus Liguori**), have been most assiduous in forwarding the devotion. When the cholera raged in **the Netherlands** during the above mentioned year, not only the people of Antwerp, but those of Biring, Neil, and Ruppelmonde came in crowds to implore Mary's protection. Innumerable were the cases of complete preservation that followed. The good Catholics of these countries still bear in memory that cures were not only effected for those who went to venerate the Image in the church, but that multitudes who honoured it in copies in their homes were either miraculously preserved untouched, or recovered when attacked, as miraculously.

**14.** We shall conclude our observations upon copies of the beautiful original, by a brief glance at a most extraordinary one, venerated under very peculiar circumstances in **South America.**

The history of this new wonder, may well cause our English Speaking readers to consider following the example it gives. It speaks of a new Genazzano, with its church and Madonna, formed exactly upon the model of that in Latium. As early as 1836, a **Spanish Augustinian**, one of those men who had seen the venerable copy in Madrid which spoke to St. Aloysius, felt inspired to transmit a devotion so valuable to the countries of South America in which his missionary lot happened at that time to be cast. The good Father, seeing new towns springing up about him with no higher aims than worldly ones, considered what a blessing to his countrymen it would be if, by means of a town to be called after Genazzano and containing a sanctuary and Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel fashioned in every respect

after the original one, he could establish the devotion that existed near the Eternal City with such fruit for so many centuries. He struggled hard to attain his object, and at length completely succeeded. So it happens that, at this moment, there is, at an easy distance from Boyaca in the Archdiocese of Santa Fè di Bogata, a « *Genazzano of Good Counsel*, » with some ten thousand inhabitants, called into existence by the unique and extraordinary zeal of the good Father. This new township is larger than Bathurst or Maitland in New South Wales, and has more Catholics living there than any Episcopal city in Australia, other than Sydney or Melbourne. Over the high altar of its principal parish church, the beautiful copy of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel is now enthroned. It is visited by multitudes from the capital and the surrounding country. Already the favours received at its feet rival those of the European sanctuaries; and South America bids fair to be one of the foremost of continents in this most beautiful devotion.

Our limits will not permit us to go further into the history of all that has been done for the good of souls by the copies of the sacred Image of Our Lady in Genazzano. All that the historians of the Sanctuary have written about them, and all that tradition tells of them, would fill volumes. The chapter which treats of the apostles of Our Lady of Good Counsel (**Chapter XVI**), will give further particulars of the power of copies, and prove how wise are those who study (**make an effort**) to propagate by pictures, medals, and every means a true and, in our days, a needed devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

**15. The celebrated copy of Prague**, referred to in an earlier footnote to this chapter (**at the end of Section 10**), and of which De Orgio wrote as early as 1747, has had a very eventful and singular history. This copy had been long venerated in the church of St. Catherine (**named after St. Catherine of Alexandria**). In 1787, upon the suppression of the church of St. Catherine by the strange administration of the Emperor Joseph II, it was religiously cared for by a devout Father of the Augustinian Order. He, when dying, left it as a sacred trust to his relatives. But in the course of years all trace of it disappeared. It happened, very fortunately for its recovery, that the late Prior of Genazzano was selected to go to Prague, in the capacity of confessor to the Ex-Emperor of Austria and his pious consort. The good Father, while in his new home, had his attention directed powerfully to the fact of the missing Image, which had been so well known in Italy, and so well recollected in Genazzano, as a most miraculous copy of the sacred Original. After long and unavailing search, he succeeded in finding it in a manner so remarkable that it cannot be said to be removed far from the miraculous. Zealous beyond measure for the glory of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, Whose devotion he has done wonders to spread in

Bohemia as well as in Italy, he kindly forwarded to the writer, whom he knew to be occupied with the present history, a letter detailing all the circumstances. This will, no doubt, be read with interest. The following is a translation of it from the Italian in which it was written:-

**Note Added by Eugene Shannon:-** The remainder of this Chapter consists of the letter referred to.

« Prague 15th Feb. 1883.

Dear Revd. Father

« Amongst the many copies of the wonderful Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel of Genazzano, worthy to be recorded in the history of that Sanctuary, is certainly that which at the present moment is venerated in the **church of the Sisters of Charity of St. Charles Borromeo in this city of Prague**. And as you request of me a particular account of it, to insert in your history of the holy Image, I very willingly comply, by telling you briefly all that I myself have come to know about it.

There lived in the beginning of the past century (**1700s**) a very pious and zealous religious, the **Reverend Father B. Antonio Socini**, priest of my own Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, who, having devoted himself to the apostolate of the Divine Word, travelled through various provinces of Italy, particularly Latium, Sabina, and the Abruzzi; where he preached chiefly the eternal truths after the manner of a missionary. He had the consolation of seeing the labours of his ministry blessed by God with copious fruits of salvation for souls, and with special graces and benefits even of a corporal nature for many amongst his hearers.

The good Father Socini attributed the happy effects of his ministry, after God, to the Patronage of Most Holy Mary Mother of Good Counsel, Whose venerated Image he was accustomed to carry about with him upon all his missions; and to display publicly in the church during the whole time each mission lasted, as the Patroness of the same, and as a means of encouraging the people to have recourse to Her with devotion and confidence. He himself obtained this great and full confidence in the Mother of Good Counsel, where he dwelt, at the very feet of the miraculous Image of Genazzano and where he dedicated himself to the ministry of preaching.

This Image then, we know he caused to be painted in Rome, by a pious young woman named **Teresa Simonetti**, who painted it upon white silk, in the year 1722.

From this same year, until about 1730, there passed a period of wonderful miracles and prodigies, which the Divine Mother of Good Counsel worked by means of the above mentioned Image, during the missions of the zealous religious, Father Socini, in favour of devout Christians.

Father Socini had the foresight to cause a formal act (**a formal written record**) to be drawn up by the competent authority of every place where extraordinary facts took place in the course of his sacred missions; and these original acts were deposited in 1735 in the Augustinian Convent of



**Monte San Savino** in the diocese of Arezzo. I have here with me, an authentic copy of the same, which served Father Mareschl for the purpose of compiling a pamphlet, which was printed in Rome in 1735.

Not being able here to refer to all the miraculous wonders worked by the holy Image, I will mention only a few principal facts.

In the month of **December 1725**, the Revd. Father Socini was giving a mission in the town of **San Sebastian**, in the Diocese of Marsi; and amongst the graces which the people there acknowledged to have received from the Mother of Good Counsel, was one by which a young girl of nine years of age, who was dumb from her birth, received the use of her speech.

Another, in **April 1726**, the zealous Father gave a mission in the town of **Fonticoli**, and during it, two young girls, sisters, named Mary Domenica, aged 15 years, and Grace, aged 13 years, both dumb from their birth, received the use of speech while praying before the Image of Mary of Good Counsel, which had been brought there by the pious missionary religious.

In the month of **May of the same year, 1726**, Father Socini exercised his sacred ministry in the city of **Pescina**. Mary's venerable Image was exposed in the Cathedral church, and the graces which the people received from Her were innumerable. Amongst others, a most signal one was received by a young man, dumb from his birth, and crippled to such an extent that he had to crawl on the ground. No sooner had he been anointed by Father Socini - with the oil that burned before the sacred Image of Mary - than he received the complete cure of both of his infirmities. Through this and other miracles worked by means of the Image brought by the zealous missionary it became famous in all that part of Italy; so that other images like it, had to be procured, and everywhere placed in that locality for the veneration of the faithful. But the original copy, after Father Socini ceased to preach and died, was deposited by order of his superiors in the convent of Genazzano, where it remained for some years venerated privately by the religious.

In the year 1733, the **Very Revd. Father Michael Mareschl**, a pious and learned religious of this Augustinian province of Bohemia, was elected Assistant General of the Order for Germany. And, for this reason, being transferred to Rome, he came from thence to Genazzano to venerate the miraculous Image of Mary. Having heard, while there, of the wonderful things narrated of the Image of Father Socini preserved in that convent, he wished to have it for the church of his convent of St. Catherine V.M. (**Virgin Martyr**) in this city of Prague. Not being able to resist a demand (**request**) so made, the religious of the convent with the subsequent consent of the General of the Order and by a capitular act (**Decision of the Cathedral Chapter**) dated **May 23rd 1735**, and by an act in writing of all the Fathers, they ceded as a gift to the above named Assistant General (**Fr. Mareschl**), the aforesaid venerable Image; to the end that it should be exposed to the public veneration of the faithful in the aforesaid church of Prague. It was, in fact, brought and displayed there in 1737 solemnly on the high altar with the due faculty and permission of the Archiepiscopal court, and there remained venerated by the faithful until the year 1787, in which year the convent and the church having been suppressed by a decree of the Emperor Joseph II, the religious were obliged to retire into other convents. One of them, however, took away the sacred Image and venerated it in the convent of St. Thomas in this same city;

but he could not place it in the church because there was already another in it brought from Rome in 1760. On this account the religious kept it himself in his cell while he lived, and towards the end of the last century (**1700s**) being near his death he left it as a gift to a relation, a pious lady, enjoining her to preserve it with the greatest respect and devotion, since it was a very venerable Image. It was, in fact, at the beginning and for many years after, held in veneration by that family, but for some years the respect of those who had inherited it, became diminished and almost entirely ceased. It was known nevertheless that the image had extraordinary claims to veneration, but the lady and mistress of the house where it was last found, seeing that she could not keep it with due respect, gave it about two years ago (**1881?**) as a gift to the Father Guardian of the Franciscans (Miñ. Osservanti) of this city (**Prague**), out of gratitude to him for having instructed one of her children for first communion. And this pious religious kept it in his cell, hung on the wall. But neither was the image placed there in the honour which was due to it, and which Our Mother of Good Counsel wished to have paid to it. And hence she caused that it should be recovered by me, in a manner most singular, and I should say extraordinary, and so it was placed again in public veneration.

After being seven years here in Prague, I never knew anything of this image, once so venerated in the church of St. Catherine; but in the month of August of the past year (**1882**), I was shown an old book in the German language printed in 1737 by Fr. Mareschl, in which was recounted all the wonders before described by me about the image venerated in the church of St. Catherine. I was seized at once with a strong desire to know where I could find it. I made inquiry at the suppressed church of St. Catherine itself, which though always closed, preserves still the altars and paintings of the saints of the Order; but I could discover nothing for all that; I demanded (**made enquiries**) of our religious and others well versed in the proceedings and misfortunes which followed the innovations of the government of Joseph II. No one could tell me a word. Not knowing what to do and desolate, I made known my troubles to **Father Votka** of the Society of Jesus. But he, though most learned in all the affairs of his country and in ecclesiastical matters, of this image he knew nothing whatever; nor could he give me the slightest light which I had not already followed and exhausted without any success.

The day after this conversation, the aforesaid Father Votka had to go and speak about some affairs with the Father Guardian of the Franciscans, and whilst they conversed in his cell, he cast his eyes on the wall and saw an image of the Madonna of Good Counsel painted on white silk. It was a ray of light — a revelation. He asked to examine closely that picture, that Image. It was positively the very one. It was the Image of the Madonna of Father Socini, brought to Prague by Father Mareschl, and for many years venerated in the church of St. Catherine. It could not be doubted, for there was yet (**still**) attached to the back and sealed the attestation of our Monsgr. Sacristan, **Thomas Cerveone**, in 1736, given at the instance of the said Fr. Mareschl; and besides this, the Guardian gave him other historical information after the suppression of the church of St. Catherine, as narrated above.

In this manner, as unexpected as it was pleasing, I had the happiness to find that celebrated and venerable Image of Mary of Good Counsel, which, furthermore, was graciously given to me by the same Father Guardian.

I showed my gratitude to him in return by an offering to his convent and by a present of another beautiful copy of the same holy Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Glad to have recovered this most precious holy Image, I took every care to have it restored and newly enclosed in a large and precious frame; and then, in deference to the desire of the excellent Sisters of Charity of St. Charles Borromeo, who have here (**in Prague**) the mother house of their congregation in this empire of Austria and Hungary, I gave it to their church, where it is placed upon a side altar of the same, and where it receives many devout visits, not only from the religious, but also from the faithful of the city; and I have confidence that it will continue to be more venerated in the progress of time, and will not cease to grant the graces and benedictions accustomed to be given by the glorious and most gracious Mother of Good Counsel to Her devout servants.

And now accept my most respectful salutations and begging you to recommend me to the Most Holy Virgin, I have the honour etc. etc.

Fr. PIETRO BELGRANO  
Augustinian

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## Chapter XIV

### DEVOTION OF POPES and OTHERS

1. Devotion of all classes to the Shrine. - 2. Of the Popes. - 3. Paul II - 4. The Cardinal Rovere. - 5. Privilege granted to Father Mariano of Genazzano - Other favours - Pius V - Innocent XI - 6. Pilgrimage to Genazzano by Urban VIII. - 7. Centenary in 1667 - Crowning of the Madonna. - 8. Clement XI - Cardinal Albani's gifts to the Sanctuary. - 9. Subsequent Popes - Great devotion of Benedict XIV - Others. - 10. Pilgrimage to the Sanctuary by Pius IX in 1864. - 11. Leo XIII - 12. Devotion of crowned heads - The Imperial House of Austria. - 13. The Electress of Saxony's pilgrimage to the Shrine - Royal families of Bavaria, Spain, Naples. - 14. Gifts of Cardinal Jerome Colonna and others. - 15. Pilgrimage of Cardinals to the Shrine - Of Cardinal Cappellari, afterwards Gregory XVI - 16. Noble families. - 17. English Speaking Prelates at the Shrine. - Hopes for the devotion.

1. We have seen, but in an incidental manner only, up to the present point, much of the devotion that has been shown to Our Lady of Good Counsel at Her Shrine in Genazzano and elsewhere throughout the Church generally. The miracles narrated have been wrought in consequence, precisely, of this devotion. But nevertheless, it cannot fail to be of interest to the devout clients of Our Lady to know who they are, who have been thus devoted through the long series of years that have elapsed since the Wonderful Apparition in 1467, and how it is that their devotion is manifested. We shall see then that all classes in the Church, through all their degrees, from the Supreme Pontiffs and the spiritual Princes who, under the Pontiffs, rule the flock of Christ, down to the humblest peasants, have manifested this devotion; and that all, from the monarch to the beggar, have been the recipients of the blessed and inexhaustible bounty of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, both at Her Shrine and wherever else in the world She is honoured under a title so pleasing to Her, and so endearing as well as valuable to Her clients.

2. In speaking of this subject, it is natural that we should first consider **the Popes**, the Vicars of Christ. If they, to whom the eyes of the whole Catholic fold turn, not only for instruction, but for example, have shown a marked personal belief in, and a consequent devotion to the Shrine Our Lady of Good Counsel, its cause is increased in the estimation of the Catholic world. In a matter involving as it does, the extraordinary and the miraculous, in a word the *supernatural*, to such a great extent, it is impossible that they could give the sanction of their high example unless that matter was far removed from the least taint of the superstitious or the untrue, or even from being doubtful in any sense. And even more.

It is impossible that such a devotion should be otherwise than salutary, and that it is, substantially, such as it is represented to be by those who write its history with the knowledge and permission of the authorities of the Church.

3. From the very commencement to the present day, the Supreme Pontiffs have shown themselves most devoted to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel. **Pope Paul II**, who ordered the investigation we have spoken of at length in the chapters where the proofs of the miraculous Apparition and Translation of the sacred Image were examined, not only did not interfere with the Sanctuary, but that it was while he was Pope that the church of Petruccia was built; that the new and beautiful convent of the Augustinians in Genazzano was erected; that the miracles recorded by the public notary were placed in the public archives; and that « all Italy », to use the words of Coriolanus, were coming in procession to visit the Shrine.

4. And then, during the four years that elapsed between the coming of the sacred Image (1467) and the death of Pope Paul II, the Cardinal who, as Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484), succeeded him, was living in Rome employed in the composition of works, some of which treated directly of devotion to the Mother of God. This was **Francesco della Rovere**, who after being vowed from his very infancy by his mother to the Franciscan Order, subsequently entered that Order; and having, in time, ascended to its highest dignities and to its supreme command as General, was, for his singular zeal and merit, clothed with the purple. During his career as a Franciscan he travelled through every province of Italy. He taught in all the great universities and preached Lenten exercises in the principal cities of the peninsula. No man was better versed in the politics of his day. He was made Cardinal in the very year of the Wonderful Apparition, and consequently must have been thoroughly acquainted with the inquiry ordered by Paul II and with its results. He was the intimate friend of Coriolanus the General of the Augustinian Order. It is impossible to imagine that such a man, under the circumstances, could be otherwise than deeply interested by an event which stirred to its very depth the hearts of the people of Italy. As a Cardinal *in curia* he must have been informed of the result of the inquiry made by Pope Paul II. For the same reason he must have been intimately acquainted with all the events which, during his active public life, were taking place in Albania.

When then we find that such a man, as soon as he became Pope (**Sixtus IV**), showed such a marked - such an intense - devotion to the new Shrine of Mary in Genazzano, as to rebuild for the Hermits of St. Augustine, to whose care Our Lady was pleased to confide Her sacred Image, and a vast church and convent, we may be perfectly sure that his belief was strong in all that was then related of the holy Image.

Yet this is the only reason assigned by the Augustinians themselves, as we learn from their erudite historian **Crusenius**, who in his *Monasticum Augustinianum* page 3, cap. 29 writes « *Hoc miraculo (that of the Wonderful Apparition of Our Lady at Genazzano) commoti Sixtus IV, et Cardinalis Guillelmus d'Estouteville Gallus certatim Ordini Eremitarum Sancti Augustini addicti, duas in urbe Roma, ecclesias eidem ordini erigendas deliberant, eisque liberalem manum apponunt: unam gloriosae Virgini Mariae de Populo, quam suis expensis Sixtus Pontifex, et alteram Divo Augustino quam Cardinalis affabre longe majoribus sumptibus creavit ad invidiam et aemulationem sanctum.* »

5. Other Pontiffs who, like Sixtus IV were *in curia* at the time of the Miraculous Apparition (**1467**), were also desirous to show favours to the Sanctuary. In this way, the singular privilege of liberating a soul from Purgatory when Mass should be offered up at the altar of the sacred Image, was obtained by Father Mariano; and so of other favours afterwards shown. In this way also, the Sanctuary became the object of the care of many of the Popes, from **Innocent VIII down to Clement VIII**, in whose reign the disputes between the rival confraternities which sprung up, as we have seen, in Genazzano, were finally settled in the interests of the Sanctuary and its religious guardians. (Senni p. 319 cap. 17). We have already described the great devotion during this period of **St. Pius V (1566-1572)** to the Shrine, and his reward from Mary in finding, under the very shadow of Her Sanctuary, the leader whose genius gave the death blow to the Turkish preëminence upon the sea, at Lepanto.

6. Nor did this devotion of the Supreme Pontiffs decrease in subsequent ages. We have already referred to the first of their illustrious line who made a public pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady in Genazzano. There are some circumstances connected with this celebrated visit which were then necessarily omitted, and which it will be here proper and interesting to note. The Pontiff was, at the time, residing at Castel Gandolfo, of which it may be said he was the founder - as the *villeggiatura* (**country residence**) of the Popes. Having resolved to make a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel, he determined to do so with every circumstance of honour. The pomp of feudal state had not then departed from the habits of European monarchs, and the Popes yet retained the great power which belonged to them, not only as heads of the Church, but as first amongst the Sovereigns of the world. The usual notice was given of the intended journey; and, on the day fixed, **Pope Urban VIII**, accompanied by a large number of Cardinals and Roman Princes of the highest rank, and attended by the Papal guards, proceeded to Genazzano by the way of Cave. There he was met by the Lord of Genazzano, the Prince Constable Philip Colonna, with many

thousands of soldiers of all arms, cavalry, and infantry, with cannon and all the implements of war. The roads were everywhere spanned by triumphal arches; and were lined by the multitudes of Latium and of more distant provinces.

On reaching the gates of Genazzano, the Prince Colonna tendered, on his knees, the keys of his stronghold and palace to his Sovereign Lord, the Pope. Cannons roared and trumpets sounded, and then amidst all possible regal and ecclesiastical pomp, the great Pontiff advanced to the beautiful Sanctuary of Mary. The Pope appeared enraptured with the unexpected beauty, freshness, and attractiveness of that sacred Image, of which, of course, no copy he had ever seen gave any proper idea. That love and devotion which brought him to the holy Shrine, and which caused him to be so devout during life to Our Lady of Good Counsel, now became, as it does in all who visit it, more intense and tender. It increased and produced its effects in him, as in Her more humble clients. Next morning, while multitudes who could not get within the church or even get room in the town awaited, he offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the altar of the Virgin Mother, with sentiments of the deepest fervour. He was a man not easily excited, but before that Image he was moved to the innermost recesses of his being. As soon as the Holy Sacrifice was concluded he burst, in the presence of all, into a downright flood of tears. They were tears of tender emotion and deep love, brought on by recalling all that Mary had done for him in the past, and by the secret assurance that his desires should be gratified, and that the Roman people, for whom he pleaded, should be saved.

7. When such devotion was manifested by the Pontiff, it is not surprising that, in subsequent ages, the feast of the Wonderful Apparition of the Madonna should be celebrated with extraordinary magnificence. In **April 1667** so great were the multitudes flocking for its **Centenary** to Genazzano from all parts of Italy, and from distant countries, that the little town was altogether unable to contain them; and all of the surrounding towns of Latium were full of pilgrims. The visitors included princes, prelates, and persons of the highest rank; and nearly all who came advanced in procession to the Shrine. It was on this occasion that the celebrated **Poussin** erected and painted a magnificent **theatre** in which the principal events of Translation and Apparition of the Madonna were represented. These paintings executed with all the strength of the genius of the artist were, unfortunately, destroyed in the great fire which subsequently did such immense damage to Genazzano, and to many of the treasures of the Sanctuary of Our Lady preserved in the convent of the Augustinians (Vannutelli, ps.54-55).

It was just fifteen years after this celebration that **the crowning of the Madonna of Genazzano**, which we have already described, took

place. That event not only demonstrates the deep devotion of so great a Pontiff as **Innocent XI**, but also the influence of the Sanctuary of Genazzano in giving as fatal a blow to the supremacy of the Turks on the land as it had given upon the water.

No doubt the holy and devoted Innocent XI loved the Shrine; and it is worthy of notice that not only he, but all the Popes remarkable for singular devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, were amongst the most celebrated of their long and illustrious line. Urban VIII, who visited the Madonna, and Innocent XI who caused the sacred Image to be crowned, were as eminent in their days as was Sixtus IV or St. Pius V in former generations. So it was afterwards.

8. The successor of Innocent XI was **Clement XI** - a native of Urbino and, as is stated by several historians of the Shrine, he was of a family which originally, as its name (Albani) testifies, came from the country which the miraculous Image left (**Albania**). One thing, however, is certain - the devotion of his family to the Madonna of Genazzano was very great. This devotion, as Vannutelli tells us, inspired his nephew, the celebrated Cardinal Albani, to do so much for the Sanctuary. He not only visited the sacred Image but left nothing undone to honour it. The magnificent altar and *reredos* (**an ornamental screen covering the wall at the back of an altar**), the pavement, and ornamentation in varied coloured marbles, the columns of *verd antique* (**a type of green marble**), which now enclose the sacred Image, are the gifts of this Cardinal. The Pontiff, his uncle, received in the year of Jubilee, which happened to be the year of his elevation, the procession coming from Genazzano with very unusual marks of favour. It may be well to mention here that in these holy years of Jubilee, when all indulgences elsewhere cease, the same special privileges granted to Loreto are also extended to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano. (see Vannutelli, page 55).

9. The Popes, Gregory the Thirteenth, Benedict the Thirteenth, Clement the Twelfth, and Clement the Fourteenth, enriched, as the archives of the convent inform us, the Sanctuary with many spiritual privileges. It was reserved, however, for the great Pontiff **Benedict XIV** to establish the devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, not only in the Sanctuary of Genazzano, but also everywhere else by Apostolic authority. This he did by his "brief" (**a papal letter that is not as formal as a Bull**) approving the Pious Union, which he formally established, and in which he was pleased to be inscribed himself, (and with his own autograph) as the first member.

10. We shall pass over the intervening Pontiffs from his time, under whose auspices the Mass and Office in honour of Our Lady of Good Counsel were approved, to come down nearer to our own day (**1883**), when we find the great Pontiff **Pius IX** going over the ground



long before travelled by Urban VIII to visit that distant Sanctuary of Genazzano, hidden away in the mountains of Latium.

From his earliest years, the virtuous mother of this Pontiff (**Pius IX - 1846-1878**), had inspired him with the tenderest devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel : and so great was this devotion in him that he celebrated his first Mass before an altar dedicated to Her under that title, in Rome. He loved to have Her beautiful picture always near him, and to Her he prayed in the many trials and difficulties which beset his path in his long, and notwithstanding temporal losses, most glorious Pontificate. He had, from the moment of his elevation, a great desire to visit the Sanctuary of Genazzano, as did Urban VIII, and this he executed on the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady 1864. He came accompanied with all the pomp of a Sovereign and a Pontiff, and left enduring impressions of his piety and devotion upon the crowds assembled to witness an act of homage to the Sanctuary, so solemn and so sincere.

**11. Leo XIII**, our present Most Holy Father (**in 1883**), is, as was his predecessor, for many years a prisoner in the Vatican. The faithful of Rome and the faithful who come to the Eternal City cannot currently be gratified by witnessing the, now suspended, cheering spectacle of the sacred state of the Supreme Pontiff. It is no longer in the power of Leo XIII to visit the Sanctuary at Genazzano, any more than it is to leave the sultry and unwholesome precincts of the Vatican in the fierce heat of Summer for the clear air of the Castle of Gandolfo, given the current political situation. If it were within his power, there can be little doubt that we should have another pilgrimage by the present Vicar of Christ (Leo XIII) to the Shrine of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. The writer is assured, on the best possible authority, of the deep devotion of Leo XIII to Our Lady of Good Counsel. (**See Letter dated 29th May 1884 from Pope Leo to the writer at the start of this edition - not in earlier printing**). And certainly, no Pontiff has, under unprecedented difficulties, shown to a greater extent the fruits of it by the possession of the gifts given to Her clients by the Seat of Wisdom, Our Lady. Few have had affairs more intricate to grapple with; or have been placed in situations where Good Counsel has been more needed. Few, nevertheless, have surpassed him in the rare wisdom which has distinguished all his acts, since his coming to the lofty but arduous position he occupies. And his acts are emphatically his own. Already, the world has affixed to his name the special epithet of **Wise** - a title which the world does not give to many, and which must be well deserved indeed, before it is granted. Nor is his the barren wisdom which is safe only because it will venture nothing. His reign up to the present has been one of vigorous, but well considered, action. The immense and needed reorganization and restoration in that most difficult of all subjects to be either mastered or

directed, the teaching of the schools, has been by him both mastered and directed with a thoroughness and a completeness that has astonished the Catholic world, and must continue to produce fruit while the Church lasts on earth. Prisoner as he is in the Vatican, he has essayed (**done his best**) to restore discipline and regenerate fervour. He has had to deal with the tangled web of European diplomacy, and has succeeded in bringing it to understand that without the Roman See from which it separated itself in its pride and in its folly, it can neither prosper nor even exist. Germany, Russia and even England, anti-papal as they are, and persecuting, as they have been but too disposed to be, have veered round so far as to seek his friendship, and many of their foremost men, with a docility almost Catholic, incline to hear his voice. He has had from the very commencement of his reign to deal with nations which were once Catholic falling into anarchy; with a Socialism advanced to its last stage of infamy; with the astuteness of an unscrupulous statecraft opposed to him in Rome and Italy; with the whole force of darkness banded in secrecy and seeking to baffle, to deceive, and to destroy his flock on every side. Nevertheless, he shows that the spirit of Good Counsel does not desert him, so that even his bitterest enemies confess his success and fear his coming victory. Already, that prevision (**prescience**) which precedes dissolution is upon them; while the light in the heavens which announces another near and glorious day for the Church he governs, already and unmistakably appears. A hand is upon the helm of the barque (**a type of sailing ship**) of Peter fitted for the occasion, and guiding it steadily to the port of rest. Who can doubt in all this that the help of Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel is with the Vicar of Her Child. We may hope then confidently that, when the port is reached, when the day of triumph dawns upon that barque, devotion to Her and to Her Sanctuary will be more intensified and extended; and that in the hour of its certain triumph, the whole Church of God will draw from Mary's fountains, Counsel and Strength for still greater conflicts.

Leo XIII, we are enabled to state upon the authority of the present Vicar-Forain of Genazzano, Don Filippo Vannutelli, showed, even when a very young ecclesiastic, the love he had for the Mother of Good Counsel at Her Shrine. He is now a member of its Pious Union. His own venerable hand has written the scriptural words which encourage all to become children of Mary of Good Counsel, and which may be seen beneath Her Image in the sacristy of Santa Maria. The Parish Priest of the Vatican, the very Revd. Father Pifferi O.S.A., mentioned to the writer how often he has seen Leo XIII long, long, absorbed in prayer before the beautiful copy of the sacred original in Genazzano, which is enthroned above the high altar of the Pauline chapel - an altar erected to honour it by the loving care of Pope Pius IX. It is not therefore too much to say that

the rare wisdom and strength which he has so strikingly exemplified in his career, comes from a source from whence issued in the past all the real glories of Catholicity - from the Seat of Wisdom, Mary the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

**12.** Then not only Pontiffs, but also **secular rulers** of nations have found the means of drawing the waters of wisdom from the fountains of Our Lady of Genazzano. Foremost amongst the royal houses who have thus shown a wise respect for the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, comes the first and highest, as well as most ancient governing family of Europe, that of the **Hapsburgs**. At the moment we write, the august Ex-Empress and aunt of the present Emperor has for her confessor, as we already stated, the pious and learned Father Belgrano, late Prior of Santa Maria in Genazzano and the author of several devotional works upon Our Lady of Good Counsel. The venerable Ex-Empress, not able by circumstances to travel to Genazzano in person, has been represented there by one of her court; and some of the most valuable offerings recently presented to the Shrine, came from her. She is a member of the Pious Union. The Ex-Emperor, her husband, was distinguished for the same devotion; and as the House of Austria is the only Catholic dynasty in Europe which has not yielded to the influence of the Revolution or been drawn into persecuting the Church, it may not be too much to say that its devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel has given it the wisdom and strength to resist malignant influences as fatal to the throne as it is to the altar. From the retirement at Prague, the Emperor Francis received continually from his affectionate, wise, and eminently Catholic uncle, who abdicated in his favour and treated him always as a son, counsels in his greatest difficulties. There, separated from the world and absorbed in prayer, that uncle and his pious consort, no doubt drank in the wisdom, which has not been wanting in the evident blessings which marked and still marks the administration of the Emperor Francis II.

But the devotion of the House of Austria is not of recent date. It ascends (**can be traced back**) almost to the period of the Miraculous Apparition at Genazzano. In Vienna and in Bavaria, we have seen that miraculous favours were extended to members of the Imperial Family through the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel, venerated in one of the copies of the sacred Image which had touched the original. There is a still more remarkable occurrence to chronicle.

**13.** In 1772, a personal visit was paid by the Electress of Saxony to the original, in distant Genazzano. This pious Lady sent before her a casket formed after the fashion of a heart, and containing her marriage rings. On her arrival, she was overjoyed to see this mark of her homage to God's Mother pendant upon (**hanging upon**) the crown given by the Chapter of St. Peters. Few pilgrims of the many thousand fervent ones

who visited the Shrine, showed more devotion while there, or more regret on departing from it, than this illustrious lady. She kept beside her to her last breath, a copy of the Madonna given to her by the Prior, Fr. Boschi. It was the greatest consolation of her life.

The example of the Imperial House of Austria and that of the Royal House of Saxony, has been followed by that of Bavaria and Spain in the last century (1700s), and of Naples in this (1800s).

**14. Cardinals and Princes** in great number have also manifested the same devotion. We have spoken of the devotion of Cardinal D'Estouteville, to whose love for Our Lady of Good Counsel, the guardians of the Sanctuary owe the church of St. Augustine in Rome; and of that of Cardinal Albano who enriched the present Shrine. In 1736 Cardinal Jerome Colonna gave the precious gifts in metal and coral - more precious than gold - which are still used in the ornamentation of the Shrine on great festivals. He replaced the old railing with the present massive one; and bestowed on the fathers of Santa Maria rich vestments and altar services for the use of the Sanctuary. The Cardinals of Palestrina, for its bishops are always Cardinals, were most devoted to the Sanctuary. The present Cardinal (De Luca) takes such an interest in its welfare that he joins with the Augustinian Cardinal, Martinelli, and the Prior of Genazzano, in forming the committee ordered by His Holiness to expend the offerings of the Pious Union, for the best advantages of the splendid church now on the point of completion, and in which the sacred Chapel of Our Lady of Good Counsel is contained.

**15.** Indeed since the arrival of the holy Image from Scutari, members of the sacred College have never been wanting in fervent devotion to it. Upon this point, Luigi Vannutelli thus writes in his Historical Memoirs of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel - « *In fine (Briefly), I do not see a single month pass by, in which, distinguished and illustrious persons do not come to venerate this miraculous Sanctuary. Whether they be of the Sacred College, or of the prelacy, or of the Italian or foreign nobility, I always find them of every class, of every age, and of every province, devoutly kneeling before that altar. And very often it happens that those desirous of celestial favours and anxious to contemplate as near as possible those countenances of paradise, have to give way one to another in turn, and then with a holy displeasure to force themselves from the sacred altar before they had satisfied their devotion. I cannot relate, but with sentiments of edification and respect that, in the autumn of 1829, the most eminent Cardinal Cappellari (afterwards Gregory XVI) who today (and well it is for us) pilots the barque of Peter, preceded with most tender respect by his friend Cardinal Bertozzoli, celebrated the unbloody Sacrifice upon that most acceptable altar. May the Queen of the heavens preserve him to us for long years. And not many*

*seasons passed when three other illustrious wearers of the purple, Cardinals Pedicini, Brignoli, and Pollidori might be seen on the same morning, the one after the other, celebrating Mass in the holy Chapel, not one of them being aware of the coming of the other. »*

**16.** The devotion of many noble houses to the Sanctuary is very great. That, for instance, of the Colonnas and the Barberinis, the Albanis and others is historic. Scarcely a decade passes without some favours being signalised as having been received by members of the ancient noble houses, not only of Italy, but of other countries in Europe, from the Madonna of Good Counsel. It is not long since a member of one of these old families, the prince Barberini Colonna, obtained the singular favour of an heiress to his house through the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel; and this child, called Maria Consilia in thanksgiving, is frequently brought by her parents to thank their heavenly Benefactress. So it is that the Sanctuary is never without clients from the highest ranks in Christendom.

**17.** It would here be improper to neglect to mention that devotion to the Sanctuary is already springing fast and fervent amongst many of the Prelates of those countries for which this work is specially intended. The recent purchase of the convent of San Pio by the Irish Augustinians, has directed the attention of several distinguished Irish Bishops, on their visit to Rome, to the existence of so sacred a Sanctuary in Genazzano. During the writer's stay at San Pio, the Most Reverend Monsgr. McEvelly, the able and erudite Archbishop of Tuam; the Most Reverend Monsgr. Dorian, the venerable Bishop of Down and Connor, who has ruled with such success the immense ecclesiastical territory connected with Belfast; the Most Reverend Monsgr. Gillooly, Bishop of Elphin, whose beautiful Cathedral and seminary and his other works for religion are so generally known to visitors in Ireland; the Most Reverend Monsgr. McCormack, the zealous and youthful Bishop of Achonry; the Most Revd. Monsgr. (**Martin**) Crane, the first Bishop of Sandhurst in distant Australia; the late and deeply lamented Bishop O'Connor of Ballarat; the Most Reverend Monsgr. Hyland, Co-adjutor Bishop of Trinidad; the Most Reverend Monsgr. Kirby, Bishop of Lita and Rector of the Irish College of St. Agatha in Rome; the Very Reverend Father Carbery, Assistant General of the Dominicans, lately elevated to the episcopal dignity as Bishop of Hamilton in Canada; the Very Reverend Dr. Walsh, President of St. Patricks College Maynooth; the Very Revd. Dr. O'Callaghan, Rector of the English College, Rome; the Very Revd. Dr. Verdon, nephew of the late lamented Cardinal Cullen, Vice Rector of the Irish College; and frequently by its very devoted client the Very Revd. Monsgr. Hostlot, the Rector of the North American College; the Very Reverend Father O'Callaghan, Prior and Superior of the

Irish Dominican College of St. Clement; the Very Revd. Father Cary, Guardian and Superior of the Irish Franciscan College of St. Isidore, and by many clergymen from nearly every English Speaking country in the world. In the past, the Sanctuary was very dear to the late Monsgr. Polding, Archbishop of Sydney; to the present Venerable Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Revd. Monsgr. Goold; and during the past few years it has been visited by the Most Revd. Monsgr. Butler, Bishop of Limerick; by the Most Revd. Monsgr. FitzGerald, Bishop of Ross; by the Most Revd. Monsgr. Clery, Bishop of Kingston, Canada; by the Most Revd. Monsgr. Leonard, Bishop of Capetown, and by many others. The Sanctuary is indeed a favourite place of pilgrimage for nearly all the national colleges of Rome, during their holidays; and by none at present more than by those who are destined for the Apostolate in English Speaking nations.

We have already spoken of the deep and tender devotion of Cardinal Acton to the Sanctuary. This is followed by others in England. The zealous Bishop of Salford has established the Pious Union in his diocese. The venerable President of the English Benedictines and several of his subjects love the devotion. Others desire to know it. All this is a favourable presage of what we may hope will be the speedy extension of a devotion so advantageous throughout all English Speaking countries.

In the next chapter we shall see something of the devotion of the people at large to the Shrine, and of their favourite mode of showing it by public pilgrimages.

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## Chapter XV

### PILGRIMAGES TO THE SHRINE

1. Religious customs of purely Catholic nations ill-understood in Protestant countries - Want of reason in this. - 2. The people of Italy in their manner of worshipping Our Lady of Genazzano. - 3. Pilgrims and pilgrimages. - 4. The pilgrimages from afar on the great feasts of the Sanctuary. - 5. The Church on these occasions - the Confessors - the Communions. - 6. Deep religion of the pilgrims. - 7. The waiting for the 22nd hour. - 8. The *festa* in the town - Conduct of the pilgrims. - 9. Who they are and why they come. - 10. The merit in their act - Its warranty and antiquity. - 11. The reason in it. - 12. The Pilgrims on the road. - 13. The formation, gathering, and departure of each company. - 14. Devotional works directing them - Father Belgrano's advices - Prayers to be said before setting out and while on the road. - 15. Pilgrims met upon the road. - 16. Action of each band on seeing Genazzano - Prayer to Mary. - 17. Entering the town - Going to the Sanctuary. - 18. Cardinal Castracani's attempts at « *improving the occasion* » by preaching - His failure. - 19. The pilgrims at the Shrine. - 20. Asking for graces - an instance. - 21. Pilgrims at night - at early morn. - 22. Grief and tears of the pilgrims leaving - retiring backwards from the sacred Image. - 23. The pilgrims' return home. - 24. Efforts of the Revolutionary Government to stop the pilgrimages to Genazzano - The officer appointed to stop them. - 25. Grief of the pilgrims who were dispersed - Disquiet of the Italian population grows dangerous, and pilgrimages allowed to take their course. - 26. Fate of the officer who dispersed the pilgrims - Opinion of the people thereupon.

1. It is very difficult for a Catholic accustomed to live, as English Speaking Catholics everywhere live, in countries from which the public religious practices of purely Catholic peoples have been long banished, to fully comprehend a devotion as public and demonstrative as that of the Italian people for Our Lady of Genazzano. When one has been accustomed for a life-time, to confine the public expression of divine worship within the walls of churches, it appears strange to see it carried outdoors, through the roads of the country, and through the streets of cities and towns. But this apparent strangeness will appear most natural and proper, when it is borne in mind that everyone met with, is of the same faith and religious feeling as the worshippers themselves. It is nothing more extraordinary than to see devout individuals in groups, or singly, making the Way of the Holy Cross (**Stations of the Cross**) in churches. As long as they do not interfere with the freedom of the passages, then those who do not care to follow their example, do not complain, and are edified. (It may come to the turn of the least devout to do the same, some day.) In this respect Italy, and indeed, every purely Catholic country, may be likened to one vast outdoor church. The most

indifferent are of the same faith. The most abandoned have been trained to reverence holy things. There are no heretics who keep some practices of Catholicity while reprobating others. No Catholic trader, for example, in England has any hesitation in closing his shop on a Sunday or upon a Christmas Day. Why? All do it. It is a public act of religion. But as a rule he does not do the same on the feast of All Saints or of the Assumption. Why? The religious reason, is it not the same? The difference is, that Protestants have retained the Sunday and Christmas Day, but have rejected, with the doctrine of the worship and invocation of saints, all the other Church holidays. If processions and pilgrimages did not share the same fate, these practices would excite no more feeling or surprise now, than the marching of school children to places of amusement, or of benefit societies on days of reunion. It is, therefore, no wonder that, in a Catholic country, a procession in honour of God or His saints excites no more comment than one which is formed to bury the dead.

2. The people of Italy have honoured, and still honour the Shrine of Our Lady in Genazzano, both publicly and privately. They come there at all times for favours. Every night the Sanctuary is surrounded by a congregation of clients assembled to sing, before the covered Image, the Litany of Loreto, and to join in vocal prayer; and every morning of the year at half past four, a large congregation of working people is present for the first Mass which is celebrated at the Altar of the sacred Image. All day long, numbers are found round the iron grating of the holy Chapel. This latter is never without its twenty lamps burning, nor scarcely is it ever seen without petitioners in prayer, many of whom come from great distances.

3. As from the beginning, so now, the year is never without its record of pilgrims singly, or in groups who come from love, and for favours, from all parts of Europe; from America; from Australia; and not infrequently from Africa, and from Asia, to the holy calm of this favourite Sanctuary of Mary, the Mother of God. Distant pilgrims are almost invariably sure of being able to see the beautiful Image uncovered, by making application to its custodians. But those living in the surrounding country, and who, probably, have again and again, been able to see it during the more solemn celebrations, are not granted so easily this privilege. Yet they too come, in an uninterrupted stream to the Shrine, for the relief of the manifold distresses to which poor human nature is subject; and they are sure to go away from the feet of their loving Mother contented. In domestic and personal distresses, it is a common practice for them to make a vow to visit the Madonna of Good Counsel at Genazzano; and, as is generally the case, the vow is heard, and the sought for favour obtained, the devout recipient goes off at once, his ten, or it could be his twenty, or it may be his hundred miles or



more, to fulfil religiously that vow. Pious writers on the Sanctuary strive to regulate and lessen, rather than to encourage this custom of making such vows, but only with partial success. The Italian peasant has been accustomed for ages to live by faith, and by faith in Mary especially. He, therefore, has recourse to Her efficacious and certain help in his distress. Nor does it astonish him if he is overheard. He looks upon the granting of a miraculous favour, because of a vow, as a reason for deep thankfulness indeed, but no reason for wonder and surprise. Success comes to be regarded as a practical proof of the actual believed-in Providence and Power of God, used miraculously in favour of His prayerful and penitent people, who love God's Mother, and whose earnest, living belief in, and love for Her, appealed to under some endearing name, has caused Her to use Her power, Her influence, and Her authority with Her Omnipotent Son for the fervent petitioner.

4. All these single, silent streams of devout people, would seem to join together and become a torrent, on the occasions of the great feasts of the Sanctuary. The whole people of Latium, Sabina, and the various provinces of the Campagna, then arise en mass to honour Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. They are joined by countless streams of the population of distant cities and far off districts, who come in ordered groups to do the same honour to the Mother of God, at this Her favoured Shrine. These feasts are, firstly, that of the Miraculous Apparition itself, the 25th April; and secondly, that of the Nativity of Our Lady, the 8th September. The latter, possibly because of the season of the year being more propitious for long journeys; and because too, of the deep devotion of the Italians for the birthday of the Queen of Heaven, is perhaps the most crowded. The former, however, attracts, during its continuance of nine days, as it ever did, immense numbers.

5. The Fathers of Santa Maria are always careful to provide for the spiritual emergency that invariably arises at these seasons of grace. Not only are the confessors of the community in readiness, and all the Augustinian Fathers who may be able to come from the Roman, or other convents, but also all the Priests of the surrounding country are invited to attend the confessionals. Confessors of every order, secular and regular, are found by the walls and pillars of the church. These hear the confessions of the women. Confessors for men are placed in the sacristy, in the choir, in the passages, in the cloisters. The church, spacious as it is, cannot on those occasions accommodate both men and women pilgrims. The services on these feasts are as grand as the Fathers can make them. There are bands and first class musicians to attend the choir; and singers come from the neighbouring cities.

6. But in truth, while all this is very pleasing to the good people of Genazzano, the mass of the pilgrims seem to have little thought of

anything beyond the Chapel of the Madonna and the priceless treasure it contains. In that, and in the frequenting of the sacraments, which forms a necessary part of their act of homage to the Mother of Good Counsel, their whole time seems to be engrossed.

7. A very solemn act, however, takes place on the feast of the Apparition, which interests all deeply - pilgrims, priests, and citizens of Genazzano. From the 21st to the 22nd hour of the Italian day, which at that season of the year corresponds to from 3 to 4 o'clock in the evening, the hour when the sacred Image descended and appeared upon the wall of the unfinished Church of Petruccia, the bells of the church of Santa Maria are rung without intermission. The same takes place every evening of the novena, its object being to remind the people about the happy event of the coming of the Madonna. On the day itself the Fathers of the Augustinian Order, the clergy of the town and diocese, the visitors, the religious, and the whole people gather into the church and remain kneeling in perfect silence before the Altar where the sacred Image is exposed. The moment the bells ring the 22nd hour, the *Te Deum* is intoned by thousands, the organ peals, and all, with one accord, join in the hymn of praise in thanksgiving for the favour conferred, in 1467, upon Genazzano.

8. At this time, as also of course on the 8th September, all the grandeur possessed by the Sanctuary is displayed. The municipal authorities, in deference to the citizens, must join in the general jubilee. Fireworks and the almost universal illumination of houses; the firing of cannon and of small arms, and all the appliances of civil gladness are provided in profusion. It is worthy of notice that in Genazzano no accident has ever occurred in its narrow streets from those exhibitions of popular joy. For the pilgrims, these things are the least attractive. Some, indeed the greater number, do not seem to pay attention to them. But it is very remarkable how differently the great crowd behaves from that of great crowds in our cities. The most perfect order and decorum reign everywhere. Even those who attend the fireworks, and who, amazed by the brilliancy of some unexpected *jeu de feu*, cry out, their cheer is always long live Mary! « *Evviva Maria!* » The majority - the vast majority - when not employed in devotions at the Sanctuary are resting their weary limbs after many miles of travelling, not on beds, nor in houses - for ten towns like Genazzano could not contain their numbers - but generally upon the hard stones of the paved ways of the township. Each company of pilgrims keeps to itself. The men and women, though of the same family, are rigidly separated. In no such gathering of many thousands anywhere else, is the same beautiful order and respect for purity and for modesty seen. The spirit of religion reigns over all.

9. It is evident that these of whom we speak here, are not of the class of those who have come by coach, or by train, and then have formed

into ranks to approach the Shrine of Our Lady. Of course, there are many of this latter class also, and there are many who have come individually, or in parties of two or three. But the mass comes now as the mass came for ages, in large companies, and informal pilgrimages. Their coming too, is an act of open reverence for the Madonna, from the moment they leave their distant homes, until they close their journey there again. It is now as it was in the time of Coriolanus, when the towns of Italy were almost emptied of their inhabitants going in procession to Genazzano to venerate the Image, which had appeared so wonderfully on the walls of the unfinished church of Petruccia. They come today (**1883**) exactly as they came four centuries ago, and solely to honour Mary.

**10.** And surely in this coming of theirs, there is a great deal of merit. Even in a private pilgrimage there is always the element of self-sacrifice, a sacrifice of time, and means, and convenience, which cannot but be pleasing to God. In the old law, the principal feature of the true worship of the Almighty was a pilgrimage which all were bound to make annually to Jerusalem. And though « *the earth was the Lord's and the fullness thereof* », though every locality was sanctified by His presence, He chose to make some places more acceptable to Himself than others. The spot where Moses saw the angel, was « *holy ground* ». The spot where Solomon erected the Temple was the only one in which God would, at all, receive sacrifice. It was the special place to obtain the remission of sins, and the granting of supplications. So also in numerous other instances. An impulse of our nature itself prompts us to reverence persons, places, and things consecrated, or having relation to God. It was through this impulse, that Magdalen went to the monument where the dead Body of Jesus lay. Instant relief came to the woman who, in faith, humility, and love, touched the hem of the garment of Our Saviour. The shadow, even, of the Apostles worked miracles. It was the same faith, so helpful in the many wants of life, that led to the pilgrimages made to the Holy Land for the veneration of the Sepulchre, which for a while, and only for a while, had the honour of containing the dead Body of Our Saviour. It is the same instinct of divine faith which brought, and which brings to certain places, Catholic pilgrims and organised pilgrimages. Faith warrants, in these cases, what experience proves; namely, that in many places where relics, images, or other objects specially connected with God, His Mother, or His servants are venerated, spiritual favours are granted.

**11.** Moreover, if one can be devout without these helps, one can be very much more devout by their means.

He who reasons otherwise, forgets all that a pilgrimage necessarily implies. It means absence from affairs of everyday life for a work which, in its whole bearing, is for God alone. It means innumerable prayers,

mental and vocal. It means a noble, fearless confession of faith, and contempt of the world. It expresses confident hope of favours from God through His sanctified servants. It calls forth charity. The love of God must animate any soul making, with pure motives, such an act. It means the sanctification of labour and toil undertaken in a penitential spirit for the remission of sin. It means, in brief, the reception of the Holy Sacraments, the gaining of indulgences, charity for the poor, prayers for the dead, and other good works of every conceivable kind.

**12.** A glance at the innumerable bands of Pilgrims coming for one of the great festivals to the Shrine of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel at Genazzano will put what I am saying here in the strongest possible light. Sometimes, as in cases of public calamity, the whole population of a town come together. This, however, does not happen often. Each company contains a number varying from about thirty to one hundred. The men of each party always go first, and the women follow. A picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel, well framed and supported by a staff, is carried in front. The women, dressed in the fanciful holiday-attire of the Italian peasant, bear upon their heads huge wooden vessels, which contain the provisions of the party for all the days of their journeying. The men, as a rule, walk bare headed, hat in hand, and with the national cloak flung over the shoulder. The Italian peasant is generally a swift walker. In Latium, in Southern Italy, and in Sicily he does not, as we already observed, live upon the land he cultivates, but in towns for the most part built on steep heights, from whence he descends daily to toil at a distance of three or four miles, and returns at night to his home. This necessitates swift walking to save time. The women too, are laborious (**industrious**) and patient workers. The weight they manage to carry upon their heads is enormous. Firewood, grain, grapes, olives, all the produce of the small cultivators are thus generally transported. Three or four days travelling, therefore, will bring them an immense distance; and thus even from far off towns of « *the kingdom* », as they still call Naples, thousands come to venerate the beloved Madonna of Genazzano.

**13.** In the town from whence they come, the pilgrimage, of course, is a subject for consideration for months previous. All who have made vows to go there, look forward eagerly to the opportunity of fulfilling them. It is only on such an occasion as the going of a large party of relatives and neighbours that adequate protection could be afforded, especially to the female members of a party. When all going are ready to depart, a day and an hour are fixed. Each family provides itself with necessary provisions and money for the journey, and in their best attire they assemble in the parish church where Mass is celebrated, and a most affecting prayer is recited by the Priest, if of the party, or, if he is not, by its elected or appointed chief, whom all obey during the pilgrimage. They

then form into procession and amidst the benedictions of those left behind, commence their journey, alternating prayers and hymns with the rosary and spiritual reading, to far off Genazzano.

They are a hardy race these peasants. They are extremely temperate. Their wants are few, and easily supplied. Sometimes they rest in the towns through which they pass, and which are, perhaps, also sending a contingent of pilgrims to the holy Shrine. Sometimes, if the weather is very hot, as in September, they journey through the night, and rest while the Sun is fierce, beneath some friendly shade. It is most edifying to meet them on their way by night or day. Grouped picturesquely, with eyes cast down, they all seem supremely impressed with the act of religion they are performing.

Invariably, the older people form a noticeable portion of every band, giving, by the intensity of their devotion, a staidness (**sedate character**) to the whole. But every class of life is represented, from the aged grandsir to the child in arms. The strong young men and women best able for the journey are, of course, most numerous; but tottering age, making the last loving journey for the priceless favour of a happy death, is never wanting in any party. As they sing the sweet canticles of the praises of Mary with their naturally beautiful Italian voices, it is pleasing in the extreme to hear their cadences dying away in the distance. The voices deep and powerful of the men, mingling with the softer and higher notes of the women, form a beautiful harmony not unpleasingly broken by some child's endeavour, or by the attempt of the aged whose will to chant Mary's praises is far in excess of the power to do so.

**14.** There are numerous popular manuals of devotion for the well ordering of these pilgrimages, written by pious directors. From any one of them, the Catholic reader of other lands may easily gain an insight into the nature of such manifestations of public devotion in Italy. In every one of them, it will be found that the client of Mary is cautioned against rashly making vows to undertake such long devotional journeys. He is invariably advised, that if he does so, he ought to make his vow conditional, or revocable, or changeable at the will of any Confessor. A vow lawfully made ought to be fulfilled, and therefore should be made with all due consideration (**wisely**).

« *Above all things,* » says Father Belgrano, whose little book is an excellent sample of these pious manuals; « *Above all things the pilgrim should bear in mind that he ought to be most careful in making a vow to undertake this or any other pilgrimage, particularly if the locality be far distant. You should* » he says, addressing his pious readers « *reflect well whether it may cause you to neglect any duty of your state in life, or any obligation you are under to others. Under every circumstance make always the condition “If I can” or, “so that any Confessor to whom I go*

*can dispense, or change my vow". Be careful further to select a proper time to make your pilgrimage, that is, on some occasion when no grave duty of your state in life or office may impede you. Provide then, that all your affairs be in such order, that by reason of the pilgrimage, or during it, none of your duties may suffer ».*

After other good advice, they are told how to go to the church, and what prayers to say there. The Father then proceeds to the method of arranging and conducting the journey. He says -

*« Let the pilgrims go all together and never be disunited. As far as possible let the men and women be separated. Let each one keep always before his mind the devout and pious scope of the journey. Hence, let no one fall into distractions or lightness of demeanour or relaxation, but let everyone be attentive to conduct himself with modesty, with devotion, and with edifying deportment. When prayer in common is not being made, let the pilgrim enter into himself and reflect upon the needs of his own soul: Let him prepare for a good confession. Let him turn his mind and heart devoutly and with faith to the Most Holy Virgin, by means of some brief but fervent prayer which the heart will dictate. Let him implore from Her goodness, the grace he most desires, and of which he has most need for the salvation of his soul. Should the pilgrims be obliged along the way to stay at some hotel, or still more, if obliged to stay the night there, let them be most careful to preserve in everything a devout and grave demeanour, that all may see that the pilgrimage is made from devotion only. It is the office (**function**) of the president or director to appoint from time to time the prayers to be recited in common, and to cause some canticle in praise of Mary to be sung, particularly when the company passes close to or through some city or village ».*

**15.** This writer has seen hundreds of these pious bands on their way to the Sanctuary of Genazzano. He has met them near it, and at a distance from it; and in no single instance did he ever witness one of the above rules violated. The deep earnestness of the men, the beautiful modesty of the women, the intense, frequently tearful fervour of the older people, the demeanour even of the children, showed that every company felt its responsibility, as a deputation from its locality, to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel in Genazzano. Each individual has, moreover, his or her own object in view, much too important to be endangered by indevotion; some favour to ask for self, or for some dear ones afflicted at home. A sister comes to obtain a brother's conversion. A father to provide for some member of his charge. A child to ask for a parent's recovery. This one to return thanks for life or health, for honour or means miraculously preserved. That one to pay the vow that saved him in some dire extremity. That other again comes to get the grace and to have the opportunity, at a place where unknown (**privately**), and to strange and

learned Confessors, and near the seat of Mary's tender mercy, the secrets of his overburdened conscience may with ease and assurance of pardon be disclosed. All are animated with intense love and reverence for Mary of Good Counsel, Whose mercy and power they full well know. No wonder then, that the silence, the fervour, the prayer and praise inculcated by their manuals of pilgrimage, and by the custom of ages should be well preserved. One thing worthy of notice is how constantly they use the refrain *Evviva Maria, Maria Evviva, Evviva Maria e Chi la credò*. This is repeated always to the same melody after every verse of the hymns sung, and is frequently interspersed with an *Evviva Maria!* given exactly after the fashion of a cheer or hurrah.

**16.** When the pilgrims come in sight of the Sanctuary, a very edifying ceremony takes place. The moment the tower of Santa Maria peeps out beyond the trees, at whatever distance, let the roads be as they may, the whole band at once fall upon their knees, and the chief of the party recites a prayer such as the following, translated from one of their manuals.

*« Hail venerable and Holy House of Mary where doth reside Her wondrous Image. Hail O Mary Mother of Good Counsel, Who hath selected this temple to be Thy dwelling place, from whence as from Thy throne of mercy and grace Thou dost dispense to all, with extraordinary liberality, Thy benefits and the blessings of Thy Good Counsel. O Brightest Star, Who dost guide us over the boisterous sea of our life. Purest Star which doth comfort us in all the distresses of our exile. Most sweet Star which doth recreate and inundate our hearts with joy and gladness, we devoutly salute Thee. Evviva Maria! Evviva Maria of Good Counsel! Animated with sweet hope and with the greatest confidence, we come to Thee, O Dearest Mother, and we rest secure that we shall obtain from Thy goodness abundantly, the fruit of this our pilgrimage ».*

### **Three Hail Marys are then recited.**

**17.** After this prayer the whole company is placed in strict order by the director. The banner or painting of Mary is carried a little in advance. The step is more measured, and all the men of the party walk with uncovered heads, regardless of sun or rain. Their sweetest hymns or litanies are sung, and thus they advance through the narrow streets of Genazzano until they reach the steps of Mary's temple. This is often so crowded that they have to await their turn to enter. The sacred songs of each group - invariably the Litany of Loreto when they enter the Church - continue until they reach where the lamps of the Sanctuary may be seen burning. Instantly then arises an *Evviva Maria!* from the new party, which, as it is followed by another from all in the church, has a stunning and strange, but withal a most devotional effect upon the stranger unused

to such cries. But it is the voice of praise heartfelt, devoted, and loving from children to their Mother. It is, moreover, peculiar to those times of pilgrimage, and except at the solemn Mass of the feast, there is no effort to restrain it. In fact, it would be impossible to do so.

18. And here an anecdote may be related. To many it seems strange, as it did to the writer, that at times of such immense concourse in Genazzano, there should be no attempt at preaching in the church of the Sanctuary where so many thousands could be benefited by the word of God. The certainty of the impossibility of being able to so preach seems difficult to understand, at first sight. The celebrated Cardinal Castracani, Cardinal Bishop of Palestrina could not accept the impossibility of doing something about it. He determined, as Ordinary of Genazzano, that the occasion of doing so much good should be improved. He would hear nothing of the difficulties. He felt certain that his position as Cardinal Bishop, would obtain for him a devout and reverent hearing. And he, accordingly, determined to be himself the preacher at the first opportunity, and so inaugurate the good work. He appeared, therefore, in the pulpit once, when the crowd was greatest, and succeeded admirably in giving out his text. But a man in the crowd happened to receive, at the next moment, a grace from the Madonna and raised the usual *Evviva Maria!* in thanksgiving. The whole church answered again and again with a deafening roar which drowned completely the voice of the preacher. He, however, was not to be daunted by this reverse, and essayed (**tried hard**) to continue his discourse. But soon a new band of pilgrims happened to move through the crowd outside the porch, seeking admittance. Their *Evviva Maria!* was taken up too, and immediately the church rang again with the cry, and the Cardinal's ears were stunned another time with the praises of Mary. The crowd, however dense, is accustomed to make a willing way for the sick, the blind, the lame, and the afflicted of every kind, brought generally by some relatives to the Shrine. The *Evviva Maria!* of the latter is the method to make known their object and to get a passage. It is taken up by the crowd outside the church and by those within. The good Cardinal's last effort was stopped by one of these; and as it was impossible to proceed, he realised the difficulty of « *improving the occasion* » and abandoned the attempt which no one has since repeated. And so, on the occasion of the two great feasts, the church has to be given up to the devotion of the pilgrims. Mary's silent voice alone is heard by all.

19. These bands of pilgrims come and go all day long. By an old custom, born of necessity, they leave the church the moment their religious devotions are completed, so that others may enter. Thus room is secured; and except on the occasion when the town awaits the recurrence of the hour of the coming of the Madonna, the people are left to discharge



their duties at their leisure. Masses go on ceaselessly at many altars from 4.00.am to mid-day. The confessionals are attended without intermission; and thus the religious needs of thousands are, without inconvenience, attended to in a few days.

In all this display of devotion, nothing, perhaps, is more affecting than the approach and departure of the pilgrims, to and from the Shrine. The greater number come on bended knees from the principal entrance of the church to the gates of the Sanctuary. Many women, with heads covered, are led by female friends and, on hands and knees, at every movement kiss the ground.

**20.** It is impossible to describe the fervour exhibited at the Shrine itself. One or two instances witnessed by the writer last September, (1882) will suffice for illustration. Amidst the various groups of pilgrims surrounding the iron bars which protect the Sanctuary, came a group from the kingdom of Naples. Its number was about fifty persons, and amongst them was a poor woman, who not only came to the Sanctuary on her knees kissing the ground, but actually seemed to touch the ground with her tongue every inch of the way. After the usual devotions of her party, she arose and led to the grating her son, a fine looking young man who looked to be about thirty years of age.

The reason of her extraordinary devotion soon became apparent. He was a victim of the terrible disease of epilepsy, and because of the frequency and severity of his fits, he was in constant danger of death. He knelt, as a little child would, suppliant at the railing, while his mother in a loud voice, made the most touching appeal imaginable to the Mother of God for his cure. Had Our Lady been visibly present, the appeal of this poor mother could not have been more real or ardent. Her language was eloquent, for it came from the heart indeed. « *Mary* » she said « *You were Yourself a Mother, and You know what a mother suffers in her son. I brought my son to You from the kingdom of Naples. You can do what You will. Have pity on me and heal him* ». She then told Our Lady how she had reared him in the Catholic faith to love the Madonna; how good a son he was; what the parish priest thought of him, and all the people; and what he suffered. At every period when she paused, all of her fellow pilgrims cried out, *Grazia Maria! grazia! grazia!* again and again, and in this demand (**prayer**) all in the church heartily united. At this point I asked one of the crowd the meaning of so much noise, and he answered in surprise, « *We are asking a favour from the Madonna* ». At long last a great *Evviva Maria!* burst from them. The pious mother - though of course she could not at a moment be certain of the cure of that disease - knew, or seemed to know, that her petition was granted. Both son and mother left the Sanctuary satisfied; and though inquiry was made, it was not heard that the young man suffered anything during his stay in

Genazzano. In the light of what was witnessed in the case of Lydia Vernini, it is probable at least, that he is one of the many miraculously cured by the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel at Her Shrine.

21. If it is edifying to meet these pilgrims either on their journey or in the church, it is yet more so to see them during the nights. Many, weary with long walking, take a brief repose; but the majority continue their rosaries, and prayers, and hymns. The still night air resounds with *Evvivas* and appeals to Our Lady. The morning light finds a multitude awaiting the opening of the temple at four o'clock; and it remains thronged during all the early Masses. The grand High Mass at the Shrine which takes place late in the day, with every accompaniment of splendour, is perhaps the least noticeable for the devotion of the people. The Sanctuary of Mary of Good Counsel is their one, their greatest, their only attraction. Many are found there for long hours together, kneeling at a distance, so as not to impede the approach of succeeding bands of pilgrims. The pressure of the crowd needs all the strength of the strong iron bars to resist its pious enthusiasm, never weary of contemplating the beautiful Image of Mary, unveiled. Whether veiled or unveiled, the reverence and love for it are all the same. But all who can, wish to contemplate, for as long as possible, the beautiful and well beloved Image. Mothers lift up their little children to gaze upon it, and no such child ever forgets it through the course of his life. All are anxious to get a print, a beads or a medal which has touched even the glass cover or the altar of the Image. None leave it without regret; and it is this feeling which gave rise to the establishment, as we shall see, of the Pious Union - a means by which the pilgrims can always be united to Mary of Genazzano.

22. The love of the sacred Image, however, seems never so intense as when the pilgrims leave the Shrine. All having satisfied their devotion, and having confessed and communicated, repair (**head towards**), at a signal from the director, to the church. Kneeling lowly they remain a while in silent prayer, and then a solemn act of thanksgiving is read, after which some vocal prayers are said. All then rise, and few are seen who are not weeping. The bitter, downright sobbing of some is so sincere and tender that it is impossible to witness it without emotion. At last the final *Evviva!* is given, and the Litany, the sign of departure from Genazzano, is intoned. The whole body retire backwards, some even on their knees, until the Church doors are reached, and the lamps of the Sanctuary are at last hidden from their sight; then, filled with holy emotion, they return in procession, as they came, through the streets of Genazzano. Finally, they move together for their distant homes where they are anxiously expected.

23. Very often, all find that, in their absence, the dearest wishes of their hearts have been granted. Not infrequently they bring in their own persons the proofs of Mary's goodness. All have obtained the plenary indulgence. And then many learn that their necessities have been fully met, - the difficulty has passed away; the erring one is changed; the persecutor is assuaged; the difficulty is gone perhaps for ever; life, honour, means, health are preserved. All are consoled. Some little memorial of the Madonna brought by loving hands satisfy those left at home. And it is this practical experience of all, which causes the Sanctuary of distant Genazzano to be frequented from generation to generation by the people of all the localities in Italy, which have never ceased, since 1467, to make those wonderful pilgrimages.

24. It must, we may here remark, be remembered, that if pilgrimages to Genazzano continue, it is despite the efforts of the present Government to stop them. Scarcely had the Freemasons obtained the supreme power in Italy by the help of France and England, when they commenced their well known persecution of the Church of their fellow countrymen.

Amongst other regulations, they prohibited all religious processions, except by the written authority of the « **Minister for Worship** ». It is true that, since then, they found it prudent, in the face of the danger of a revolution, to modify this strange ordinance of freedom. But while such an ordinance did last, several persons were cast into prison for indulging, after the custom of their forefathers for centuries, in the very harmless occupation of marching in companies to honour God and His Saints. It was natural that a Sanctuary which was a foremost offender in causing those processions, should feel the weight of the vengeance of the « **Minister for Worship** ». And so an officer with a detachment of well armed gendarmes was despatched to Genazzano. This brave and very able individual discharged his duties against unarmed and inoffensive country people with exceedingly great zeal. He drew a military cordon round the town, and by every road that pilgrims came for the Feast of the Nativity of God's Mother (**8th September**), they were met by « **the guardians of freedom,** » and after days of journeying to visit their beloved Madonna, the pilgrims were dispersed and forced to return home.

25. Great was the grief of thousands on that memorable occasion. Many scattered themselves over the mountains, and timidly made their way by circuitous routes into the church. But as the pilgrims generally consisted, as we have seen, of neighbours and relations - many being females who could not be permitted to separate - they were forced to go back as they came, without entering Genazzano. It was thought that such a lesson would have stopped pilgrimages to the Shrine altogether, as

people would not again undertake so great a journey with the risk of disappointment. But a very different result followed. There was excitement not only in Genazzano, and in the towns from which the pilgrims came, but in all the towns they passed through. The government officials became alarmed. Discontent might assume, perhaps, too formidable a proportion; and so the « **Minister for Worship** » thought proper not to enforce his draconian decree.

26. The over officious officer or lieutenant was named **Acqua**, a Garibaldian of a pronounced type. He gloried in his achievement, but he never again got to enter the town from which he had driven the pilgrims. On his next visit he was shot by robbers in mistake for someone else, upon the very bridge where he had, with a party of his men, forced back some poor pious people who came from a great distance to visit the Madonna of Good Counsel. A small stone, now mouldering, has an inscription regarding his death upon the spot of the encounter. His untimely end may have been an accident, but the country people for miles around point with horror to the spot, and firmly believe his fate to be a supernatural punishment for carrying out, in his own extreme way, the decrees of the Government, which are largely left to the discretion of the officials confided with their execution.

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## Chapter XVI

### APOSTLES OF THE DEVOTION

1. The Augustinians - Their history - Their saints. - 2. Celebrities in the past - Position in Rome. - 3. Their Cardinal Protector - Cardinals in Curia. - 4. Living learned professors. - 5. The Ven. Menochio, Sacristan and Companion of Pius VII. - The Ven. Bellesini, the modern Apostle of Genazzano. - 6. Devotion of their Generals to the Sanctuary. - 7. The Sanctuary «*the apple of the eye*» of the Order. - 8. General Vasquez. - 9. Commissary General Neno. - 10. Augustinians at the Sanctuary - Remarks of Buonanno. - 11. Why Our Lady of Good Counsel selected the Augustinians and their church of Genazzano. - 12. The devotion not confined to the Augustinians. - 13. St. Alphonsus Mary di Liguori and the Redemptorists. - 14. The Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel «*his heart*». - 15. Graces received - The dying sinner at Avenzo. - 16. Devotion of Redemptorists in Belgium.

1. Amongst the many who have been instrumental in preserving and diffusing devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, the foremost place belongs, as naturally it should, to that Venerable Order (**Augustinians**) so prolific in saints, in doctors, and in pontiffs; and of which the greatest luminary of the Church in his own time, or indeed, in any other day, St. Augustine, was the founder. The followers of his Rule divide themselves into two distinct communities. The **Canons Regular**, to whom St. Dominic belonged, modelled after the manner of those who lived the regular life of the great Doctor after he was elevated as Bishop, with what reluctance we all know, to the See of Hippo; and the **Hermits**, who preferred the stricter seclusion in which he spent his penitential days before that event. In 1170, the Hermits, scattered in separate bodies over various countries were, by order of the Holy See, united under one General, and numbered amongst the four mendicant orders, which did so much for Italy and for the world in the 12th Century, and in every century since.

This action of the central authority soon brought a great blessing upon the united community. St. Nicholas of Tolentine, St. John of St. Facundo, St. Thomas of Villanova, the Blessed Egidius, and a host of Beatified and Venerable Servants of God appeared within a very brief period. In it, the Rule of St. Augustine, referred to by Pope Alexander VII as the fruitful parent of Saints, has in every generation since, proved its right to that title. The last Canonisation at the Vatican inscribed the Blessed Clare of Monte Falco (**Canonised on 8th December 1881**), an Augustinian, amongst the number of the Saints. Her beautiful body lies as if asleep, and as perfect as the day she died, in the convent of her order,

after the lapse of five centuries. This wonder, which thousands from all parts of the world go to witness, is not taken official notice of by the Church. It formed no proof in the process of her canonisation. But there were other miracles more certain with which God glorified this, His faithful servant. Her heart, when opened, was found to contain a figure of the Crucifixion, and figures too of all the instruments of the Passion, sculptured in the flesh. These still exist. Her body, furthermore, contained three balls of identical size and weight, and yet having the following miraculous quality : that any two will weigh not more than any one, and any one as much as any two. This miracle represents the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity to which the Saint was so devoted. The Venerable Alphonsus De Orozco was also, at the same time (**1881**), beatified.

**2.** The number of spiritual writers and of persons of great sanctity and learning, at all times in the Order, has been very great. The Venerable Thomas of Jesus, and other names familiar to all Catholic readers, demonstrate this. And in our own day, the Venerable Stephen **Bellesini (who was beatified on December 27, 1904)** and the Venerable Joseph **Menochio**, whose causes for beatification are now pending, enlightened the world, by the supernatural holiness of their lives, and by the miracles with which God was pleased to attest that holiness.

The order was once spread over Spain, Italy, Germany and France. Its members were the Austin friars of England. Though never, perhaps, so much diffused as the Franciscans, they had at one period no fewer than three thousand monasteries under the obedience of their General. As children of the most learned doctor of all time (**St. Augustine**), they naturally led in learning. The erudite and able Cardinal **Seripandus**, who presided at the Council of Trent, was of their number; and to them also belonged the profoundly learned Cardinal **Norris**, the son of an Irish exile, and who possessed the rare merit of refusing the Tiara (**refused to be Pope**).

In Rome, they have, since their formation, occupied a foremost place in the Pontifical Court, and in the Schools. Two of the chief parishes in the Eternal City, Santa Maria del Popolo and St. Augustines are served by them. The Bishop Sacristan to his Holiness is always an Augustinian; and the Vatican and Quirinal palaces, are distinct parishes under his jurisdiction, and served by sub-sacristans who like himself must be Hermits of St. Augustine. They were and are still employed, in a like capacity, in many Courts of Europe. The chair of Sacred Scripture in the University of Rome is always filled by an Augustinian.

**3.** The pious and learned Cardinal **Martinelli**, occupied this post for many years previous to his elevation to the purple. It is a position requiring vast erudition and great ability, above all in a city like Rome,

where the learned of the world congregate. The devotion of this Cardinal to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, is very great. And certainly, She has wonderfully endowed him with the rare gifts dispensed at Her Sanctuary in Genazzano. His present position, as the guardian of the souls of the faithful from the tainting influences of bad literature<sup>1</sup>, requires them all. There is no position where the Spouse of Christ (**the Church**) needs more vigilance, and indeed, subtlety of discernment, so that no poison may infiltrate itself into the teaching of her children, or amongst the teachers of that teaching. History, Philosophy, Theology, every branch, sacred and profane, of human knowledge is exposed more in our day than in any past time to dangerous, and sometimes all the more dangerous because skilfully disguised, corruption. The activity of the Sacred Congregation of the Index has been equal to the occasion, and certainly, no more able guide for it could be found than this humble child of Mary. English Speaking readers will be edified to know that his life, when not engaged in the duties of his high office, is passed amongst the students of the house of studies of the Irish Augustinians in Rome. He shares with them, all their exercises of devotion, from early morning until night - himself the first at every exercise. He conducts their retreats, hears their confessions, and delights to occupy himself in every work of God, having for its object their spiritual advancement. This great and learned Prince of God's Church appears to be the humblest member of the community. He loves the plain habit of his Order; and nothing, when in the house, but the simple red zucchetto, or skull cap, shows his Cardinaliate dignity. His labours are incessant.

4. The writer who has had the privilege of witnessing his edifying life, while in Rome, has also had the happiness of seeing the same religious simplicity in other princes of the Church who are not even members of religious orders; and some of whom have been in their time, such as the Cardinal Bishop of Palestrina, **De Luca**, ambassadors from the Holy See at Courts like that of Vienna. He gladly mentions the fact, to show how utterly without even the shadow of foundation are those pictures (**stories**) of Roman ecclesiastical princes drawn by the negative imagination of such novel writers as the late Lord Beaconsfield.

Those in Rome, from the youngest, Cardinal **Parocchi**, to the oldest, the Dean of the Sacred College, are of the one stamp, learned and able indeed, but withal simple, affable, zealous, and sincerely anxious to do what they can do for the glory of God and the good of God's people. Their revenue is not even that of a very humble bishop in Australia, not even that of many priests. The calls upon it are very great. The labours of

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<sup>1</sup> Index Librorum Prohibitorum - See -

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Index\\_Librorum\\_Prohibitorum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Index_Librorum_Prohibitorum)

Abolished on 14th June 1966 by Pope Paul VI.

their office are arduous. Yet out of their little, they delight in saving something for the love of God. Cardinal Martinelli has recently spent all he could spare from a poor life enough, to decorate the beautiful chapel of the Crucifix, in the church of Our Lady in Genazzano, through devotion for the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. Besides being Prefect of the Index, and member of many congregations, he holds this year the post of Camerlingo to the Sacred College.

Father Luigi **Sepiaci**, lately elevated to bishop by Pope Leo XIII, is looked upon as one of the first (**foremost**) living theologians in the Eternal City. He took, by public concursus, the chair *De Locis Theologicis* in the same University. Fr. Agostino **Ciasca**, one of the first (**foremost**) living Oriental scholars, at present interpreter for the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda and professor of Oriental languages at the college of the Apoline is also of their Order.

Their present Commissary General, Father Pacifico Antonio **Neno** (**1833-1889**), after acting for many years in the United States of America as professor, president, missionary, and finally Provincial of that province, has brought to Rome the creative zeal of newer lands, together with great administrative ability. The state to which the confiscations and vexations of the Piedmontese reduced his Order in Italy, has taxed all his powers of reconstruction. Instead however of lying down under the load of oppression, he has gone to work with a will; and an immense measure of success has attended his efforts. A few years has enabled him to place his ancient Institute already on a basis capable of defying at least the present persecution, and of being able to do vast good in all Italy. He has re-opened noviciates in many places where they had been closed, and, under the shadow of St. Peters, has erected a vast new professoriate, or school, for the benefit of the young professed members destined to sustain the Institute.

The learned historian **Lanteri** is an Augustinian, as is also the Venerable and Saintly Bishop **Marinelli**, long the Confessor and confidant of Pope Pius IX. The late beautiful Italian poet, **Balzofiori**, was a Roman Augustinian. Father **Semenza**, of this Order, is amongst the first (**foremost**) pulpit orators in Italy at the present moment. Father **Ferrata**, Secretary of the Order, is, though young, Professor of Hebrew at the Propaganda.

The Augustinians drink, at present (**circa 1883**), in common with their brethren of the other Orders, the chalice of bitterness given them by the governments of France, Spain, Italy, and Germany in such overflowing measure. But a turning point in their fortunes may be near. Spain cannot do without their missionary labours in the Philippine Islands. Italy has to tolerate them; and, thank heaven, especially in the new zeal of their General (**Fr. Neno**), there is an evident sign of a coming



and a brighter day in which they will do more, perhaps than at any past period, for the benefit of the Church of God.

5. We may here take occasion to say a few words in reference to the two members of the Order declared Venerable in this century (**19th**), and whose holy lives were witnessed by living men; namely, the Venerable Servant of God, Bishop Sacristan **Menochio**; and the Venerable Servant of God, Father **Bellesini**. The first was the companion, Chaplain, Confessor, confidential adviser, and fellow sufferer of the illustrious Pontiff, Pius VII. The second lived for many years as master of novices and as curate of the parish of St. Mary, at Genazzano.

It would take a volume to record all that Father Bellesini did to spread devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel. Born at Trent, he entered the Augustinian Order early, and experienced all the vicissitudes through which the Order passed upon the coming of the French to Italy, both at the period of the Revolution, and upon the rise of Napoleon. He saw his Order disbanded, its members scattered, its property confiscated, and its churches desolated. He had to flee. But neither adversity nor prosperity could separate him from his brethren. A crust with them was dearer to him than all the riches of the world without them. In his native land, he became prized for his zeal by the Austrian government, and was placed over the work of education - a work in which so much can be done for religion and for souls. But the moment peace came to the States of the Church, he left this work to join once more his brethren in poverty. Loving discipline with an ardent love, it is related of him that, even when living with his relations, he made a cloister of his room, and there he performed all the duties of a religious. As the eloquent historian of his life, Fr. Balzifiore, well says, he was « *avid of common life* », the true and, indeed, the only secure life for a religious who has vowed poverty to his God, and who must one day give an account of the practice of a virtue which he has sworn to keep through all his days. Therefore, as the disturbances of the times did not permit perfect 'common life' being practised in some communities newly reëstablished, he deemed it a rare good fortune when his heart's desires were realised, on being placed in the convent of Genazzano, where, in reverence for the Madonna, 'common life' had never once been interrupted. Here the soul of God's servant developed, under the radiance of Our Lady's most wonderful Image, into one of the fairest of the flowers in the garden of the Church. His heart, always innocent, always on fire with the love of God and of God's Mother, now dilated still more; and he advanced with giant strides in the ways of the saints. Virtue, that before was perfect, now became heroic; and as teacher of novices, and as parish priest, the community soon came to know, that the long line of the Augustinian saints was destined to have yet another matured in the light of Our Lady of

Good Counsel. It would be a pleasing task, if the writer of this notice of this child of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel, had space to do so at length, to tell of all his holy works. He was at once the father, the servant, the spiritual guide, gentle but firm, of his novices. He was then, the zealous pastor who in very truth - « *in deaths often* » - generously laid down his life for his sheep. He spent his age and strength freely for the souls committed to his keeping. Miracles in life - miracles in death, attested his sanctity. He was declared Venerable soon after his holy death; and it is with much consolation that we have heard that his Beatification is almost certain of being accomplished within a short period.

6. Genazzano is full of the fame of his miracles. The writer has seen a child, who while falling from the wall of the church of Santa Maria, was saved through the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God. Good Father Berio, who came to Genazzano but two years after the death of Bellesini, tells of several; and was eye witness of the cure of a lame man performed at the tomb of the Venerable, in the church of Santa Maria. This modest tomb lies by the wall side, not far from the Sanctuary of his beloved Madonna. He foretold the hour of his death and its manner; and his body, years after that event, was found perfectly incorrupt, and so identified for the purpose of his Beatification.

The Venerable Menochio, a brother in religion and a contemporary of Bellesini, was Bishop Sacristan to the much persecuted Pontiff, Pius VII. He shared in all the sufferings inflicted upon his master by the atrocious conduct of the ungrateful Napoleon. He travelled also with the aged Pontiff through all the fatigues of his forced exile; and, both in exile and in Rome, gave proofs of such heroic sanctity that the necessary process for his being placed upon the altars of the Church commenced soon after his death. Devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel was, as befitted a member of his Order, one of the leading features of his life. He strove by every means in his power to extend it, especially by means of the Pious Union, in all the places through which he had to journey with Pius VII, and in the Eternal City. He provided for its permanent establishment in Ancona; and, no doubt, took care that his saintly principal should be filled with the same devotion - a devotion so needed then - and which may have been no small part of the cause why the Pontiff was able to meet the astuteness of the diplomacy of Talleyrand, the pride of Napoleon, and the long troubles of his reign (**including captivity by Napoleon**), with such gentle yet firm inflexibility. Mary of Good Counsel alone under God could make him equal to his trials.\_

The same devotion is extended by his saintly successor, the present Bishop Sacristan (**Bishop Marinelli**); and most actively by the Subsacristan, the Very Rev. **Fr. Pifferi** - a veritable Apostle of its extension by means of the Pious Union. He is the agent for its spread in

France, and is unceasing in his efforts to advance it in every other country. The greatest delight of this good man's life is to get away from the Vatican to Genazzano and, when there, to spend all the time he can spare before the beautiful Image of Mary. Him still being amongst the living (**in 1883**), prevents us from saying more about all he does for the Sanctuary and the glory of Mary everywhere.

7. The above brief sketch will enable the reader to know something of the Order to which it pleased the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel to confide the keeping of her most beautiful and miraculous Image. That Order has been most grateful for the trust, and has been most zealous to advance the honour of a treasure it has always esteemed as the most precious possessed by it. We have already seen what the General, **Coriolanus**, wrote regarding it, and how much was done for the Church of Santa Maria, the Sanctuary and the devotion during his tenure of office. The zeal of Coriolanus and of the whole Order for Our Lady of Genazzano, did not die in that generation. It continued, on the contrary, to increase until the Shrine and the devotion became, as it were, « *the very apple of their eye* » to them. In 1715, for the greater dignity of the sacred Image, the Father General, **Adeodatus Summanticus**, decreed that, unless for Princes of the house of Colonna, Bishops, and some other dignified personages, the sacred Image should not be uncovered without the unanimous consent of all the Fathers of the monastery. Subsequently, the Father General, **Gioja**, decreed that, except on the Feasts of the Translation of the Image, the Nativity, Annunciation, and Assumption of Our Lady, and the great Feasts of Easter, Pentecost, Christmas, and the Epiphany, it should be not exposed at all to the public; and that no priest, who was not a bishop, should be permitted to celebrate Mass before the picture uncovered without permission in writing from the General himself. Neither was the Image to be unveiled at any time, except with all possible ecclesiastical pomp; with incensations before and after, and with at least twelve wax candles of the larger sizes, lighted. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin and other prayers to be recited or sung, were prescribed both before and after.

The most Reverend General, Nicolantonio **Schiaffinati** had the convent declared a generalitiate one by Pope Clement XII. That holy Pontiff, on the occasion of being supplicated for (**asked humbly for**) this honour for Genazzano, desired to know the reason why the General wished for so singular a favour for a convent inferior in size to many other Augustinian convents in the Roman province. « *Your Holiness* » replied the General « *If Our Lady Most Holy, after a long voyage from Albania to Genazzano, wished to confide her Image to the hands of the Augustinians, I feel it my duty as unworthy Superior of that Order to have a distinct care and zeal for that holy place, and to promote with your*

*Holiness the lustre and honour of that Sanctuary, which ought to be the pupil (apple?) of the eye of myself and of my religion. »*

Under this General, the convent was constituted not only a generalitiate one, but also a house of holy retreat; and in all the subsequent changes and vicissitudes of the Order, it never lost its preëminence for the keeping of strict common life; and generally also as a chosen home where the Augustinian novices were trained in the highest sanctity under the shadow of Mary's Shrine.

8. The General, Francis Xavier **Vasquez**, a Peruvian, was also a specially zealous promoter of the devotion to this Sanctuary. By his means, Benedict XIV approved of the Pious Union; and upon its approval, the General ordered that the Union, so productive of spiritual blessings to millions, should be established in every church of the Order. He built the sacristy of Santa Maria, formed the choir, and improved the whole church, the convent, and the Shrine; and in many ways proved himself to be amongst the best benefactors of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel. The gratitude of the community of Genazzano to this General is evidenced by a beautiful marble bust, and by an inscription to his memory which is placed in the sacristy, and reads as follows -

FRANCISCO . XAVERIO . VASQVEZIO  
PERVANO  
MAGISTRO . GENERALI . EREMITARVM . S.AVGVSTINI  
OB . INGENTIA . BENEFICIA . CONLATA . IN . SACRARIVM  
TEMPLVM . ET . COENOBIVM . IENAZZANI  
MARMOREAM . EFFIGIEM  
PATRES . COENOBII . LIBENTI . MVNERE . DEDICARVNT  
ANNO . CHRISTI . MDCCCLXXXV  
OBIIT . POSTRIDIE . KAL . FEB . EIVSD . ANNI

9. Subsequent Generals vied with each other in extending the devotion and the prestige of the Sanctuary; and, as we write (1883), it forms a foremost object with the present ruler of the Augustinians, the Most Rev. Commissary General **Neno**, already mentioned, who takes the most lively interest in all that concerns the Sanctuary and devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel. This he promotes by every means at his disposal, but more especially by means of the Pious Union. Meanwhile, other members of the Order were not less zealous than its Generals for the treasure confided to their care. It was, as we have already seen, by means of Augustinian Fathers that so many miraculous copies were brought to so many places, as to Genoa and elsewhere; while the great preachers and theologians of the Order always make it a special study to advance the honour of Our Lady of Good Counsel by every means in their power.

10. At the present moment the attention of the whole Order is concentrated upon the Sanctuary. The church in which it is housed is being embellished with a new splendour surpassing anything attempted before. Every penny supplied by the Pious Union goes to the work. This source of revenue is providential in view of the fact that the entire revenue of the convent has been confiscated by the Piedmontese. While the church progresses, the services of the Sanctuary are not diminished in grandeur. Twenty silver lamps still burn their olive oil continually before the sacred Image. The festivals of Our Lady advance rather than decrease in the number of those who come to celebrate them, and in the solemnity of the celebration. Religious exercises take place in the church at stated periods for the benefit of the people. The Divine Office is chanted at the regular canonical hours of the day; and the rule of the Hermits of St. Augustine is observed by a community which, if not so numerous as it used to be before the Italian Government took the convent and its funds from them, is yet sufficient for at least all the needs of the Sanctuary. The present Prior, Father **Martinelli**, is busily employed in finishing the paintings in Santa Maria Church by means of the best available artistic talent in Rome. His predecessor, **Fr. Belgrano**, greatly to the regret of the people of Genazzano and of all who loved the Shrine, was translated (**transferred**) at the request of Pius IX to the post of Confessor to their imperial Majesties, the ex-Emperor and Empress of Austria, as we have already stated. His leisure has been as fortunate for the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel as his active life; it has enabled him (i) to give to the world a large volume on the devotion, and (ii) to publish an invaluable manual for the benefit of the pilgrims to the Shrine. He has added many thousand members to the Pious Union in Germany and Bohemia. But to say the truth as Father Buonanno observes « *the whole Order of St. Augustine has nourished always, and still nourishes, the most intense devotion for Our Lady of Good Counsel, and acknowledges as a work peculiarly its own, the obligation of spreading Her worship; inasmuch as Providence, having decreed to confide that Image to the care of the Hermits of St. Augustine, and so, having declared them depositaries and guardians of a treasure so precious, they, in truth, have never, as such guardians, been found wanting in zeal to promote the glory of the Sanctuary and to extend the devotion. There is not an Augustinian cloister which does not live and flourish under the shadow of Mary of Good Counsel. There is not a church of theirs without an altar or a chapel dedicated to Her, and where the feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel is not kept annually with pious pomp. There is not a religious, who does not nourish singular love for Her, who does not see Her in Her Image, ever present to his mind, and who does not write and preach the glories of this most sweet Mother. Nay more, there is not to be*

*found one of them who does not, by every possible means, endeavour to spread in the minds of the faithful devotion to Mary Mother of Good Counsel, and who does not induce them to join the Pious Union of Genazzano, the fountain of innumerable celestial graces. In fine, we may say that the love of the Virgin of Good Counsel is so deeply, and with such good reason, inviscerated in the souls of these religious as to become the glorious ensign of all the Augustinian Order which, though it was at all times reputed grand and illustrious, is now, by such zeal for Mary of Good Counsel, adorned with a new glory in sight of the Catholic world. »*

**11.** It was to this Order, therefore, - to the children of the great Doctor of Hippo (**St. Augustine**) - that Our Lady of Good Counsel determined to confide the most wonder-working and precious, the most faithful and perfect Image of Herself, the world has ever possessed. Their ruined Church in Genazzano, was dear to Her on many accounts (**for many reasons**). It was dedicated to Her under a title loved by Her, and expressive of the abiding strength in Her of the Holy Spirit of God, Her Spouse. It celebrated Her triumph over Venus, and over all the horrors of the abominable rites by which that fiend in female form was worshipped. St. Augustine too, was the first to celebrate Mary's heavenly praise as Mother of Good Counsel. It was meet (**appropriate**) then, that to his children, and to Genazzano, Her sacred Image, destined to represent Her in all after ages under that title, should come. The church of the Augustinian Tertiary, Petruccia, was perhaps the only one on earth, at the time, dedicated to God's Mother under the title given to Her by St. Augustine. It was certainly the only one which, under that title, celebrates Mary's triumph upon the very locations of the depravities of Venus. No fitter fountain, therefore, for devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel could be selected. St. Augustine overcame the heretics of his day by the Counsel he received from « *Her, Who alone has overcome,* » through the medium of servants like him, « *all the heresies that have ever appeared in the whole world.* » Against all other forms of error and force which fight against souls She opposes instruments, made apt (**suitable**) as St. Augustine was, by the same Spirit of Counsel. In Her servant Scanderbeg we have seen that She was « *formidable as an army set in battle array* » to the hosts of the Infidel; just as (**in the same way that**), in St. Augustine, She was formidable to the intellectual foes of the truth of Christ. In Genazzano, She determined to give the graces of Counsel and Strength necessary to overcome both heresy and vice; and from Her throne there, and wherever else She may be worshipped (**venerated**) as Mother of Good Counsel, to send forth for the defence of Christianity, champions like St. Augustine and Scanderbeg, to the end of time.

12. But, although the Augustinian Order has naturally been foremost in devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel and to Her beautiful Image at Genazzano, it has been, by no means, the only religious body which has been thus devoted. A devotion, at first specially confided to a single body, may, as in the case of the Sacred Heart Devotion for instance, soon go far beyond that body, without, at the same time, being disassociated from those who, so to speak, cradled it, and spread it in time to all the societies and individuals of the whole Church of God. The Rosary, the Scapular of Mount Carmel, the Sacred Heart, confided by Providence to Dominicans, Carmelites, and Jesuits, are now as universal as the Church; and unquestionably would survive the Orders through which they sprung, if these, in the order of Providence, should pass away. So it is with the devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, and with the Pious Union of those who, in the spirit of the (**Apostolical**) brief of Benedict XIV, desire to honour Her throughout the Church.

13. A most remarkable instance of this occurs in the case of **St. Alphonsus Liguori**, and of the congregation of missionary priests established by him (**Redemptorists**). These excellent men are remarkable for the fidelity with which they adhere to the Rule left them, and to the example of their learned and holy founder. No saint of the Church, perhaps, is more widely known than St. Alphonsus. His moral theology, and his works of the more scholastic kind, have made his name famous in all ecclesiastical schools; while his smaller works, intended for the instruction and edification of the faithful at large, are found in every language, and are used with unspeakable profit throughout the world. No portrait of any saint is more generally known; and it will be recollected that he is often represented with a picture of the Madonna near him<sup>1</sup>. He had but one. He kept it nearly all his lifetime. He never parted with it until his work for the Church was done, until broken with age (**he lived from 1696 to 1787**) and sickness, he left his diocese to return and die with his children in religion.

14. The daughters of St. Francis de Sales, whom he (**St. Alphonsus**) had directed for such a length of time in the way of the highest perfection, were inconsolable at his departure. When they found that they were, indeed, to lose him, their spiritual father, for ever, they asked some remembrance. Then, and then only, did the Saint part, as his Master parted from Mary on the Cross, with this beloved Image. He sent it to them with this message « **I leave you my heart.** » He had nothing else he loved on earth to give: that Image was a copy, and a very beautiful one, of Our Lady of Good Counsel of Genazzano.

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added by Eugene Shannon** - This is borne out by some images of St. Alphonsus Liguori that you will find on the Internet. The picture of Our Lady included in them is that of Our Lady of Good Counsel of Genazzano.

**15.** It would be easy indeed, from this fact, to understand the numberless lights and graces which the holy Doctor (**St. Francis de Sales**) obtained from the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. In him, surely, that Most Pure Mother triumphed over the foul efforts of the Venus of impurity in every shape, just as She did in Genazzano. From Her he drew those copious streams of learning and of wisdom which were destined to enlighten and to direct, in a manner never known before, the consciences of confessors and of people. No tongue can tell, no pen can write, the real, secret, silent good effected by this singularly devoted child of Mary, when, in presence of that little Image that he loved so much, he wrote and sent out these works of his upon the world. Only in the full flood of the light of Heaven shall we be able to see the power of the Mother of Good Counsel, as exemplified in this Her favourite child from Naples - the city in which, above all others, the same Virgin Mother of Good Counsel is most honoured. To this day, from his far distant province, priests and people come to Genazzano, for his spirit is upon them. He not only used the sweet Image of Mary for his own needs, but, as a missionary and as a Bishop (**of Sant'Agata de' Goti**), he used it for the needs of those for whose salvation he laboured. Miracles are recorded as having been performed by aid of his medals and pictures of Mary the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, one of which, being of peculiar interest, we shall mention briefly.

At Avenzo, an aged and scandalous sinner was near death. He refused the ministrations of the Priest. Nothing apparently could save the unfortunate man. St. Alphonsus sent him a little image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, exhorting him to have recourse to Her. The dying man, at the sight of it, not only at once returned to God, but to bodily health, and lived to do penance and repair his scandals.

**16.** The same touching devotion was exhibited by the Fathers of the Redemptorist Order, which the saint (**Alphonsus**) founded. In Belgium and elsewhere these good missionaries established sanctuaries, formed on the model of that of Genazzano; and that with incredible fruit for souls.

Other religious orders practise the same devotion; and to the writer of this little work in honour of Mary of Good Counsel, it was pleasing to hear from a venerable Father of the missionary Society of Marists, that the devotion was not new to them; and that it was made known and extended by their present General, under whose sway the Marist Community has assumed such immense proportions; spreading not only through France, but through Ireland, Scotland, England, America, Australia, and Oceanica; keeping everywhere to the Order's primitive spirit, and to the essential blessing of every religious order - common life with perfect discipline. A beautiful, special chapel is erected at the



novitiate of this Society near Lyons, where its youth may learn wisdom at the feet of the Madonna of Good Counsel.

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## Chapter XVII

### CANON ANDREW BACCI

1. Other Apostles.- 2. Devotion of **Andrew Bacci**, Canon of St. Marks in Rome.  
 - 3. His works. - 4. His celebrated letter. - Disseminating Copies - The Boy on the Journey to Genazzano - Roseate Hue on Image - Examples of Graces Received  
 - 5. Image at St. Marks. - 6. His death at the Sanctuary - His epitaphs.

1. From what has been said in previous chapters, it is evident that the propagation of the devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, however much extended by the Fathers of the Augustinian Order, or by members of other religious orders, or by canonised saints, has been in no sense confined to them. Pontiffs, princes, and people have all coöperated in spreading it. It is also, at the same time, true that perhaps no shrine has received less assistance from human means. It has, from the first, subsisted by the very force of its own power; coming as that assuredly does from the Queen of Heaven; and preserved, as it certainly is, by Her continual favour. Whom She wills, She selects to advance it; and, in this task, Her ways are in unison with the wonderful ways of God at all times, and in all the world over.

It is also a fact worth noting that since the first appearance of Her sacred Image in Genazzano, in 1467, until this hour, no efforts have ever been made to influence in any way the multitudes who come to venerate it in Mary's Sanctuary. They come and they go. They stream before the Sanctuary, through the tribunal of Penance (**Confession**), before the Eucharistic table. They kneel for hours before the Shrine, often when the sacred Image is veiled from their eyes. But who they are, or why they come, none inquire and none can tell. Their departure, which so often reveals them bathed in tears, or crying outright on leaving the Sanctuary, tells of hearts eased and grateful; of hearts released from bonds of sin, and grief, and pain, which none but heaven may know.

2. It was to a "relief" of this kind that the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Genazzano owed one of the most zealous - perhaps the most zealous - of all the apostles of Our Lady of Good Counsel, in the 18th Century. This was **Andrew Bacci**, a Canon of the Basilica of St. Mark, in Rome, who in a period of deep distress, accidentally came to the knowledge of the wonderful power of the sacred Image of Genazzano. Having found out about it, he went there, and obtained at once the relief that he had long, in vain, sought after. The mercy of Our Lady of Good Counsel so moved him that, in gratitude, he became a lifelong

promoter of Her devotion in the Eternal City (**Rome**); and, as far as he could, throughout the whole extent of the Church of God. With all whom he could influence, with apostolic missionaries, with ecclesiastics of high position, and with all others capable of advancing the devotion that he met in the Centre of Catholicity (**Rome**), he never lost a chance of diffusing, by means of Images, pictures, and pious treatises, his beloved devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel.

3. His zeal animated even the custodians themselves of the Sacred Image in Genazzano with fresh ardour. Through his advice, a new registry of miracles was opened by the Fathers in 1748. Through him, a beautiful proper office was composed for the feast of the Wonderful Apparition (**26th April**), and is now recited in Genazzano; in all the Cardinalitate diocese of Palestrina; in the whole Augustinian Order; and in very many dioceses throughout the world. He obtained from Pope Benedict XIV the privilege to establish the Pious Union of Our Lady of Genazzano in the church of San Pantaleo ai Monti in Rome. His zeal, and liberal contributions, caused the church in which the Sanctuary is situated to be furnished with costly vestments. The magnificent marble of the great altar; the marble balustrade; the rich altar of the most Holy Crucifix; the pavement; all came from his deep strong love and gratitude to his Benefactress, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

**He further caused Father De Orgio to write a history of the Translation from Albania and the Apparition of the Image of Our Lady of Genazzano, which has been of much value to all subsequent writers on the Sanctuary.**

4. We find, in Page 135 of Bacci's history, the following letter from himself to Father De Orgio, which gives in detail the reasons that led him to go to Genazzano, and the nature of the "relief" he obtained there. His meeting with, and his giving of relief to a poor boy on the way is a singular circumstance (**and a very interesting story**), showing the power of charity. No one knows the nature of the trial from which Our Lady delivered him. But that it must have been a trial, real, severe and external, is evidenced by the word he uses in his letter - « fatal ». We here give a translation, as near as possible literally of this letter, to preserve the genuine evidence of simple truth which marks the whole history that he wrote. Our readers will find it not only deeply interesting, but abundant in its proof of all that we have hitherto advanced in favour of devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel. The letter is as follows -

« Very Reverend Father.

« Two things are required of me by your Very Rev. Paternity. The

first is, to explain the reason, or motive that led me to take such a deep interest in the Sanctuary. The second, to tell what graces or wonderful gifts I know to have been granted through the most venerable Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, by means of the many copies on paper, given (**distributed**) by me, and scattered throughout Italy and far beyond Italy.

« With regard to the first; in order to satisfy to the full your pious desire, it is necessary that I should make an open and most sincere narration of all that which happened to me in the year 1734. And for no other reason could I be induced voluntarily to make this statement, except that it may advance the greater glory of God, and of that most amiable and most wonderful Image, to which I feel myself fixed and bound with all the affections, and with the most intimate feelings of my heart.

« In the month of December of the 1734, I found myself so agitated internally by certain fatal circumstances which disturbed my mind and soul, night and day, to such an extent that I knew not where to turn in order to find a proper remedy. One day, which was precisely the 7th of the present month (**the month we are presently talking about**), having visited a certain house in which a young person lived who, by a most painful contraction of the nerves, could not, for eight years continuously, stand upon her feet, I found her completely cured, free from pain, and happy. Struck with sudden astonishment, I at once asked about how, and in what manner, was she cured of her grievous and painful malady. The good young girl then, with perfect clearness of language, told me how, a few days previously, she had been brought to Genazzano in order to receive through its most wonderful Image, the grace she so ardently desired; and that, while she found herself at the foot of the sacred altar, contemplating and admiring the beautiful **Image of Paradise**, uncovered to her gaze, and listening to the Litanies which were being chanted for her at the foot of the altar of the Shrine, she suddenly felt the nerves of her feet loosen themselves and become vigorous; then, that her contracted members were forced apart; and that there ran through her whole body such an energy of motion, that she instantly wished to stand up and endeavour to move. In fact she did get upon her feet and found herself so vigorous, sound, and free from pain, that, casting aside her crutches, she commenced to walk, and thus returned to Rome, after having first rendered most heartfelt thanks to her benign Liberatrix in Genazzano.

« In hearing such a true and candid account, I, at that very

moment, (which for me was a moment very memorable) felt myself inflamed to visit the same Sanctuary, and that too (**also**) in such a manner, that I had a certain, secret, internal assurance, that there, from the most benevolent Mother of Good Counsel, I should obtain a salutary remedy for those ills which destroyed all my internal peace. Instantly, without regarding the severity of the winter season, or any of the dangers of the journey; on that very night, the seventh of December, the vigil of the Immaculate Conception, I hired a carriage and set out alone for Genazzano.

« And at this point I ought to let your Very Revd. Paternity know of an agreeable event, which happened to me on the way. About 12 miles from Rome, I heard the coachman cry out to a poor boy who tried to sit at the back of the vehicle, that he should get off. The poor child, only eleven years of age, trembling all over with cold, then said that he had sore feet, and therefore, for charity, he prayed to be allowed to remain. On hearing the plaintive, childlike voice I dismounted at once from the carriage, and saw the poor boy thrown on the ground, unable to get upon his feet, and all pleading and trembling. Moved with pity and tenderness, I lifted him up and placed him beside me in the carriage, covering him as best I could with wrappers. I brought him with me to dinner at my own table at the osteria of San Caesario. We recited the rosary together in the vehicle and, at the commencement of that rosary, he said to me, with an imperiously sweet tone of voice, that I should always think of saying it every day. After the rosary was over, he commenced to speak in the following unexpected form and to say to me: **“For that much charity which you have shown to me this morning, go now and you will have that grace which you are going to ask from the Virgin Mary.”** Surprised and astonished at such unexpected expressions, I said to him, **“do you know then where I am going?”** He answered with frankness; **“you are going to Genazzano to demand (request) from the Virgin Mary of Good Counsel a grace which you need greatly; go by all means, and without any doubt you will obtain it.”** I was then seized with unusual astonishment, inasmuch as the child did not know nor, humanly speaking, under the circumstances, could he know where I was going to, nor what motive was bringing me to Genazzano. Finally, we arrived in the neighbourhood of the town, near the beautiful villa of the Signori Sonnini, where the road divides itself into two branches, one of which leads to Genazzano, and the other to Paliano and the kingdom of Naples. I then looked again with wonder and tenderness to the good child. I gave him some pence in charity (as

much as I could afford) to help him on his journey, and left him in holy peace to pursue his way to the Abruzzi, through which he said he was obliged to travel. Now having gone on some ten or twelve paces in the carriage, there arose in my heart an ardent desire to see the child again, and to bring him to Genazzano with me. But with all the diligence that I and my coachman could use, it was impossible to find him; although he could not possibly be distant more than three or four yards on a road long and straight. I was, at that point, even more astonished than before. Having again mounted in the carriage, I soon found myself in Genazzano where I was lovingly received by its religious.

« Afterwards, at the proper hour, the sacred Image having been uncovered for me, I venerated and worshipped it with all my heart, and with an extraordinary internal tenderness, asking of the Most Holy Mother of Good Counsel the great grace which I sighed after, and which so much concerned me. And then I saw - and clearly saw, that the blessed Image towards the middle of the Litany which was being recited, **became suffused and enkindled as a purple rose**. And I was the more confirmed in the belief of not being deceived by my sight, when one of the good religious, on taking leave of me, said that Most Holy Mary would, without doubt, grant me the grace which I internally demanded (**requested**), because **the holy Image uncovered, showed a countenance joyful and roseate in hue**. In fact, on my return to Rome, with the most lively confidence of having been already heard, I received immediately the desired grace; and with such, and so great, completeness, that presently my dark and sorrowful aspect changed; and, consequently, there arose within me such perfect calmness, and quiet of mind, that I esteemed myself the happiest, and most fortunate man in the world.

« This then, sincerely and confidently expressed to your Very Revd. Paternity, is the motive, the remarkable motive, for which I have developed such great devotion to the most blessed Image; I now always have it fixed in my mind to promote its veneration and estimation wherever I could.

« With regard to the second part of your zealous enquiry, I shall tell you with equal straightforwardness, all that has happened to my knowledge in Rome and outside Rome, by means of the same holy Image.

« Inflamed, as I have said a little before, with love and devotion for that great Mother of Good Counsel, I commenced forthwith to speak of Her most singular prerogatives. With the factual knowledge of what had happened to myself, I commenced,

by exhortations and familiar reasonings, to influence all, especially persons troubled and afflicted, to have recourse to the aforesaid Most Loving Mother. I also commenced to distribute, to the devout, Her Images on paper; making on such occasions earnest exhortations to those who received them, to the effect that they should keep them in their houses with becoming respect, and that they should recommend themselves to the Mother of Good Counsel there represented, with all their hearts and with a firm purpose never more to offend the Divine Majesty for the love of Mary. Thus continuing for the course of fifteen years, I have seen wonders, and strange wonders, which, with all truth and security of conscience, I can attest and always prove before any authority whatever.

«I have seen, by means of the devotion advocated and established by me amongst the faithful towards this most amiable and most pure Mother of Good Counsel, and by means of large pictures given by me, which at the present moment amount to the number of ninety seven thousand, I have seen I say; peace reëstablished in houses, in families, and even in pious places; youth retiring from the slippery ways of the world and seriously thinking upon the most important concerns of the soul and of eternal salvation; and others leave and abandon perverse occasions of sin and inveterate bad practices. I have seen people almost reduced to despair, opportunely saved by Most Holy Mary with Her Good Counsel and other needful and timely assistance. I have heard that, with the holy Images dispensed by me, some have been liberated from chronic diseases; from gangrene, asthma, varicose veins, violent flux from the eyes, through which they ran fatal danger of becoming blind; from difficulty of breathing; from rheumatism; and others from malignant and burning fevers with many mortal symptoms. Women in labour devoutly reverencing this sacred Image, have been happily delivered: and some who could neither bring forth nor conceive, after having applied, for three or four days, this holy Image to the breast have been most happily consoled. I have known, and securely understood, that besides the innumerable maladies of fever, of wounds, of acute pains, there were even incurable diseases suddenly healed by the holy Images dispensed by me. Many, and many by this salutary means, and with this same devotion, have been liberated on journeys from imminent danger of perishing, either through falls of a perilous kind, or through the planned attacks of assassins, or evil designers, or by the flooding of rivers, as lately happened to Signor Niccola Piaggi, courier of the cabinet

of his Majesty the king of Portugal. This gentleman, having returned to Rome last year, narrated, in presence of several couriers and many others, how by means of an Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel which he had sewed in his breast, he found himself saved most wonderfully from the deadly peril of being submerged and drowned by a flood of water in a rapid river of those parts, which he wished courageously to pass by fording. Others, moreover, have either gained certain suits which they looked upon as lost; or found those in a good state when brought again, which previously had been very badly conducted and judged. Others on having recourse to this most blessed Image, and to its powerful and most loving patronage, have unexpectedly found deeds, money, and other objects of consideration which they had given up as lost. And others, in fine, by the powerful favour and assistance of Our Great Mother of Good Counsel have happily settled their daughters in life and provided for their sons. Finally, I have admired, and known, and discovered, that many, by becoming devout to this holy Image have wisely provided for their spiritual needs, and reäcquired the peace and tranquillity of their conscience; and that several who were much in dread of death, by placing before their eyes this most blessed Image of Paradise were suddenly enlightened, resigned, and placed in perfect calm; that they disposed rightly of their temporal and spiritual affairs, and thus peaceably passed to eternity.

« And since the graces and the wonders which it has pleased, and always pleases, Most Holy Mary to grant through these devout Images on paper, have come to the knowledge of many far distant provinces and kingdoms, people there have prayed and besought me by letters and frequently repeated requests, to send them copies. I have thus sent very many of these holy Images again and again to the kingdom of Naples; to the Ecclesiastical States, to Florence, to Genoa, to Venice, to Lombardy, and even to Istria in Dalmatia; to Portugal, to Catalonia, to Brazil; and many others to Africa and to America, by means of various apostolic missionaries. And indeed here, I have had the spiritual contentment of seeing and knowing that Our Lady, by means of these same Images, has worked everywhere great wonders amongst those faithful who have taken up so profitable a devotion to Her.

« I would never finish, if I were to recount the profit, the glory, and the graces granted by Mary, precisely by means of Her dearest Images, of which, as I have said a little before, I have given away through pure charity, and through the desire of making



new devout clients and children of the great Mother of Good Counsel, over ninety thousand. And I always wish to dispense more, until God is pleased to take me out of this mortal life. I conclude, however, this my letter, by narrating succinctly one more prodigious event.

« Perla Gradiglia, a young Hebrew girl, a child of ten years, of excellent mind, and of great promise of genius, on the 22nd September of the past year (**1747**) was taken from the Ghetto and placed in the Conservatory of Catechumens of this mother city of Rome, in order that she may embrace our Holy Christian Faith. After a few days she repented of what she had done (**she had changed her mind**). There was no means omitted by exhortations, instructions, prayers, and teachings to make her know and discover "the great deception and battle of hell". Finally, I was called, in order that I should bring a devotional Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel of Genazzano. I went immediately and, very willingly, I gave her the holy Image, and twice spoke to her of the graces and celestial prerogatives of Our Lady. Ordering, however, that in the convent there should be commenced at once a Novena before the holy Image, which the young girl frequently looked upon with tenderness. Thus it happened that, on the 5th day of the Novena, Perla called the Superioress, and she protested not to be able to resist the divine invitations any longer and that, positively, she felt in these days of the Novena, that her heart would break if she did not embrace the Holy Roman Catholic Religion.

« There was presently a great jubilee amongst all who heard such happy news: and now the good child who has often upon her lips "Jesus, Mary, Joseph!" disposes herself for Baptism, and will be devoted and deeply devoted for ever to the most wonderful Holy Mother of Good Counsel.

« I believe I have, at least in part and in brief, satisfied the anxiety of your Very Revd. Paternity; and I am ready even to satisfy it to a greater extent, if you command me. Meanwhile, praying you to recommend me heartily to that most amiable Mother of ours, of Good Counsel, whom I hope soon to come to visit: I am with all esteem. »

« Of Your Very Revd. Paternity »

Rome 2nd Feb. 1748

The most devoted and humble Servant:

ANDREA BACCI

Canon of St. Mark.

5. The good Canon wrote this letter in 1748, and for ten years longer continued his unceasing labours for his beloved Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, Who certainly had in him, no ungrateful child. In the Basilica of St. Mark, in which he held his benefice, they celebrate, as we have already noticed, to this day, the feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel with great pomp, and with a proper mass and office on the 2nd Sunday of July. The picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel placed in this Basilica by him, is reputed miraculous. Towards the close of his days he retired to Genazzano, so that he might be as near as possible to his beloved Virgin Mother. There he increased daily in sanctity and in fervour.

6. Finally, he took up his residence at the convent where, close to the wonderful Image of Mary Whom no man loved or served better, he breathed out his soul to God and to Her, just as the great feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord was dawning upon the world in August 1758. His body was interred in the Church of Santa Maria, at a little distance from the balustrade of the high altar, and within a few feet of the railing of the Sanctuary of his beloved Madonna. In gratitude for his services and his love for Our Lady of Good Counsel, the Prior and Fathers of the Convent at Genazzano placed a marble inscription to his memory, surmounted by his portrait, near the entrance to the sacristy. Another inscription was placed upon his tomb, which lately, in consequence of the marble pavement recently laid down over all the church, has had to be removed. This latter one, which possibly, from its tenor of humble depreciation of himself, was composed at his desire, if not by his own pen, ran as follows -

ANDREW BACCI  
AN UNWORTHY SINNER  
CANON  
OF THE BASILICA OF ST. MARK IN THE CITY OF ROME  
LIES HERE  
DUST AND ASHES  
IN THE TEMPLE  
OF THE DIVINE MOTHER MARY  
OF GENAZZANO  
HIS MOST PIOUS PATRONESS  
AWAITING  
THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD  
AND LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME  
HOPING IN CHRIST JESUS

PRAY FOR ME  
 HE LIVED LXIV YEARS, III MONTHS AND XI DAYS  
 AND DIED IN THE YEAR OF SALVATION REPAIRED 1758  
 IN THE CONVENT OF ST. MARY, GENAZZANO  
 ON THE 5TH DAY OF AUGUST ABOUT MIDNIGHT.

The community of Santa Maria placed another tablet with the following inscription, which has been lately inserted in the wall near the entrance to the Church and facing the Sanctuary of Mary.

INTEGERRIMO PISSIMOQUE VIRO  
 ANDREA BACCIO  
 BASILICA S. MARCI IN URBE ROMA  
 CANONICO  
 QUOD  
 CULTUM  
 DEI GENITRICIS MARIAE GENESTANENSIS  
 DE BONO CONSILIO NUNCUPATAE  
 PER UNIVERSUM TERRARUM ORBEM  
 LATISSIME PROPAGARI CURAVIT  
 EIQUE DICATUM COENOBIIUM  
 MAGNIS AC FREQUENTIBUS BENEFICIIS  
 CUMULAVIT  
 PRIOR ET PATRES AUGUSTINIANI  
 A. AE. V. MDCCLVIII  
 GRATI ANIMI  
 MONUMENTUM  
 P.

« The Prior and Fathers of the Augustinian Order with grateful hearts place this monument, in 1758, in remembrance of Andrew Bacci, Canon of the Basilica of St. Mark, in Rome, a man of the greatest integrity and piety, who took care to propagate most widely throughout the world the worship of Mary, the Mother of Good Counsel of Genazzano, and who endowed with great and frequent benefits the convent dedicated to Her. »

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### DON STEPHEN ANDREA RODOTÀ

1. Devotion of the Albanians in Italy. - 2. Their colony in Calabria. - 3. Their Apostle, Don Stephen Andrea Rodotà. - 4. Letter regarding his labours from Don John Francis Avato, to Father De Orgio.

1. It is a very remarkable circumstance, and, as we have seen, a proof of the miraculous Translation from Scutari, that ever since the apparition of the miraculous Image of Our Lady in Genazzano, the Albanians, not only at home, but in all the lands of their exile, have never ceased to regard it, though it is gone from Albania, as still and peculiarly being their own. It is inseparably connected in their minds with the glory of their nation. They recall with pride the fact that, while it remained with them, no power, not even all the power of the Turks, could overcome them. They are sensible (**aware**) that the reason why Mary left them in Her Holy Image, was because of the laxness, first in faith, and then in fervour and in purity of life, not of all indeed, but of many amongst their ancestors. Hence today (**1884**), those in Albania who have held the faith are amongst the most fervent Catholics in the world.

Out of Albania they, and their descendants for many generations, have kept and keep the recollections of their faith and fatherland; and demonstrate the most tender devotion to the Madonna which left Scutari. They come from all parts to venerate the sacred Image in Genazzano, even to this day.

2. Devotion amongst the many colonies of Albanian emigrants, which the generosity of the Pope and the Italian princes established in Italy after the Turkish occupation of Epirus and Illyria, who settled in Calabria through the fostering care of its Dukes, is very remarkable. This colony long kept the customs, religious and national, of its fatherland; and it is worthy of note that, when peace and prosperity produced a decay of fervour amongst them, devotion to the famous Madonna of their nation caused them, and indeed all their neighbours in Calabria, to return to the ways not only of faith, but also of Christian perfection.

3. This was effected by a fervent priest of their blood, who became, like Canon Bacci, an apostle of the devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, in Calabria and Southern Italy generally. Father De Orgio, when composing his Historical Notes of the Sanctuary, wrote to the best authority he could find in Calabria, about the nature and the effects of the

singular zeal of this devoted client of Mary of Good Counsel, named, Don<sup>1</sup> Stephen Andrea Rodotà.

4. Speaking on this point, Fr. De Orgio says: « *Not wishing to give anything of my own, it will suffice for me to refer here to the following full, and erudite letter, written to me on this very worthy and laudable subject, by the illustrious Don John Francis Avato, a most learned professor of the Greek language in the flourishing Pontifical Corsini College, at San Benedetto Ullano* ». The following is a literal translation from the original Italian of this letter, which gives in detail all that Father Rodotà did for his people by the aid of Our Lady of Genazzano. The reader will find in it much of the complimentary and roundabout phraseology, common to Italian epistolary correspondence in the first half of the 18th Century. But the writer deems it better to preserve this style rather than to weaken the value of the document by giving it in a more modern, and, perhaps, more readable form. It is as follows :

« Very Revd. Father De Orgio.

« The happy, unexpected information reached me during the past month of the work which your Very Revd. Paternity was engaged in composing, upon the glories, and the immortal prerogatives of the holy and most august Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel; and this information, confirmed afterwards in my mind by succeeding accounts, united to the many rare qualities which adorn your mind, and of which real proofs are found in the continued exercise of the principal onerous offices sustained by you in your renowned Order, - all this has filled me with extreme joy; because of the particular devotion which this seminary, and all this country profess towards that celebrated

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<sup>1</sup> « Don », which evidently appears to be a contraction of the Latin Dominus, prefixed to the Christian name, is the usual title given in Italy to the members of the secular Priesthood, when speaking either to or of them. Titles belonging to office or dignity are prefixed to the family name. Except, however, in the case of prelates, « Don » is the title used most commonly even when speaking of capitial dignitaries. In families it is seldom or never lost. Brothers and sisters will talk of their « Don Nicolo » or « Don Giovanni » even when the latter has been for years a Monsignore, or even a Cardinal. There appears to be the element of endearment in the name, as in that of « Father » joined to the Christian name of a Catholic Priest, in Ireland, America, and the colonies. In Italy, as in all Catholic countries, the word « Padre » - Father - is only used in the case of priests who are members of a religious order. Should the latter have attained the highest grade in Theology, they are styled « Padre Maestro » - Father Master. While the latter title is very commonly in use in the case of the regular clergy, secular Doctors in Divinity are rarely if ever called, as with us « Doctor ». University titles in Theology or Canon Law are appended to the name of the individual possessing them, as with us happens in the case of literary graduates. We sometimes hear of « Signor » Abate, Arciprete, Canonico etc. but the prevailing title is, even in the case of these, « Don ». The same title is given, as in Spain, but in a much more restricted manner, to seculars of a very exalted rank; as Don Philip, Duke of Paliano; Don Amadeo, etc. just as we hear Don Carlos. It is, in fact, the highest general, secular title applied in love by a Catholic people, to their priesthood. It was probably first introduced, at least commonly, into Italy during the Spanish domination in the South.

Sanctuary. And thus I am stimulated (**motivated**) to give you some remarkable proofs of the singular devotion which this province of Calabria Citra has shown for that holy Image, and still shows to this day. Hence I can, in some manner, in the name of the Alumni and of the devout people, contribute in a small degree at least, to the glories of Most Holy Mary, by communicating to you such valuable records as are here preserved.

« In the year, then, 1713, a noble gentleman of the renowned college of St. Athanasius in Rome, named Don Stephen Andrew Rodotà having heard frequent conversations amongst persons worthy of every credit, regarding the wonderful and unmistakable prerogatives of that holy and most blessed Image of Most Holy Mary of Genazzano, which came originally from Albania, and of the miracles performed by it in its passage to Italy, he found himself, in such a manner inflamed with so ardent a desire to visit and venerate it that, without loss of time, he betook himself to Genazzano, where he was received by the religious of that period with the greatest welcome and love; particularly when they found that **he was a priest of the Greek rite** and, by nation, an Albanian. The holy and most venerable Image was at once uncovered for him with a special demonstration of esteem. He was permitted to celebrate Mass at the altar of the same holy Image, and to fully satisfy his devotion and fervour by regarding and contemplating it again and again, as one who wished to have a vivid copy of it formed in the very centre of his heart.

« After this he returned to Rome; but so entirely inflamed was he with love, and overwhelmed with tenderness for that great, most beneficent Mother of Good Counsel (Whom he often called the Madonna of the Albanians) that, from that moment, he commenced to conceive vast and holy ideas for the promotion of Her worship everywhere, and especially in Calabria Citra. He himself was a native of San Benedetto Ullano in that province, although the family, Rodotà, enjoyed nobility in the city of Montalto, and were favoured with many privileges by the most excellent the Dukes, and were well known by many titles in all that country. Wherefore - (omitting the labour up to that sustained by him as the most faithful companion of the missions of Father Baldinucci of the Society of Jesus, so greatly renowned for sanctity of life and for his heroic, apostolic zeal,) - with a copy of the above-referred-to most holy Image, he fled, as it were, (after having by his apostolic labours, and with the above-named most zealous Apostle of Italy, travelled through and sanctified many provinces and especially the Romagna;) he fled, I have said, to San Benedetto Ullano, and there commenced at once to cause his zeal for the worship of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel to become resplendent with the idea and the design, well pondered upon, to sanctify, by means of the holy Image, the Albanian colony more than others, by bringing them back to the perfection and first lustre and splendour of the Greek rite, which for

want of subjects skilled in the Oriental ceremonies, was on the point of falling and of losing its majesty, purity, and decorum.

« Now I cannot certainly express with the pen in a few sheets, what and how great apostolic fatigues he undertook, followed up, and sustained to his very death, to the great spiritual advantage of the whole population, and of the devoted Albanian race especially. I could easily, of such an ample subject, form an entire work. I will, however, relate some of the most remarkable and valuable facts, in order that in the voluminous work which your V. Revd. Paternity is about to send soon to the press, they may assist in giving edification to the people, and in the increase ever more of the worship in truth of that most amiable, and most gracious holy Image.

« The first of these facts is this; that scarcely had that zealous, new Apostle, elected by God for the sanctification of that people, and for the propagation of the worship due to the Most August Empress of the Heavens, commenced with sermons, with panegyrics (**speechs/writings in praise of**), with exhortations, and with assiduous familiar discourses, to unveil the glories, and the singularly high prerogatives of the most holy Image of Mary of Good Counsel, which came with such great and portent events from Albania to Genazzano; scarcely had he with well taken copies of the holy Image which he always brought with him, commenced to invite with apostolic words the Albanian colonies to acknowledge, and worship, and venerate their most benign ancient Mother of Good Counsel, than presently there became kindled in their hearts such a living fire, and such a fervent love, that all gathered with one accord to see and admire so beautiful and devotional an Image in all their towns and cities. All crowded to hear the voice of this beloved servant of Mary, who with such eloquent tenderness and zeal, preached, and assiduously evangelised upon that noble, holy, and delightful object. And hence were derived those copious heavenly graces, which at the commencement, as the first fruits of these souls, were gathered. All the land of San Benedetto Ullano immediately changed its aspect. Peace once again flourished in houses, in families, and in souls prone to revenge. Young women became such models of modesty and staidness of demeanour that many of them embraced the perfect state of the virgin consecrated to God; and all, with a holy emulation, endeavoured to acquire a true devotion to Mary of Good Counsel. And in fact, they did acquire and demonstrated this in the first magnificent temple erected at Ullano in honour of the holy Image brought there and exposed frequently upon the altar, by the aforesaid Don Stephen. But in this, the Rodotà family distinguished themselves as much and more than all others, giving not only generous sums of money for the erection of the temple (**church**), but also providing, afterwards, precious vestments, chaplains, annual revenues, sacred vessels, lamps, and other very notable gifts. Hence to this day is seen and admired in that locality, this first majestic temple

erected to the glories of the great Virgin and Mother of Good Counsel.

« The second fact is this, that in order to demonstrate how agreeable to heaven were the incessant apostolic fatigues of Don Stephen, and the singular devotion excited in the souls of these people, especially of the Albanian colonists, Most Holy Mary commenced very speedily to work astonishing prodigies, and to dispense most signal favours worthy of everlasting remembrance. Of these a whole volume could be written, as in fact many and many miracles have been registered, and others are everywhere being collected and registered. I will here refer to two only performed by the holy Image, since those first blessed moments, for the beloved family of Rodotà so much interested and pledged in extending its veneration. The Lady **Agatha Rodotà** the daughter of Don Maurice - a man endowed with great probity and credit in that province - **had a young son** grievously afflicted in the eyes by an acrid burning and pertinacious humour (**fluid**), which already placed him in evident peril of losing both eyes. The most painstaking diligence was employed by the most skilful physicians to cure him, but it was always without effect or any advantage whatever. At last the devout, noble mother had recourse to Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel; and having anointed the eyes of her son with oil from the lamp which burned before the holy Image, presently his eyes became clear as at first, and he perfectly regained his sight by an evident miracle, and to the great astonishment of all.

« Thus also in the year 1738, the Lady **Rosa Carraschi**, wife of Don Luigi Rodotà found herself given over (**given up**) by the physicians, and in a state prepared to render her soul to God at every moment, so much so that, already, the matters necessary for her funeral were prepared by the domestics. At last, some of her near relations resolved to present a memorial filled with the most fervent expressions at the feet of the Image of Mary Most Holy of Good Counsel, in the above named Church of Ullano. This being done, even as one arises from death to life, the devout lady, Donna Rosa commenced at once to grow better, and presently saw herself perfectly cured, to the great wonder of the assembled doctors, all of whom declared that such an unexpected change could not have taken place but by a most signal grace of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel.

« The third remarkable occurrence which I have here to notify to your Very Revd. Paternity, (omitting, as I have said previously, the account of the great prodigies there operated by means of the copy of the holy original Image, of which I keep by me the sure documents), is, that from San Benedetto Ullano the devotion to Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel commenced so effectually to extend, amplify, and propagate itself, by means of the continual fatigues of the same Don Stephen, in so many other cities, lands, and villages of that province, (where so many devout people from Albania found refuge when obliged to flee, at the time their country was taken possession of



by the audacious Turk), that altars were to be seen everywhere erected to Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel. Everywhere too, this holy Image was called the Image of Mary of the Albanians. Many and many copies were taken in copper, in prints, and even in sculpture. Besides the spiritual profit to souls, the most perilous and obstinate maladies of their bodies were cured. The faith also constantly increased, through the most tender and most sweet discourses and reasonings of the before-referred to loving servant of Mary, Don Stephen Rodotà. In a little time, other new temples were erected to the immortal glory of the blessed Image. The Lady Donna **Teresa Caccuri**, sister of his Excellency the Lord Duke of Forano, a lady as illustrious for the nobility of her blood, as she was for the exemplary innocence of her life, caused another church to be erected immediately after that of Ullano, (which was precisely the second temple of Mary of Good Counsel) on her own feudal estate, excited and moved by the sermons and discourses of Don Stephen, upon the singular luminous gifts of that sacred Image. This second temple, built by the same devout noble lady; endowed with magnificent revenues; enriched with most sumptuous decorations; and provided withal with singular munificence; - so great munificence indeed, that when dying the Lady Teresa above named, and really worthy to be well praised, left heir to all her property, the same temple, erected in honour of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel. The other temple was that commenced with great sumptuousness and magnificence, but not yet terminated, in the country of Falconara; and likewise another is seen erected with expedition and most perfectly completed in the district of San Giacomo, where took place that memorable miracle which I cannot pass over in silence. It happened that a manual or day labourer, who was employed working and excavating foundations behind the church, in order to erect there two rooms for a priest or hermit was, all of a sudden, overwhelmed by a vast mass of stones which fell upon him, and he became buried alive under the irreparable ruin. Nevertheless, thanks to the most singular protection of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, many persons having gathered with the view of extracting at least his corpse from under the vast mass of stones and earth, and after having with great fatigue excavated for four consecutive hours, they found him, to their great amazement and joy, not only alive, but preserved from any, even the least hurt whatever. Hence entering into the before-named temple they rendered sincere thanks to Mary.

« Many, certainly, were the apostolic and glorious undertakings of Don Stephen in all that great province, in order to found, and establish, and promote the worship, and the tender and most fruitful devotion to Mary Most Holy of Good Counsel. But then, he, with his clear mind, understood and knew, that the grand work commenced by him would never be prosecuted with such fervour, or sustained with such zeal, if in San Benedetto there should not be erected a Pontifical College with its

Bishop of the Greek Rite as President, specially for the Albanian colonists. Therefore, he speedily prepared himself to undertake for that laudable and holy object, a new voyage to Rome.

« Having arrived in fact once more in that Holy City, the first visit he wished to make was to his most loving and most sweet Mother, Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel in Genazzano, Whom he ever had with wonderful sweetness upon his lips, and deeply impressed upon the very depths of his heart. He therefore presented himself for the second time in Genazzano. With most copious and tender tears he worshipped anew the beautiful Image of Paradise uncovered to his eyes. Before it, he celebrated Mass with intense fervour of spirit, and at its feet he left a supplication or memorial written in Greek, but written with such profound sentiments of tenderness, of devotion, of doctrine, of esteem, and of love, that it cannot be read without the most vivid emotion. He recommended with this most fervent supplication to Mary, the great cause for which he had come to Rome; and, as he himself afterwards ingenuously (**candidly**) confessed to his friends, **he saw in that moment, the holy and most amiable Image change itself graciously in colour, and become in countenance as a vermilion rose, florid and rubicund; and he heard then, indeed in the interior of his heart, a sweet, secret voice which said to him, “take courage Don Stephen, because if what you ask redounds to the glory and honour of My Son, know that I will obtain it for you, and hear your prayer”**.

« It is true that, because of the very great and important difficulties which then arose upon the point of the appointment of a Greek Bishop for the benefit of the Albanian Colonies, which Don Stephen alone had promoted both with the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, and with the Holy See, he was immediately compelled to place such a weighty burden upon the shoulders of his brother, **Don Samuel**, a personage of singular prudence and learning, and to retire himself to his most beloved people, the Albanian race, to extend and amplify much more the worship and devotion to Mary of Good Counsel. Amidst these holy and apostolic labours, rich in merits, and laden with a glorious conquest of souls, **he died a short time after**. But still it is true, that by means of his prayers, as we piously believe, in heaven, not only have we obtained the appointment of the aforesaid Greek Bishop, but further the erection of a Pontifical College so ardently desired by him for the Italo-Grecian youth. Thanks to Pope Clement XII of holy memory, both of these great benefits were granted to that nation; and if in this land of San Benedetto Ullano there is erected that majestic far famed college as it is now seen, called the Pontifical Corsini College, the first Greek Bishop-President of which was the aforesaid Don Samuel Rodotà (**brother of Stephen**) with the title of Archbishop of Borea, and whose erection has been already confirmed by his Holiness Pope Benedict XIV in the Bull *de Ritibus Graecorum*. From

thence have departed, and still depart Italo-Grecian alumni, so well instructed in the purity of the Greek language, and of the Oriental ceremonies, and of holy and most exemplary morals, that to them every Albanese colonist acknowledges his greatest advantage; and, by means of them, the great devotion introduced by the zealous spirit of Don Stephen Rodotà towards the great Mother of Good Counsel in this fortunate province, goes on evermore increasing and extending; whence it is to be hoped that within a few years, will be seen and admired in every city, in every town, and in every Albanese colony, either a new Temple, or at least a most sumptuous altar in honour of the Image of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, copied faithfully from the most sacred original which is preserved in Genazzano, and worshipped with such assiduous concourse of people as is demonstrated on the greater solemnities of the year.

« This is what I can at present with security state in brief to your Very Revd. Paternity; and you can securely, if you so please, cause it to pass into print, since of all these things stated by me, besides being public and manifest, and even well known to persons living and of standing, the clearest proofs are preserved in this seminary; and beseeching you to recommend me to the most sacred original Image of the B.V. of Good Counsel, (I being born under Her most powerful protection) with full and sincere esteem for the merits of Your Very Revd. Paternity I devoutly kiss the hands ».

« Of Your V. R. Paternity.

Your sincere, humble, and obliged servant,  
**DON GIOVANNI FRANCESCO AVATO**  
 Greek Lecturer. »

« Corsini Seminary of San Benedetto Ullano,  
 14th February 1748. »

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### **Note added by the Author, Msgr. Dillon -**

While this chapter was passing through the press of the Propaganda, the writer was informed by his Eminence Cardinal Martinelli that steps were being taken to have declared Venerable, another most zealous Apostle of the devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel; namely, Father Modestino, whom we already referred to in *page 176* of this work. Father Buonanno states that during the lifetime of this wonderful man, (for he died a victim of his evangelical charity) he renewed the face of Naples by his devotion

to Our Lady of Good Counsel. It was his custom to carry a copy of the sacred Image of Genazzano from house to house in that city, and it is impossible to describe the number of families sanctified and the number of sinners converted through the sweet influence of Mary thus represented, and in the hands of an Apostle so zealous.

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## Chapter XIX

### THE PROPER MASS AND OFFICE

1. Value of granting a Proper Mass and Office as a proof of the approval of the Church. - 2. First (**Common**) Office granted in 1727. - 3. The Proper Office sought for. - 4. Delay in granting it in the case of the Holy House of Loreto. - 5. Genazzano more favoured. - 6. Investigation - Proper Mass and Office granted in 1789 (**1779 seems more likely**<sup>1</sup>). - 7. Description of the liturgy. - 8. The Proper Office from the Roman Breviary (**Omitted from this version**). - 9. Its extension through the devotion of many Bishops, religious orders, and people.

1. The ultimate, and the most emphatic seal of approval which the Church gives to any devotion is to approve a special liturgy, and also to appoint a special festival for it; and then to command its Proper Mass and Office to be used, under the penalty attached to the neglect of a Church law, by all, or by any portion of her children. All this she has done in the case of the devotion to the wonderful Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel in Genazzano.

2. So impressed, in fact, was the Church by the miracles which for centuries had been wrought under the very eyes, as it were, of the Vicar of Jesus Christ (**the Pope**), and so great were the spiritual fruits derived by all of her children who showed devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel - and they were multitudes - that, early in the eighteenth century, she took under consideration the question of approving a Proper Mass and Office in honour of the miraculous Image of Our Lady, under the title of Good Counsel. Then, after that mature deliberation which always marks the action of those commissioned with the government of the universal fold by the Vicar of Christ, an order issued from the Sacred Congregation of Rites on the **12th July 1727**, by which the clergy of the town of Genazzano, secular and regular, were privileged to celebrate the **Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel**. The anniversary of the Miraculous Apparition (25th April) was appointed for the festival. Soon after, the same favour was extended to all of the clergy, secular and regular, of Palestrina. The feast was then elevated to a Double of the Second Class<sup>2</sup>, but without an Octave.

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<sup>1</sup> **1779 or 1789** - It seems more likely that the date of the Order approving the Proper Mass and Office was 18th December 1779 rather than 18th December 1789. The 1779 date is given by Mons. Dillon in Section 5. Then, in Section 6, he says that the number of years from the date of the earlier Order (1727) was 52 years. This would make 1779 the year of the later Order.

<sup>2</sup> **Classification of Feasts:** See -

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ranking\\_of\\_liturgical\\_days\\_in\\_the\\_Roman\\_Rite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ranking_of_liturgical_days_in_the_Roman_Rite)

3. It must be understood, **however**, that this privilege contemplated only the usual or, so to speak, common office already arranged for the Feasts of Our Lady. There was nothing in it that spoke of the fact of the Wonderful Apparition, nor even as a fact well established by the evidences of human credibility. It is indeed (**it seems?**) certain that, unless the Sacred Congregation of Rites knew and believed this fact, then not even a common Mass or Office would ever be permitted. But to permit and to encourage amongst the faithful a well founded belief, known to be productive of the most certain spiritual advantage, is one thing; to teach that belief, even upon human evidence, through the medium of the Church Liturgy, is another thing.

In this last particular, the Church has been always most careful. Even though, most clearly, the matter may have no element whatever in it of divine faith; even though it relates to a fact ascertained upon the clearest human testimony, about which there need be no more doubt than of the existence, say, of Charles V or of Napoleon Bonaparte; still the Church is cautious and more than ever cautious, when there is question of a miracle. Not, certainly, that the Church believes miracles to be impossibilities. If the miracle is there, she recognises it. Just as she recognises the historical or the natural fact, she recognises and acknowledges the supernatural one. She knows nothing of the cowardice which fears the sneer of the disbeliever in miracles. She is not afraid of the reasoning of the Atheist. **But, on the other hand, She does not yield to the indiscreet zeal or devotion of the enthusiast.** She knows that we may be deceived; and that, where there is question to do with the supernatural order, we are more likely to be led astray than in the merely natural order; and that, therefore, it is necessary to use the utmost caution. And so in all her courts, when proposals are made to acknowledge supernatural occurrences, the Church has officials well skilled in Canon Law, in evidence, and in practical affairs, whose special duty it is to oppose by every means in their power all such claims. Hence, for instance, the processes for the beatification or canonisation of saints, or even for the introduction at all of such processes, are hindered for years, and are often entirely prevented.

4. A remarkable instance of this intense caution is found in the case of the Proper Office and Mass in honour of the **Miraculous Translation of the Holy House of Loreto from Dalmatia to Italy in 1291**. No historic fact could be more well known to, or more believed in, by the faithful; or indeed, better established in every way. Pontiff after Pontiff had received miraculous favours at Loreto, and shown magnificent signs of gratitude. Pilgrims flocked there, as at the present moment, from all parts of the world; and yet, it was not until the reign of Innocent XII - four hundred years after the translation - that a Mass and Proper Office,

in which reference to that Miraculous Translation was inserted, was finally granted (**in 1699**). Even then the Proper Mass and Office (**relating to Loreto**) were not permitted beyond the province of Piceno.

5. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Genazzano has been more fortunate than that of Loreto. The Wonderful Apparition occurred in 1467. As we have seen (**S.2**) on 12th July 1727, the common Mass and Office was granted; then, on the **18th December 1779** a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites was promulgated, authorising in the same manner as in the case of the Translation of Our Lady's House of Nazareth, a Mass and Proper Office.

6. From the time that the first of these favours was granted, until the Proper Office was approved, fifty two years came and went. In this interval the Sacred Congregation caused to be made a severe, critical and, it may be said, crucial examination of all the proofs of the Miraculous Apparition. Two of the most able archaeologists at the period in Rome, the brothers, Calisto and Cajetan Marini, Custodians of the Secret Archives of the Pope at the Vatican, were employed to investigate all records, monuments (**could mean written tributes?**), and traditions, adduced by the postulator, for the Proper Office. The results of their labours was a work of vast erudition and of great critical research about the investigations which they themselves had made upon the spot, and which succeeded completely in placing the truth of the Miraculous Apparition in the clearest possible light. Therefore, upon a memorial (**written statement of facts**), based upon the statements of the critical experts above mentioned, being placed by Cardinal Archinto before the Sacred Congregation of Rites, the Proper Office composed by the Postulator, Fr. Daniel Marcolini, was finally approved by a Decree bearing the signature of Cardinal Marefusus, the Prefect of the Congregation, under the date of Dec. 18th 1789 (**more likely 1779**).

~~We shall now give the general reader a brief description of this Office; and then, for the information of Ecclesiastics, we shall add the Office itself in Latin, as approved by the Sacred Congregation (**Omitted**).~~

7. The hymn of Matins, composed to the metre of the *Iste Confessor*, is very beautiful. It is full of allusions to the Miraculous Apparition, and to the numberless maladies both of body and soul which were cured upon its appearance. The singular fact that public calamities, pestilences, and the like, were always kept away from the dwelling place, so to speak, of the Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, is expressly mentioned; *Longe et aerumnas Latio imminentes Ipsa fugabat*.

The lessons of the first Nocturn are from the **Book of Proverbs**, and have a most distinct reference to the gifts of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Counsel, which the Church always teaches her children to look for, both in and from the Mother of Jesus Christ.

- (a) The first Lesson is taken from the second chapter of that book, from the 10th to the 15th verses inclusive, where the Wise Man teaches the value and use of wisdom, « *If wisdom shall enter thy heart and knowledge please thy soul, **Counsel** shall keep thee, and prudence shall preserve thee* » etc.
- (b) The second Lesson is taken from the third chapter, from the 21st to the 26th verses inclusive, and urges perseverance in wisdom by showing its advantages « *My son let not those things depart from thy eyes, keep the law and **Counsel*** ».
- (c) The third Lesson is from the eighth chapter, from the 12th to the 17th verses inclusive, and is full of the praises of that virtue, which it is the special pleasure of Our Lady to give to those devoted to Her Shrine of Good Counsel. « *I, wisdom, dwell in **Counsel**, and am present in learned thoughts. The fear of the Lord hateth evil. I hate arrogance and pride and every wicked way, and a mouth with a double tongue. **Counsel** and equity are mine; prudence is mine, strength is mine. By me, kings reign, and lawgivers decree just things. By me, princes rule, and the mighty decree justice. I love them that love me, and they that watch for me in the morning early, shall find me.* »

Those who ponder upon these words will find how entirely applicable they are to Mary. And how comforting it is that gifts so heavenly, and so needed by all having charge of others (above all, by those having spiritual charge), may be obtained infallibly, upon having recourse to the guidance of Our Lady of Good Counsel, whether at Genazzano or in any other locality. Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, may be found even in the privacy of one's chamber.

There, certainly, every « leader in Israel », every Ordained Priest and, even more so, every Prelate of the Church of God can easily, after the example of St. Alphonsus Liguori, and of the great Popes, Pius IX, Benedict XIV, and Leo XIII, have always within sight, ready for use upon any and every occasion, **an Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel**.

Only the light of Eternity, a light which shines so soon, and generally so unexpectedly, upon all arriving at the care of others, and above all upon those arriving at Prelacy, will ever truly reveal the numberless blessings which such a practice as this - small as it is, and so simple, - has caused to flow, and will cause to flow, until the end of time, upon the people of God. **(It is not for us to know such things in this life.)** That little picture upon the writing table, or above the kneeling stool, or on both, may be as small as the one so lovingly held, and for so long, by St. Alphonsus; but it has, nevertheless, in the love of the heart which keeps it, and in the constant recourse to it which that love invites, a



marvellous power. That light of Eternity which shines with such searching effect on the past, upon the day of one's Judgment, will tell how many perils to eternal life, and even to temporal life the practice of habitual recourse to the little picture of Mary has caused the soul to escape. The false steps avoided; the snares detected and shunned; the enemies baffled, converted, or removed; the froward (**persons difficult to deal with**) softened; the difficult dealt with; the erring brought back; the little ones saved; the designs of the crafty and the malignant defeated; the helps received; the power to use the mild but irresistible charity and forbearance of the Gospel with the strength of the saints for the conversion, the care, and the preservation of all; - these and a thousand other blessings will then be seen to have come to those in authority blessed with devotion, even in such a simple way, to this heavenly representation of Mary.

The Lessons of the second nocturn, are from **the works of St. Augustine and St. Fulgentius**. They describe the dignity of Mary as the second Eve. The third Lesson finishes after the manner of the third Lesson in the office for the Translation of the Holy House of Loreto, with an account of the Wonderful Apparition. It says. « And as there is nothing that is not sublime in this Most Holy Virgin, Whom the angel saluted as **full of grace**, it is not without the action of Divine Counsel, that even Her images are held in the highest honour, and are illustrated with prodigies and miracles. Amongst these, that Image which appeared wonderfully upon the wall of the church of the Fathers of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine, in the town of Genazzano and diocese of Palestrina, in the Pontificate of Paul II, is principally honoured; as is proved by Pontifical diplomas and monuments of nearly equal weight. Moved by which facts, Pope Pius VI conceded to the religious of the said town a Proper Office, to be recited on the seventh of the calends of May, (25th April) that is to say, on the very day of the Apparition; and then, upon the day immediately following (**26th April**), fixed in future for its recitation, he extended it, to the whole of the aforesaid Order, under the rite of a double major ».

The third nocturn is, of course, upon the Gospel of the feast, and consists of three Lessons, taken from a commentary of St. Thomas, Bishop, which speaks specially of the incomprehensible dignity of Mary, as the Mother of God.

The prayer is, as that in the Office of Our Lady of Loreto, a petition, with a simple allusion to the fact of the Wonderful Apparition, asking through the prayers of Our Lady that we may come to enjoy the happiness of our celestial country.

In the Mass, the Introit is the same as that used on the joyful solemnity of the Assumption. The Epistle is taken from the Book of

Ecclesiasticus, XXIV 23, where the praises and rewards of those seeking wisdom are most strongly dwelt upon. « *He that harkeneth to me shall not be confounded, and they that work by me shall not sin. They that explain me shall have everlasting life.* »

8. The following is the Office postulated for, and granted in full.

~~**DIE XXV APRILIS.  
IN FESTO  
APPARITIONIS SACRAE IMAGINIS  
B. MARIAE VIRGINIS DE BONO CONSILIO  
NUNCUPATAE**~~

~~**Duplex secundae classis.  
etc.**~~

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**Note added by Eugene Shannon (2015) -**

I have not included here the version of the Office which appears in Mons. Dillon book. There is, however, an abridged version of this book which includes the Office in English (in addition to Latin).

The abridging of this book was carried out by Mrs. Anne Bennett (nee Gladstone). It was published in 1888 with permission from Mons. Dillon.

The Office commences as follows -

FOR THE 26TH OF APRIL.

**THE FEAST OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN  
OF GOOD COUNSEL.**

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**IN I. VESPER.**

*Anthems as in Lauds; Psalms as in Feast of Blessed Virgin.*

9. The privilege of having this beautiful Proper Mass and Office has been requested by several dioceses where wise pastors have considered its value in promoting devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel amongst their clergy. Its use has, after a time, led to some dioceses petitioning the favour from the Holy See that Mary, under the title of Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, should be constituted a special Patroness. Many Bishops in Italy and elsewhere labour to extend, by this and every means at their disposal, a devotion so profitable amongst all classes. It is easy to understand the benefit which such Bishops will derive from a work so valuable; a work which continues for a period longer than the duration even of Cathedrals, the praises of Mary in a diocese; a work which brings down also for generations, the unspeakable (**inexpressible**) blessings of Good Counsel upon an entire fold (**diocese**) of the Church of God. Very recently (**c.1880s**), the Archbishop of Prague and the four bishops of Bohemia, joined in petitioning the Holy Father for permission to celebrate this feast as it is celebrated at Genazzano. This was granted, on the condition that the day of its celebration should be the 26th April, so as not to interfere with the feast of St. Mark. Others in Germany, have either petitioned for the same privilege, or are in the process of doing so. It may be well to note also that several Prelates have carried their devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel so far as to place her beautiful Image on their coats of arms. This has been done by Monsgr. Gould, the present Venerable and zealous Archbishop of Melbourne; and by the late scholarly and eminent Cardinal Archbishop of Malines.

Several religious Orders have already obtained the privilege of using the Proper Mass and Office; and amongst them, is the now extensive congregation of Marist Fathers. Other religious Orders are upon the point of petitioning for it; and amongst these latter is the ancient Congregation of English Benedictines, the devotion of whose venerable President we have already referred to. We may hope then, that in a few years, the Proper Mass and Office, and with them, love, deep, sincere, and tender for the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel will be general not only in Italy and Europe, but also in all the lands where English is spoken, and throughout the whole extent of the Church of God on earth. The Nuns of the Visitation in Brooklyn have obtained the favour of the Proper Mass through the Venerable Bishop of the diocese.

It is, we have heard, on the point of being postulated for by the entire hierarchy of Ireland. Monsgr. (**Martin**) Crane the zealous Bishop of Sandhurst in Australia is, this year, seeking for the privilege of having not only the Proper Mass and Office, but also of obtaining the favour of having his extensive diocese consecrated canonically to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

## Chapter XX

### INDULGENCES AT THE SHRINE

1. Privileged Altars. - 2. Votive Proper Mass. - 3. Plenary Indulgences. - 4. Partial Indulgences.

(Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:- There are references in this Chapter to (i) Types of Feast Days and to (ii) the granting by the Church of special indulgences. The Church's teachings about both of these things have been modified since the time Mons. Dillon was writing this book in about 1883.)

1. The indulgences and other spiritual favours with which the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano is enriched are very numerous, and precious. Some date back to the very generation which witnessed the Miraculous Apparition. Others have been granted as late as our own days (**c.1883**). They are in all as follows.

Besides the privilege of liberating one soul from Purgatory every time Mass is celebrated at the altar of the sacred Image (a privilege granted by Pope Alexander VI to Fr. Mariano), we find the altar of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel made a « **privileged altar** » for every day of the year and for all priests, secular and regular. This was granted by Pope Gregory XIII on the 6th December 1653. The same remarkable favour was confirmed by Pope Benedict XIII on 16th June 1725; and by Benedict XIV on 14th December 1751.

2. Further, by a rescript (an **official Papal decision**) of Clement XIV dated the 16th December 1771, permission was granted to celebrate the Proper Mass of the Blessed Virgin of Good Counsel, approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, on all days except on feasts which are Doubles of the first and second class, and excepting the Conventual Mass.

In this votive Mass, the *Gloria* and the *Ite missa est* are said, although the *Credo* is omitted.

Pius IX, by a decree of 14th March 1867, also confirmed the above great and unusual privilege, - a privilege not granted even to the votive Mass at the very tomb of the Apostles at St. Peters. Moreover, whenever a priest should be impeded at the altar of the Sanctuary, it was permitted to celebrate the same Mass at any other altar of the church, and with the same privileges.

## INDULGENCES.

**3. First.** A plenary indulgence is granted once every year to all who shall visit the Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, and there pray for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, after having confessed and communicated. (Clement XII - Brief *Unversis* 2nd March 1734.)

**Second.** A plenary indulgence on the same above conditions, once only in the year, may be gained by all pilgrims.  
(Benedict XII - 26th April 1742.)

**Third.** A plenary indulgence, once in the year, and applicable to the souls in purgatory, is granted to all who, being truly penitent and having confessed and communicated, shall devoutly visit the said church and there pray for some time, for the Pope's intentions.  
(Pius VIII - 8th February 1830.)

**Fourth.** A plenary indulgence is granted, on the above conditions, to all who shall visit the church on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception; and the same, on the same conditions, on the feasts of the Nativity of Our Lady, of Her Presentation, of Her Visitation, and of Her Purification.  
(Benedict XIV - Rescript 14th December 1751.)

**Fifth.** A plenary indulgence, applicable to the holy souls in purgatory, is granted, on the same conditions, to all who shall visit the church on the Feast of Pentecost; on the Sundays of the Month of May; on the Feast of the Apparition, 25th April, or on any one of the seven succeeding days, at their option; on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, or on any day of its octave.  
(Pius VI - Brief 15th June 1782.)

**Sixth.** An indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines<sup>1</sup>, is granted to all those who, at least with contrite heart, shall visit, on any day of the year, the altar of the Blessed Virgin of Good Counsel, and there recite thrice, the Ave Maria (**the Hail Mary**).  
(Pius VI - Brief 15th June 1782.)

**Seventh.** The same indulgence is granted to all who assist at the Litany of Our Lady, which is sung every evening in that church.  
(Pius VI - Brief 15th June 1782.)

**Eighth.** An Indulgence of 300 days is granted to all who, before the Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel, shall say; « Mary of

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<sup>1</sup> "Quarantines" is an expression frequently used in the grants of indulgences, and signifies a strict ecclesiastical penance of forty days, performed according to the practice of the early Church. Hence an indulgence of seven quarantines, for instance, implies the remission of as much temporal punishment as would be blotted out by the corresponding amount of ecclesiastical penance.  
(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12593a.htm>)

Good Counsel, with You may your Son bless us. »  
(Pius VI - Brief 15th June 1782.).

4. To the above indulgences are added the following, granted in favour of the altar of the Most Holy Crucifixion, an account of which is given in the Appendix (**Chapter XXV**).

- 1.° The Altar is privileged<sup>1</sup> on every day and for ever, and for all priests, secular and regular.  
(Pius IX - *Omnium Sabatum*, 7th June 1872).
- 2.° A plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in purgatory, on the usual conditions of Confession and Communion, is granted to all who shall visit this altar on the Friday nearest Quinquagesima Sunday; or on any Friday of Lent, after the rising of the Sun, (except Good Friday), and there pray for the Pope's intention.  
(Pius IX - *Omnium Sabatum*, 7th June 1872).
- 3.° The same, on the same conditions, is granted to all on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, from first Vespers until sunset.  
(Pius IX - *Omnium Sabatum*, 7th June 1872).

The above indulgences, are confined to the church of Santa Maria in Genazzano. Indulgences, plenary and partial, which the members of the Pious Union may gain, will be found in the next chapter (**XXI**). To make the above indulgences more sure, the guardians of the Sanctuary obtained from the Sacred Congregation of Rites the following decree, which renders their authenticity beyond doubt -

« Sacra Congregatio Indulgentiis Sacrisque Reliquiis praeposita praesens Summarium Indulgentiarum, quae tum Ecclesiae B. Mariae Virginis de Bono Consilio in opp. Ienestani, tum Congregationi sub eodem titulo ibidem erectae, concessae sunt, uti authenticum recognovit, typisque imprimi ac publicari posse censuit.

« Datum Romae ex Secreteria eiusdem S. Congregationis die 25 Aprilis 1873. »

Loco Signi

L. Card. BARILI Praefectus  
Dominicus SARRA Substitutus.

<sup>1</sup> An altar where a plenary indulgence used to be gained for a soul in purgatory by the fact that a Mass is offered for that intention at that altar. **Privileged altars** were suppressed with the publication of *INDULGENTIARUM DOCTRINA*, of Pope Paul VI, on indulgences (1967), **norm 20**, which reads -  
n.20—Holy Mother Church, extremely solicitous for the faithful departed, has decided that suffrages can be applied to them to the widest possible extent at any Sacrifice of the Mass whatsoever, abolishing all special privileges in this regard.

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_constitutions/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_apc\\_01011967\\_indulgentiarum-doctrina.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_p-vi_apc_01011967_indulgentiarum-doctrina.html)

## Chapter XXI

### THE PIOUS UNION

1. Feeling of loving regret on the part of those who visit the Shrine when leaving - Instances - Urban VIII and others. - 2. An every day instance. - 3. Rise, therefore, of the Pious Union. - 4. Its advantages for those not able to visit the Shrine. - 5. Its duties. - 6. Its approval by Benedict XIV who became its first member. - 7. His example useful for pastors of souls and other superiors. - 8. His Brief *Iniunctae nobis* (~~in the original Latin and~~ in English. - 9. Value of this Bull, as warranting (**supporting**) the facts of the Miraculous Translation from Scutari. - 10. Example of Benedict XIV followed by many. - 11. French Revolution. - 12. Present position of the Pious Union. - 13. Increase of indulgences in 1800. - 14. Duties of Members. - 15. Indulgences Plenary and Partial. - 16. Special advantages to members given by the guardians of the Sanctuary.

1. One of the most remarkable features of the devotion exhibited so tenderly, for ages, to Our Lady of Good Counsel in Her Sanctuary of Genazzano, as we have already, and more than once, had occasion to notice, is the loving regret which all who come with the intention of honouring so benign and powerful a Mother experience when leaving Her Shrine. Urban VIII, during his famous visit, was, as we have seen, deeply moved on beholding this wonderful Image, and again while celebrating Mass at its modest but beautiful altar. It was when leaving, however, that this great and holy Pontiff felt most moved. He burst into tears. The Electress of Saxony after her long journey and long stay, was, upon the day of her departure, similarly affected, and was, in fact, inconsolable.

2. The writer of this book does not wish to speak of his own experience. At present he can only say, with all humility for his absolute unworthiness, *secretum meum mihi* (**keeping it to myself**). But he can speak of what he has seen in others. And, besides that which he has related in previous chapters, he may mention one other occurrence. Upon going one early morning to the Sanctuary, he saw a Priest who, together with a family of high position, had come a great distance to satisfy a deep devotion. The good Father had not had the permission necessary to celebrate before the Madonna « *scoperta* » (uncovered); but after he had said Mass at the altar, (the holy Image being veiled) with a devotion truly marvellous; and after he had communicated his friends; a permission, which the Prior has power to grant once every day, was given that, with all the usual reverence and ceremonies, the sacred Image should be unveiled. When, therefore, the twelve wax candles were lighted, and the prescribed incensation duly made, the covering was slowly removed; and

when the almost divine appearance of the Mother and Child beamed upon that Priest, it could be seen at a glance, that the Image was already deeply engraved in his heart. He looked fixedly upon it, just as a mother might upon the beloved face of a child risen from the dead. Long and earnestly he looked and then his face began to swell, his body to tremble, and he burst into a flood of tears. The same thing happened in the case of every member of his party, as each one drew nigh. And all continued thus weeping silently, while the Image remained uncovered, and while the Litany, the Salve Regina three times, and the other prayers prescribed were said. When the ceremony was over, and the beautiful Image was veiled from their eyes, they remained long in prayer before the silent Sanctuary, and then reluctantly tore themselves away.

Such an occurrence as this is so common that no one, even amongst the guardians of the Sanctuary, seems to notice it. But it has been repeating itself for hundreds of years; and so it has happened that, in order to satisfy the desires of the devout, a custom sprang up amongst pilgrims to the Shrine of leaving their autographs - as it were portions of themselves - at the feet of Mary.

3. Like that devout chronicler who, from pure devotion as we have seen in Section 7 of Chapter IX, compiled the register of miracles, each client of the Sanctuary hopes to see once more before death that beautiful vision of Our Lady; and to secure through Her intercession the certainty of seeing the glory of the Original, Mary Herself, in Heaven.

And in truth, «*I love those who love me*» are the words of Wisdom, which the Church of Christ «*the pillar and ground of truth*», the infallible guide and teacher, attributes to God's Blessed Mother. Out of this tender necessity then, of satisfying the devotion of the loving clients of Mary, arose the Pious Union of Genazzano.

4. But that Pious Union had another advantage. It extended to all those in the wide expanse of the Church of God who could not visit the Sanctuary itself, all the benefits obtainable by those who could visit. It is true, as we have seen, that no copy of the Madonna of Genazzano equals the original, but the hearts of Christians can love that original everywhere, however imperfectly represented. They can keep and honour a copy of it in their homes; and they can at least send their names to the Sanctuary, as a testimony of their love.

5. The Pious Union, then, is, in the main, a means of being constantly reminded of Our Lady of Good Counsel; first, by keeping a copy of Her holy Image of Genazzano; and then by doing some little thing constantly in Her honour, **after having sent one's name to the Shrine where the heavenly original Image is enthroned.**

Those who see daily in their homes, a beautiful, touching representation of God's Mother and Her Little Infant, cannot but be



brought to love Both, before long. If one does the rest; that is, if one says three Hail Marys daily, and offers a Mass or a Communion once a year for the benefit of his fellow associates, he fulfils all the conditions, and gains all the indulgences and graces of God, which the Bull of Benedict XIV promises (*Iniunctae nobis* - See Section 8).

And then there is much love in these simple actions in honour of Our Lady of Good Counsel. They bind all Her children, no matter where situated, to Her; and so it is that, though arising from the hearts of Her clients in the first instance, the Union has finally received the most marked approbation which the Supreme Authority in the Church of God could give to any work.

**6. On 2nd July 1753**, the **Pious Union of Genazzano**, on the petition of the General of the Augustinian Order, Father Francis Xavier Vasquez, was solemnly approved by a special Brief of the learned Pontiff, Benedict XIV (*Iniunctae nobis*). The Pious Union was enriched by him with many indulgences, information about which is given in detail at the end of this chapter. And the great Pontiff did much more for the good work. He requested that his own name should be the first inscribed upon the first page of its authorised register; and he wrote that name with his own hand.

« *We receive* », he said, in a letter to the General, « *with the greatest pleasure, this page, and we esteem it much. In it we shall be ascribed to this spiritual league, so that we ourselves may participate in so great a spiritual treasure* ».

And after doing that, then, just like the humblest of its members, the greatest of the Pontiffs of the last century (**1700s**), kept his picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel near him; said his three Hail Marys every day; and offered his Mass for the associates yearly.

**7.** And he was right. Though all of us want the light of Counsel, none require it more absolutely and fully than those to whose care is committed the ruling and guidance of souls in the Church of God.

So much depends upon all their qualities; upon their moderation, their charity, their knowledge of sacred science, their vigilance, their forgetfulness of self, their unwearied labour, their prayer still more unwearied, their spotless lives, their patience under calumny, persecution, and affliction; their fatherly heart, their devotion and unswerving fidelity to the Centre of Unity, their sinking of fleeting vanity, ambition, or jealousy in the grand cause given them to foster, or destroy; their total hatred of avarice, and of every one of those passions by which the Devil so often tempts men to make mistakes as terrible as the mistake of Eve; often as irreparable as the mistake of Lucifer.

All these, and far more qualities, are required to make up the character of any ruler in the Church of God; but most of all of him who

holds the loftiest, and consequently, the most dangerously exposed position. Where can the light come from, that men placed so high may not err ? may not damage instead of furthering the interests of Christ, and of souls redeemed by His Precious Blood ? Where from ? From the Spotless Spouse of the Holy Spirit. From Her Who, as we have said in the commencement, crushes for ever the cunning of the serpent's head; - from Her « *by Whom kings reign, and framers of law decree judgment* »; - from Mary the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

The wise Pontiff, Benedict XIV, when he attached his venerated name to the registry of the Pious Union of Our Lady of Good Counsel, gave a splendid example to pastors of souls, and indeed to all those having the charge of others. In giving his reasons for his act he has encouraged every superior of the Fold to provide that, like him, the children of God, each one for himself, might participate in so valuable a spiritual treasure.

In order to show his judgment, not only of the Pious Union, but also of devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel in general, and his belief in the history given in this volume, we here give at length his celebrated Brief, *Iniunctae nobis*, ~~in the original Latin~~ (**Omitted**), followed by a translation in English.

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8. The Brief *Iniunctae nobis* of Pope Benedict XIV regarding the Pious Union of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano.

(**Latin Version omitted.**)

#### TRANSLATION

#### BENEDICTUS PP. XIV. A PERPETUAL RECORD OF THE SUBJECT MATTER HEREIN

The account which we who, though manifestly unworthy, hold the place here on earth of Jesus Christ, the Prince of pastors, have to render of the Apostolic duty enjoined upon us, demands that, with a free and willing mind, we should expend the offices of Apostolic authority, and the treasures of heavenly gifts, the dispensation of which it has pleased the Most High to accredit to our weakness, whenever we are confident that it would be for the greater increase of the piety of the faithful of Christ towards the Most Blessed ever Virgin Mary Immaculate, and for procuring the salvation of souls. But since, as our beloved son,

Francis Xavier Vasquez, a Brother expressly professed, and Master and Prior General of our beloved sons, the friars of the whole Order of St. Augustine, has lately made known to us that, in the church of the monastery of the same Order of St. Augustine, in the town of Genazzano, belonging to the diocese of Palestrina, and dedicated under the invocation of Our Lady of Good Counsel, there is found a Chapel in which is worshipped an Effigy or Image of the same Immaculate Virgin Mary of Good Counsel, translated there formerly, as pious tradition tells, by the hands of Angels from the city of Scutari. Therefore, from the beginning, the faithful of Christ, coming from every direction to this venerable Effigy or Image, and returning with their souls' desires satisfied, because of the abundance of celestial gifts granted by the Father of Mercies and the God of all Consolation through the intercession of that same Virgin; it happened that our beloved sons, the Chapter and Canons of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, took care to adorn that Effigy or Image, with which also the effigy or image of the Most Holy Child Jesus Her Son, embracing Her on the left hand side, is seen, with crowns of gold; and which crowns, according to custom, were placed in position on the **25th November 1682**. But thenceforward so greatly did the worship increase towards the same Image of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary of Good Counsel, that in these times especially, affected with greater piety than before, the faithful of Christ of both sexes and of every grade in society flocked to Genazzano to venerate the Queen of Heaven, either for the purpose of returning thanks for benefits received, or to implore the opportune aid of the same Virgin for their concerns. Nor were there wanting very many (such as the aforesaid Francis Xavier, Prior General, likewise caused to be explained to Us) who, living far away, and when they were not able to return there again, were accustomed earnestly to petition that, though absent, they may be made participators of all the good works, which in honour of the same Most Holy Mother of God, were there almost daily performed, by the means of having their names registered in a volume. Because of all this, the superiors of this church and monastery, with the consent of the aforesaid Prior General, instituted a certain Union, or certain spiritual compact, of all those who in this volume had already desired to be inscribed (**to have their names written in it**), or who afterwards should so desire. For these, either already inscribed or to be afterwards inscribed, it was promised that the religious of the aforesaid monastery, besides their daily works of Christian piety, the suffrages of prayers, and the canticles of sacred hymns, to be given and applied in the church of the said monastery, there should be offered up once in every year a solemn Mass, which should be celebrated at the altar of the same Virgin of Good Counsel, on some one of the days within the octave of the festival day, which itself falls (**in Genazzano**) upon the

25th April: and that for nine continuous days, at an opportune time each year, peculiar works of piety and offices of prayers should be exercised.

In return, those, the faithful of Christ already inscribed or afterwards to be inscribed in the register, (i) are bound each day to salute the same Virgin with three Hail Marys, and (ii) to promote Her worship, (iii) to keep Her Image or picture in their homes, (iv)(a) and once in the year to celebrate, or cause to be celebrated, one Mass in any church, or at any altar (which altar will be privileged (**in respect of indulgences**) for that Mass (**and that Mass**) only), if they are able to do so; or if not able to do so, (iv)(b) they should receive the sacred Communion of the most Holy Eucharist; and (v) all these things they should apply mutually for all those inscribed already or afterwards to be inscribed in the register in Genazzano.

We, therefore, in as much as we confide in the Lord that this Pious Union, or institution, will prove to advance the greater worship and veneration of the same Virgin Mary, and in order that it may subsist more firmly by the tenor of these presents (**this Brief**), do, with Apostolic Authority, not only approve and confirm and strengthen with the inviolable patronage of Apostolic firmness; but also, in order that it may receive a greater increase of virtue, by the tenor and authority of these presents, **We concede and impart** equally to the same faithful of Christ of both sexes, either already inscribed or hereafter to be inscribed, who, truly penitent, shall have confessed and shall have been strengthened with the Holy Communion, on the day they happen to be inscribed, whether absent or present, or on the Sunday immediately following that day, **a Plenary Indulgence**: and likewise to those inscribed or to be inscribed, in the article of death (**Dictionary: at the moment of death; in the dying struggle**) of each one of them, if truly penitent and confessed and strengthened with the Holy Communion, or insofar as they cannot do so, but are at least contrite, they pronounce the Names of Jesus and Mary with the mouth if they can, and if they can not, with the heart, also **a Plenary Indulgence**: And to those who shall have been present at that Mass which is solemnly, or, if preferred, sung, also **a Plenary Indulgence** of all their sins, which may be applied by way of suffrage (**for the deceased**) for all those inscribed (**sic**) who have died in the charity of God. **A Plenary Indulgence**, likewise once only, to be obtained on one of the before-mentioned nine days, but on the other days, (**a Partial Indulgence of**) seven years and seven quarantines<sup>1</sup>, to those who shall have been present at the foregoing works of piety, in the aforesaid Church. But to those faithful of Christ of both sexes everywhere existing (**living anywhere**) and inscribed, who shall either celebrate

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XX for explanation of “quarantines”.

Mass, or cause it to be celebrated, or shall have been strengthened with the Holy Communion of the Most Holy Eucharist visiting any church upon that same day, and there pouring out pious prayers for the concord of Christian princes, the extirpation of heresy and the exaltation of Holy Mother Church, also **a Plenary Indulgence** which is also applicable, as has been stated, by way of suffrage (**for the deceased**). But as often as they shall have sheltered the poor, or made peace between enemies, or shall have made, or procured settlements, or shall have followed the bodies of any persons dead whomsoever to the grave, or shall have accompanied any processions made with the approval of the Ordinary, or processions of the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist; also in the latter processions when carried to the sick or otherwise, whenever and wherever, for the time it may be carried; or if impeded, shall say, once, the Lord's Prayer and the Angelic Salutation (**The Angelus**), when the bell gives the signal for that purpose; or shall recite five times the said Prayer and Salutation for the souls of the dead; or shall have brought back any person to the way of Salvation; or shall have instructed the ignorant in the precepts of God and those things necessary for Salvation; or whatsoever other work of piety or of charity they shall have exercised; as often as each one of the above works are exercised, we relax sixty days of the penance enjoined, or otherwise in any manner due, according to the usual form of the Church.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, these presents (**the content of this Brief are**) to be **of value for all future time**. And we desire that the transcriptions, or copies, including printed copies, of these present letters, subscribed by the hand of any Public Notary, and confirmed with the seal of any person constituted in Ecclesiastical dignity, should have the same faith (**credibility**), which would be given to these (**original**) presents if they were shown or exhibited.

Given at Rome, at Saint Mary Major, under the seal of the Fisherman, this 2nd of July 1753, being the thirteenth year of Our Pontificate.

Place of Signature.

CAIETANUS AMATUS.

9. This is a most remarkable Brief, not only for the favours which it confers upon the Pious Union of Our Lady of Good Counsel, but, as we have before observed, for the testimony it bears to the claims of the sacred Image to be what history and tradition represent it to be; and especially as having been carried by Angelic hands from Scutari to Genazzano. Rome is (**always**) guarded in speech and slow in approval;

and certainly no Pontiff ever lived who could be more careful in the examination of the claims to sanctity of persons, or places, or things, than Benedict XIV, as his vast work on the Canonisation of the Servants of God amply proves. And yet what could emanate, even from the Vicar of Christ, more telling than this Bull (**the above Brief**), the whole tenor of which is an exhortation to devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. The Image is spoken of in a most tender manner. The devotion of the past is taken up, is lauded, is signed with Apostolic approval; and then is enriched with plenary and partial indulgences so great that scarcely a parallel can be found, at that period at least, of so many spiritual favours being conferred on a mere written aggregation of persons, not a religious order, nor even a confraternity.

**10.** No wonder then that, after the example of this great and learned Pontiff, (**significant**) numbers hastened to avail themselves of privileges so easily obtainable. His Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain, soon joined the Pious Union; and he was followed by the Colonnas and a host of other temporal magnates. Towards the close of the last century (**1700s**), there were no less than one hundred and ninety thousand names enrolled as members on the lists kept in the convent of Genazzano.

**11. But a break soon came.** The torrent of the French Revolution passed over Italy and over Europe, overturning the order of ages, the spiritual as well as the temporal. The religious communities of the Catholic Church had to bear a large share of the shock; and, indeed, had not a Divine Hand sustained them, they would then have been surely swept, and for ever, from at least the revolutionised countries of Europe.

**12.** But, when that storm had spent its force, those religious communities arose in greater strength and purity than ever before. The Augustinians returned to their plundered convent which, in its greatest treasure, the Miraculous Image, its Shrine and Church, remained untouched; except insofar as it was robbed of its ornaments in precious stones and metals. The power of Mary was then, as ever, over Genazzano; and beyond the theft of the revolutionists, no evil occurred to the Sanctuary or sacred Image. Soon, the strict discipline which in the hours of their deepest distress, the Augustinians always religiously enforced in Genazzano, were practised once more. Common life was observed. The praises of God ascended not only on public occasions, but at every canonical hour of the day. People and priests gathered round the Shrine, as previously, to glorify the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, and to pray to Her for the living, and for the dead.

With this, the Pious Union once more acquired its pristine vigour and, after 1821, soon swelled into something like its old proportions: and subsequently, it extended world-wide, which it had not done before.

Through the Augustinian communities settled in Ireland and America, it reached, in part, these countries, though it is much to be regretted that its way had not been still broader (see Footnote<sup>1</sup>). In Italy, Germany, Bavaria, Bohemia, and France it has had an immense extension. As before, persons of the highest Ecclesiastical and secular rank are being numbered amongst its members. Amongst the latter, are princes of the Imperial House of Austria; and, of the former, no less lofty names are recorded than those of the late Pontiff, Pius IX, and his no less illustrious successor, Leo XIII, whose names, as we had occasion to remark before, are inscribed as members of the Pious Union on the books of Genazzano.

**13.** Having so far treated of the nature and history of the Pious Union, we shall now explain to our readers, in brief, all that is required to be done by them, in order to obtain the spiritual benefits of so valuable a means of serving the best interests of their souls; while, at the same time, showing their love to, and extending the glory of Mary, the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. It will be seen that the obligations are very light indeed. While they are light, they are of such a nature that the heart, even of the most tepid Catholic, would almost instinctively of itself adopt them.

The first requirement is to keep in one's house, in one's bedroom or elsewhere in one's dwelling place, a copy of the beautiful likeness of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. If this be inconvenient - if one should not have, for instance, a house of one's own, or if one should live where it would not be well to expose the sacred Image, then it may be kept in one's trunk, in one's prayer book, or otherwise, where it may be venerated, at convenient times. This simple act of thus keeping such a picture of Our Lady, with the heart's love and reverence, may appear to be little. But it is great in its effect for good. It is lauded as a practice by all that the Church of God ever said and did and suffered for the honour, which it taught, against the efforts of many heretics, to be not only lawful but praiseworthy and salutary, to give to the representations of God, and

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:-** It is clear from this last sentence that Mons. Dillon was disappointed that there had not been, in his own time, any significant level of devotion to Our Lady under the title of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Ireland, to where he was subsequently posted. I can say that serious devotion to Our Lady, under any title, is largely absent in Ireland today (2015) except among a small part of the population. This is part of the general decline in religious observance both in Ireland and in most of the rest of the world. Nor is the central rôle of Our Lady in God's relationship with Us widely understood. I would, even now, have no substantive knowledge or interest in this specific title of Our Lady were it not for a "minor vision" of **bright colours** which I saw over my Mass Leaflet in my local Church on Saturday 26th April 2014 at a specific point in the reading of the Nicene Creed. This date turned out to be the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

The colours vision started to appear when the following part of the Creed was being read - **"and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man"**. (See - [www.tsmit.net](http://www.tsmit.net))

Subsequent to writing the above, I have seen another "minor vision", in my home. It happened on the Feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help - 27th June 2015. It consisted entirely of **shadows**.

of God's Mother, and of God's saints. It is a continual act of love, the same love that prompts the keeping of photographs and other images of those dearest to us on this earth. We do not keep, at least in loving reverence, the likenesses of those we dislike. And also, this Image of Mary with Her Infant Child — God Incarnate as He is — is so touching in its tenderness, so benign, so heavenly, and yet so full too of human, maternal sweetness, that no one can contemplate it without being moved.

If Life remained always one, still, even flow of monotonous duty, there would be both consolation and profit in the possession of such an Image. But Life is never so. Life has many seasons. It has sunshine and storm, scarcity and plenty, joy and sorrow — alas, more often sorrow than joy. It is tried by sickness, and must submit to death. If it is found sometimes in honour, it has often to face shame and disgrace.

Ah! who can tell, in the varied vicissitudes that come upon Life, the value of the Image of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel. We read, amongst the miracles recorded at the Shrine, how jealously the Queen of Heaven watched over one of these Images. A beggarman had sewed that Image in the inside of his hat. His poor clothing was the only house he had, but the best chamber in that house (**inside his hat**) was given to the Image of Mary, and Jesus Her Son. Heaven only knew what love and prayers and praise that little picture drew from the heart of that poor man, just as heaven alone knew what an extent and what an intensity of holiness once filled the soul of the beggarman who is now known as **St. Benedict Joseph Labre**.

The appearance of things which strike the world are nothing in the reckoning of God. It is man's heart He wants. The tinsel of the earth, its palaces, its refinement, the produce of its arts are nothing in the sight of Him, before Whom all men are equal. We see the equality ourselves when we come to contemplate the skulls in the tombs of generations long passed away. We cannot tell the master from the servant, the beggar from the monarch, the rich from the poor. The love of God in man's heart is what makes the difference in eternity — the difference that is never to end. Whatever creates this love, and also leads to its greater intensity, must be amongst the most priceless treasures to be found in this life. And we believe that, for the Catholics who have always at least the inclination, the disposition, to love and cling to God's Holy Mother, there are few things we know of, outside the Holy Mass and the Sacraments, more capable (a) of keeping them in the love of God when they have that love, or (b) of leading them back to the love of God when they come unfortunately to have lost it, than the keeping close to their minds and hearts, in reverence and in love, this beautiful Image of Mary.

Those who are their own masters, may keep it in a place of honour in their homes. Those who are in the service of others, may keep it in



their rooms, if they can do so with convenience or, if not, in their trunks, in their prayer books, or otherwise, at their option. The beggarman that kept it stitched in his clothing, kept it so as to fully satisfy this first condition, which is now required to join the Pious Union.

It is true that, in Italy and other Catholic countries, many members of the Pious Union who have homes, generally keep their picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel in very great honour. Its painting, or oleograph is beautifully framed; and before it is a small altar on which is placed flowers, amidst which a little oil lamp is lighted, at least on Saturdays and on all festivals of Our Lady. A kneeling stool is placed before the altar, and thus it forms an oratory to which all in the house have recourse from time to time, and before which, the family assembles for the Rosary and other evening devotions. This does not prevent each individual from having a picture in his room, and in his manuals (**books**) of devotion. The Image so honoured offers the family's homage, as a family, to Our Lady of Good Counsel. But, however beautiful, laudable, and useful, it is not necessary for membership of the Pious Union to do all of this. What is required from members by this primary condition is, to keep a copy in the house, or with oneself, of **the holy original of Genazzano**; and then to interest oneself in spreading devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel.

**14. The second condition** binds members to recite three Hail Marys every day. This too, is very easy and simple. Those who are doing much for their souls already will find no difficulty in an obligation so trifling, yet necessary, to gain all the spiritual favours granted to Pious Union members. But who can tell what an influence for good it must have upon those who may have fallen away from other practices of prayer, and perhaps have lapsed far into sin. In the works of St. Alphonsus Liguori and of other spiritual writers, we find many instance given of sinners saved by a practice apparently so very small. Neither faith, nor hope, nor indeed charity, however sadly imperfect, can be altogether gone from those who hold in reverence and love, the picture of God's Mother, and will never give up the practice of thrice honouring Her for the mystery of the Incarnation, and thrice asking Her, to pray for Us « **now and at the hour of our death.** »

The case of a sinner known to the writer may here be recorded. The poor man was near death, but could not be brought to believe that his end was so very near. No effort — and many were made — could induce him to go to confession. At last, he commenced his Hail Marys, and when he came to the third he could not stop. He continued and continued it, until at length the love of God's Mother led him to deep and fervent acts of contrition. He prayed alone on a hospital bed the whole night; and next morning to the surprise of everyone, he sent for his Confessor and made

what is to be hoped was his perfect peace with God. He received, in tears, the last Sacraments; and so passed to the Mother Whose love he would never part with, in all his many and far wanderings; and Who so clearly prayed for him and that efficaciously « **at the hour of his death** ». The three Hail Marys then, to be recited — when, and where, and how, is left to the discretion of the member — every day, forms the second necessary condition for gaining all the Indulgences of the Pious Union.

The third condition is also a wholesome one, not only for all the members collectively, but also for each one individually. It must be remembered that there are a great number of priests in the Pious Union. Therefore, it is stipulated that each member must celebrate one Mass, or cause one Mass to be celebrated once every year, for the benefit of the whole of the associates in the Pious Union. If, however, he cannot either celebrate a Mass or cause one to be celebrated, if he be poor for instance, it will suffice to offer up one Holy Communion each year for the associates. Nothing further need be said of the value of this sacred duty.

Of course, all the three good works, — the retaining in love and honour a copy of the sacred Image with the desire to extend the devotion; the daily saying of the three Hail Marys; the offering of the Mass or the Holy Communion — are all to be done for the benefit for the associates in the Pious Union, living and dead.

In return, according to the tenor of the Brief of Benedict XIV, those who are inscribed and faithfully perform these good works, besides the many and valuable indulgences plenary and partial, which we shall now mention, participate in all the good works — Masses, Communions, novenas, offices, pilgrimages, prayers, works of charity, etc. etc. — which take place continually throughout the year at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano. It may be here, also, added that, in **1830**, the indulgences granted by the immortal Benedict XIV were increased; and those again were amplified and confirmed by a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, on the **25th June 1875**. The following is a summary of all the indulgences granted to the Pious Union as they stand at present (**c.1883**).

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## 15. Indulgences etc.

**INDULGENCES AND SPIRITUAL ADVANTAGES GRANTED  
IN FAVOUR OF THOSE INSCRIBED IN THE PIOUS UNION  
OF OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL.**

I. A **plenary indulgence**, is granted on the day itself upon which the name of the member is written in the book of the registry; or on the next Sunday or Feast Day, on condition of going to Confession and receiving the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

II. A **plenary indulgence**, applicable to the souls in Purgatory, is granted on the following five Feasts; the Immaculate Conception, the Nativity, the Annunciation, the Purification, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin; and on any four Saturdays of the year to be selected at will by each person inscribed; — provided that, having gone to Confession and received Holy Communion, such member visits any church and offers prayers according to the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, who conceded these Indulgences.

III. A **plenary indulgence** is granted at the hour of death, if confessed and communicated, **OR** not being able to do so, if truly contrite, the inscribed member should, with the heart, pronounce the Most Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

IV. A **(partial) indulgence** of seven years and seven quarantines, also applicable to the souls in Purgatory, is granted to all those inscribed, on the feasts of the Presentation and the Purification; provided that at least being contrite for sin, they visit any Church, and pray there for some time for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

V. A **plenary indulgence** is granted, on the day on which an associate celebrates, or has celebrated, the required yearly Mass.

VI. A **plenary indulgence**, applicable also to the souls in Purgatory, is granted to all those inscribed, wherever they dwell, on the 26th April, or on any other day, on which, with the permission of legitimate authority, is celebrated the Feast of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel; provided that they be present at least five times at the public novena before the feast, or on all the days of the triduum, when a triduum only takes place; and that, if truly penitent, confessed and communicated, they should devoutly visit the church where the said feast is celebrated, and there pray, for the concord of Christian Princes, for the extirpation of heresies, for the conversion of sinners, and for the exaltation of Holy Mother Church. (Pius IX. Brief *Expositum nuper* **16th March 1875.**)

VII. A **plenary indulgence**, applicable to the holy Souls, is granted

to all those inscribed, who dwell in places where no triduum or novena takes place in public, if they perform one or the other privately; and upon the day of the 26th April, if truly repentant, confessed and communicated, they should devoutly visit the parish church, or the principal church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and there pray as above. (same Brief).

VIII. A **(partial) indulgence** of seven years and as many quarantines, applicable as above (**for the Holy Souls**), is granted on every day that the inscribed, with at least a contrite heart, shall be present at the public novena or triduum, or shall make the one or the other privately.

IX. A **plenary indulgence** is granted to all members if, confessed and communicated, they shall assist at the Solemn Mass which is celebrated every year for all the inscribed, at the altar of the Sanctuary, on a day within the octave of the Apparition, viz. from 25th April. (applicable as N.6)

X. A **plenary indulgence** (applicable as N.6) is granted to all members, on any one of the nine days, from the 25th April inclusively, if they should assist at the novena which is made at Genazzano for all the inscribed. On the other days of the same novena, a partial indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines, provided that the conditions as at N.6 be observed.

XI. A **partial indulgence** of 60 days is granted every time they accompany devoutly the processions, either of the Most Holy Sacrament to the sick, or of the dead to burial, or that they recite for the Holy Souls, five times, Our Father and Hail Mary; or that they exercise any work of piety or devotion, or mercy, or charity, or procure peace between enemies, or correct, or instruct in Christian duties, or give alms.

XII. Every inscribed member has part in the multiplied pious works which, in the course of the year, are practised in the Sanctuary.

All here stated, is supported by the chapters of establishment in the above mentioned letters, and by the following decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

### DECREE

« **25th DAY OF JUNE 1875.**

« The Sacred Congregation with responsibility for Indulgences and Sacred Relics, acknowledges the present Summary as authentic, and considers that it may be printed and published. In the faith of which etc.

« Given at Rome at the office of the same Sacred Congregation.

I. Card. Ferrieri Praef.

Rev. P. D. Secretary Marianus Merlini-Nolfi. »

Finally, all the conditions necessary to become a member of the Pious Union of Our Lady of Good Counsel, and thereby to gain all the indulgences and privileges hitherto described, may be summed up thus:-

1. It must be distinctly understood that the association is one of simple voluntary aggregation.
2. It is not a confraternity.
3. None of its duties oblige under any sin or penalty whatsoever.
4. Admission to it requires no ceremony.

It is in fact an immense spiritual boon, granted by the Vicar of Christ (**the Pope**), in favour of those who desire to honour the beautiful miraculous Image of God's Virgin Mother which was translated amidst so many prodigies from Scutari, in Albania, to Genazzano, in Italy. Everything required, then, is as follows:-

**CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO BE INSCRIBED.**

**(That is, to have one's name entered in the appropriate Register in the Sanctuary in Genazzano, Italy.**

- I. To go personally and give, or to send by post, or otherwise, one's name to the Very Revd., the Prior of the Augustinian Convent of Genazzano; in order that it may be written in the register of the Pious Union.
- II. To recite every day, three Hail Marys.
- III. To keep with oneself, or in one's house, a copy of the holy Image of Our Lady of Good Counsel of Genazzano, and to interest oneself in promoting the devotion.
- IV. To celebrate, or have celebrated one Mass every year, in any church, or on any altar (which, by concession of Benedict the Fourteenth, will be, for that one occasion, privileged;) or, if being unable to say or get a Mass celebrated, to offer instead the Holy Communion.
- V. To apply all the above named works for all the associates.

**16.** So far, we have considered the Pious Union as a purely spiritual league, to which no tax whatever is affixed, to which no subscription is

paid, and which all persons, even the poorest, may join. In order, however, to find funds for the necessary improvements of the temple (**church**), the Sanctuary, and worship, the Fathers determined to add other and greater advantages for the spiritual benefit here and hereafter of all the members of the Pious Union, who may assist these works; works so dear to all who love the chosen home of Our Lady of Good Counsel; and works, it may be added, now of imperative necessity<sup>1</sup>, since the Italian Government, perhaps with less open violence than the French Revolution, but with far more deadly effect, has despoiled (**Dictionary:- steal or violently remove valuable possessions from**) the Religious of every farthing of income which at one time they possessed both for their own support, and also for the sustenance of the church and Sanctuary. They have now, literally, nothing whatever; so in order to get funds, not, let it be said, for their own necessities, but for the necessities of the church, the Sanctuary, and the necessary expenses of God's worship, they now promise to all the members of the Pious Union who may give them a mere trifle yearly, *or its equivalent in a single sum*, the following advantages in addition to the other spiritual advantages of membership:-

1.° One hundred Masses are offered up each year for the spiritual and temporal wellbeing of all the living members; and besides this, in every month of the year, there is offered for the same intention a triduum, when a solemn Mass is sung.

2.° One hundred Masses, are offered up each year for the members who are deceased, and whose payments, of course have ceased; and a triduum and solemn Mass, are also offered every month for their souls.

3.° The members thus assisting, alone enjoy the fruit of the special prayers and Masses, which are offered up through the year at the Sanctuary, amongst which is the Salve Regina sung every night after the Litany, before the sacred Image.

All these advantages, together with a certain number of special Masses on the news of the death of a subscriber reaching Genazzano, are

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon** - To fully understand the points being made here by Mons. Dillon, one would need to have some basic knowledge of the political, military and revolutionary things that were happening in Europe generally from about the time of the French Revolution up to the time of his writing this book (**c.1883**). You would not need overly detailed knowledge.

given to those who subscribe the sum of two shillings and six pence yearly, (half that, or fifteen pence a year for the right to a lesser number of Masses at death) or who give thirty shillings (for the lesser number, fifteen) in one payment, *which suffices for life*. The news of the death of a paying member should be transmitted by the friends of the deceased to the collector of the locality; or direct to the Prior of Santa Maria, Genazzano, Italy, when the Masses will be at once said. The deceased, of course, immediately commences to enjoy the advantages of the hundred yearly Masses for the deceased, the triduum, and all the works carried on as before mentioned to the end of time, for the benefit of deceased members in general.

On the transmission of the sum above stated, from any part of the world to the Prior of Santa Maria, Genazzano, Italy, by Post Office Order, or Draft on any bank in Rome; an answer (**acknowledgement**) with a paper of aggregation both to the Pious Union and to the additional advantages secured to subscribers, will be immediately forwarded.

The letter can be in English, as an English Speaking Father is always in the convent for the benefit of persons needing an English Speaking Confessor. A father of the American Augustinian Province at present (**1883**) occupies this post; and attends to the spiritual, and also indeed, with great kindness, to any other wants, of English Speaking pilgrims, who now come in large numbers to the Sanctuary.

Any additional information which may be required can be readily obtained from the Prior of Santa Maria in Posterula, N°. 143, Via Tordinona, Rome. English Speaking visitors to the Eternal City, from any part of the world, can there also be directed as to the best means of getting to Genazzano. When the Irish Augustinian students occupy San Pio, English Speaking Ecclesiastics desiring to celebrate Mass at the Shrine may, upon application to the Prior, obtain hospitality amongst the community; and may also be directed in the manner of obtaining (**as to how to obtain**) from the General of the Augustinians in Rome the privilege of offering the Holy Sacrifice before the sacred Image, unveiled.

We here translate from Buonanno, a notice of those who have been lately aggregated to (**joined/enrolled in**) the Pious Union. He says. « *To give the names of some, at least, we shall notice the following: the Most Eminent Cardinal, Philip De Angelis, Archbishop of Fermo, Cardinal Pacca, and Cardinal Edward Borromeo passed to a better life; His Eminence the Most Revd. Sixtus Riario Sforza of blessed memory, Archbishop of Naples inscribed on the 25th June 1873; Monsgr. Francis Pedicini, Archbishop of Bari, inscribed on the 1st April 1873; Monsgr. John Acquaviva of the Oratory of Naples, Bishop of Nusco, joined on the*

*16th Feb. 1873; Monsgr. Dominic Ramaschiello, Bishop of St. Agatha of the Goths, aggregated on the 14th Sep. 1873; Monsgr. Francis Xavier Petagna, Bishop of Castellammare di Stabia; the Bishop of Foggia; the Bishop of Callurico; Monsgr. Negroni, Minister to Pope Pius IX; and Monsgr. (now Cardinal) Francis Ricci. »*

Besides, Monsgr. Herbert Vaughan, Bishop of Salford in England, and other distinguished prelates have established the Pious Union of Genazzano in their dioceses.

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## Chapter XXII

### THE CHURCH AND SANCTUARY

1. The old church. - 2. The old alto-rilievo in marble of Our Lady of Good Counsel. - 3. The Sanctuary. - 4. The church of Father Felix Leoncelli of Cave. - 5. Subsequent improvements - Works by Canon Bacci. - 6. The convent built by Prior Bosca - The ejection of the religious from the convent by the Revolutionists. - 7. Improvements by Vasquez and others. - 8. Consequences to church and convent on the coming of the French and Bonaparte to the Papal States - Valuables contributed to their exactions from Pius VI. - 9. New exactions of the French from the Pontiff and new contributions from the Sanctuary - Lists. - 10. The French take Rome and carry the Pope off to France - Final spoliation of the Sanctuary - List of valuables taken. - 11. Some objects restored - Fate of sacrilegious spoliators. - 12. Santa Maria during Napoleon's tyranny. - 13. Its rise on the return of Pius VII. - 14. Improvements effected by Father Fanucchi. - 15. Cardinal Pedicini renovates the Sanctuary - 16. Further improvements usings funds provided by the Pious Union - Committee to oversee works. - 17. Opinion of Artist Friend of writer. - Assessment of Frescos and artists.

1. After all that we have hitherto said about the Sanctuary of Genazzano, a glance at the varied fortunes of the celebrated temple (**church**) in which it is found, cannot fail to interest our readers. Those whose good fortune may enable them to visit the Shrine, will look for this; and indeed, it is necessary in order to completely understand the history which is here given. It will be recalled that the temple was in poor condition prior to the coming of the sacred Image within its unfinished walls in 1467. And it had an interesting history before that.

We have seen that, by the care of Pope **St. Mark I**, the first Christian temple built over the ruins of the places of dreadful worship of Venus and Robigo in Genazzano was a Church dedicated to the Mother of God, under the title of Our Lady of Good Counsel. In that Christian temple, for a thousand years before Prince Giordan Colonna called the Augustinians to its care (**on 27th December 1356 - Julian Calendar**), the people of Latium assembled on the old feast days of heathenism but instead to worship the Most Pure Mother of God. Eleven hundred years came and went from its founding to the time when the holy woman, Petruccia, became inspired to prepare a better home on its site for the Queen of Heaven. We cannot follow all the fortunes of the old edifice, during those long years. It is certain that not all of its guardians were as careful of it as could be desired; otherwise Prince Colonna would not have been so anxious for the change which he effected, and which put the *jus patronatus*, in practical terms, out of the power of his family to the

Augustinians. But it is equally certain that great devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel was at all times manifested in it.

2. A proof of this exists in the very beautiful alto-rilievo (**high relief**) of the Virgin and Child, which must have been executed at a rather early period; possibly a century or two after the erection of the first church. It is still preserved in a domestic chapel of the convent; and indeed so great was the devotion of the people to it that, for a long time after the coming of the sacred Image from Scutari, it continued to retain its position in the church. It was not relocated until as late as 1629, when the present edifice was rebuilt. The alto-rilievo must have been executed by no ordinary artist, and may be said to be a wonder for the era to which it is commonly ascribed. The face of the Virgin is most gracious; She is represented sitting, with a veil covering the head, and falling negligently upon the shoulders. The Divine Infant is represented naked, and standing by Her side, with His body and arms leaning towards His Mother's knee. The sweetness of the Child's face is very remarkable, and the look of tender love that the Mother gives Him shows astonishing power in the artist, at a period when art had much decayed. The visitor to the Shrine should not depart without a visit to the little chapel which houses such an interesting and ancient, as well as devotional sculpture.

We have already seen with what speed the church of Petruccia advanced to completion after the coming of the miraculous Image. Although it was constructed from designs, as Senni thinks, by the architect of the fine convent of San Pio, the same one who also, as is generally believed, constructed the lordly castle of the Colonnas, that church was, from the peculiar position it occupied, very defective in form. It ran crosswise; and the still older church of St. Mark, formed a kind of vestibule to it; while its chief entrance faced the narrowest of the present side streets. The architect had to respect the foundations laid by Petruccia, and also the line of the streets; while, at the same time, he had to save for use as much of the old building as possible. The sacred Image remained, as it came, suspended in the air; and, of course, the architect's first care was to provide a covering for it. This he did at once; and in a manner which shows a master mind and a full Catholic heart. The tribune (**raised area or gallery**) erected by him, chiefly, it is said by some, at the charge (**expense**) of the Colonna family, stands to this day. It has been embellished and strongly enclosed; but neither the original design, nor the richness of the material could be improved upon. It is said that the architect ornamented the edifice elaborately to make up for other defects; but it was irregular and wanting in light; and after about one hundred and fifty years the Fathers of the convent had to think seriously about erecting another in its stead. This they did, chiefly through the unwearied energy and zeal of the Prior at the period, Father **Felix Leoncelli**, of Cave, who

left nothing undone to obtain offerings from the Colonna family and the wealthiest inhabitants of Genazzano, as well as from the pilgrims to the Shrine and the faithful of the surrounding territory and of the Abruzzi. In nine years he rebuilt Santa Maria anew, and in the form in which it is now to be seen. The older temple of Petruccia disappeared, and with it an immense number of votive offerings and inscriptions which covered its venerable walls and floor.

3. The new edifice consists of a wide nave, and two side aisles. What we would call a chancel is formed by the extension of the nave some fifty feet, and in this chancel is found the high altar, with a fine choir behind, and an ample sanctuary in front, enclosed by a balustrade of polished marble.

At the end of the aisle on the Gospel side (**left**), stands the magnificent Shrine and Sanctuary of the Madonna; and at the extremity of the other aisle, is an altar richly decorated, where stands the miraculous Crucifix. Side altars are erected in both aisles, in place of the chapels which existed in the old edifice.

4. With the exception of the façade renewed recently and some buttresses to one of the external walls, little, substantially, has been added to the edifice of Prior Leoncelli of Cave. As soon, however, as his work was completed, gifts for furnishing and for decorations, began to pour in upon the temple, in honour of the Sanctuary of the Madonna. Thus, the fine organ was erected in 1633, and restored in 1735, by **Cesare Calarinozzi**. Cardinal **Albano**, in 1734, placed the present precious altar and Shrine for the sacred Image of Our Lady; and two years later, Cardinal **Jerome Colonna**, besides bestowing most valuable candelabra and vestments, enclosed the whole Sanctuary with the massive iron railing which subsists to this day.

5. A few years later on, the indefatigable zeal of Canon Bacci, and the zeal which he infused into the Fathers of the Sanctuary themselves, caused splendour to appear in the whole temple. The altar of the miraculous Crucifix was newly, and with lavish expense, embellished. The massive marble balustrade appeared in front of the great altar. The pavement, the walls, and the whole church essentially, was improved in some form or another.

6. In 1774, **Father Bosca**, the Prior at that period, commenced the convent, and in 1777, it was finished as it stands today (**1883**)

This magnificent pile (**the convent**), together with the church, filled up the large square, between four of the narrow streets of Genazzano. It accommodated a numerous community, and also those novices of the Roman, and other Provinces, whom the General of the Augustinians desired to have specially trained under the shadow of the great Sanctuary of Our Lady. It was also a house of retreat, for such

Augustinians as desired to pass the evening of their days in the presence of Mary's miraculous Image. Within its walls also, Ecclesiastics and religious men from distant localities coming to visit the holy Shrine of the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, received true monastic hospitality. This noble and beneficent building, continued almost uninterruptedly to accomplish the purposes for which it was intended, until the evil day that saw Victor Emmanuel enter Rome by the breach at the Porta Pia (**20th September 1870**<sup>1</sup>), and saw the Vicar of Jesus Christ deprived of the last remnant of his States, by fraud and force combined.



The agents of the Revolution, in their accustomed hatred of the friends and servants of God, lost little time in driving the religious, and all belonging to them, from this, their home. The community, the novices, the Fathers on retreat, and such pilgrims as were receiving hospitality from the religious, were all cast upon the streets. Fortunately for the Sanctuary, the church of Santa Maria was a parochial one; and the Piedmontese for fear of raising insurrections amongst the Catholic people of the country that they were so bent upon de-Christianising, spared, in their anti-religious crusade, parish churches. But in the cases of such churches served by priests of religious orders, they took care to confiscate the revenues. A pious and wealthy gentleman - **Signor Clementi** - who held property in Genazzano, gave up his residence there to the Fathers. This provided them with a shelter, and enabled them to continue to serve the Sanctuary. The fine convent adjoining the church was handed over to the municipality. But, notwithstanding that the municipality established all its offices in it and turned its halls into government schools, still a

<sup>1</sup> See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capture\\_of\\_Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capture_of_Rome)  
and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porta\\_Pia#/media/File:BrecciaPortaPia.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porta_Pia#/media/File:BrecciaPortaPia.jpg)

large space remained unoccupied. This space, indeed, might have been utilised as a grain store, or let go to ruin, as is commonly the case with suppressed convents in the small towns of Italy. But the people began to act in the matter. Discontent began to assume alarming proportions; and so, at length, the municipality were forced to re-admit the Fathers into a part, — and of course the most wretched part, — of their own dwelling, *as tenants*. There, still *as tenants paying rent*, they are tolerated, but barely tolerated, and obliged to endure the continual fear of being ejected at the instance (**instruction or order**) of the first faithless municipality officer, who may have little religion enough, (**but who would have the inclination**) to brave the anger of his fellow townspeople, by moving the authorities to eject them, even as tenants and paying rent, from their own property.

7. But to return to the improvements effected in the church during the last century (**1700s**). Soon after the building of the new convent, the great General, Francis **Xavier Vasquez**, improved the choir, and then the sacristy, at an expense of 4,000 Roman crowns; and received from the gratitude of the Fathers the marble monument with a half bust, which we have already spoken of, in the same sacristy (**See Chptr. XVI - Sect.8**).

The zeal of the friends of Our Lady of Good Counsel, meanwhile, had grown apace; and new and more beautiful embellishments were being designed, or were in the process of being placed in position, when the French Revolution, the scourge of Europe in the last century (**1700s**), after desolating France, then swept over the beautiful, peaceful plains and cities of Italy.

8. This historical fact (**the spread of the Revolution into Italy**) has had such an effect on the Sanctuary of Our Lady at Genazzano, that it merits a brief consideration here insofar as it affected the States of the Church (**Papal States**) and the consequent negative effects on the Sanctuary. In 1793, the imprudence and wilful misconduct of the French agent at Rome (**Basseville?**), ended in his death; and gave the Republic a coveted opportunity for creating a quarrel with the reigning Pontiff, Pope Pius VI. The armies of France, with little previous parley (**negotiation**), overspread the States of the Church, and after « **attaching** » the greater portion of the Legations and the Marches, then, in addition, forced the Pope to pay, out of the residue of his dominions, **twenty million lire** to the Directory. This was the work of **Napoleon Bonaparte**. To meet so heavy a war indemnity, the Pope was obliged to appeal to the wealth which the piety of many ages had accumulated and had consecrated to the service of religion in sanctuaries and monastic houses. Genazzano, of course, together with very many other famous Shrines, had to bear a large portion of this unavoidable burden. An interesting document left as a receipt, by the Vicar General of Palestrina, who acted for the Pope in

making the requisition at Genazzano, gives an idea of what was then the wealth of the Shrine.

The following objects were, as proved by this document, then given up.

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
Six chandeliers of silver, weighing in all,	34	11
Four <i>ditto</i> of silver,	2	6
A silver bell,	0	6
Eight silver chalices,	13	7
Twelve silver lamps,	46	0
Two patenas of silver gilt	2	10
Two fonts and aspersories,	1	1
Two torch stands, in silver,	26	0

Seven medals in gold, of Clement XIII and Clement XIV, were also offered.

9. It would be well if the spoliation (**Dictionary - the action of taking goods or property from somewhere by violent means**) ended here. The Sanctuary could have borne the loss and, moreover, upon the return of prosperity, the Pontifical exchequer would be sure to replace whatever had, in an evil day, to be taken for the necessities of the State. But the aim of Napoleon was, evidently, to get out of the convents by means of the Pope, that which his force could never manage to extract. In 1797, the very year following, he forced Pius VI to purchase peace anew, at the hollow treaty of Tolentino, by the payment not only of the first twenty, but of another **thirty million lire**; and then, moreover, of **three hundred thousand lire** to the family of the firebrand, Basseville, whose conduct had created the pretext for the French occupation. The Pope had, consequently, to make another demand from the shrines etc.; and this drew from the convent of Genazzano the following additional objects in the precious metals, as is manifested by the receipt of the Vicar General of Palestrina, before mentioned, to whom the objects were consigned viz.

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
Six silver lamps, weighing	34	8
Six candlesticks with crosses and pedestals	28	0
Large silver chalice	3	8
Three other silver chalices	4	0
Silver cases	7	4
An ostensorium of silver	3	0
A censer and boat, in silver	2	8

A bambino, of cast silver	4	4
Two flower vases, <i>do, do</i>	4	4

**10.** All this payment of treasure on the part of the Pope, did not satisfy the French. Early in 1798, the Directory's troops entered and annexed the remnant of the Papal States; and on the ~~30th~~ (15th) February of that year, **Berthier** was master of Rome<sup>1</sup>. The Pope, refusing to abdicate, was sent upon his sad pilgrimage of imprisonment, first to Siena, then to Florence, then to Grenoble, and finally to Valence on the Rhine. There, worn out with the weight of years, and by persecution, his martyrdom was consummated, in August, 1799, in the 82nd year of his age, and the 24th of his Pontificate.

Meanwhile, the « Roman Republic » was proclaimed in Rome on 15th February 1798; and on the 23rd of the following March, certain « **deputies** » appeared at the church of Our Lady in Genazzano and demanded, in the name of the Government, not just a part, but everything of value the convent and Sanctuary possessed. These worthies were fit forerunners of those who, in the name of Italian unity, have taken everything from the religious of Italy in our own day (**in the period that this book was being written up to 1883**). The list that they left shows how rich in precious objects the Sanctuary of Our Lady was, even after having given so many valuable articles for the necessities of the Pope. It is sad to find so many votive offerings of not only intrinsic but of historic value amongst these objects, which went neither to the Government nor to the people, but into the possession of reckless individuals, who with conscience seared enough to rob religion, made little scruple of professing themselves infidels and republicans, so that they may have the chance of plundering with impunity. While the mass of the people remained aloof from such activities, these few « **deputies** » sided with the invaders, took up the cant phraseology of the Revolution, assembled and elected themselves « *deputies* » and « *representatives* » - without a people to represent; and, fortified by the bayonets of the stranger, they proceeded to rob, with the forms and jargon of « *the law of the strongest* », both their Church and fellow countrymen. The law compelled them to leave a note of what they took; but what they did actually take went, of course, to the service (**personal benefit**) of these « *citizens of the republic* » themselves. The following is a copy of the document (**the one required by the law**), which still exists. This document is all that the Fathers ever received in place of their property. It will be noticed that several articles, which must have been heavy, are mentioned without the weight being

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Republic\\_\(18th\\_century\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic_(18th_century))

given. Yet such weights as are given in pounds and ounces, prove the value of the objects themselves:-



« NOTE OF OBJECTS TAKEN FROM THE CHURCH AND  
CONVENT OF THE AUGUSTINIANS OF SAINT MARY OF  
GOOD COUNSEL, BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF GENAZZANO,  
AND CONSIGNED TO THE CITIZENS OF THE MUNICIPALITY.

**Silver**

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
Votive offerings in silver, found on the walls of the chapel of the Madonna . . . . .	19	6
Other silver offerings . . . . .	24	4
Others again, in another division . . . . .	15	0
Others again, in another division . . . . .	2	0
A silver tablet, containing a heart of silver with flowers, countersigned with the seal of the municipality.		
Another tablet, with a crown and heart of silver.		
Silver taken from the glass frame of the Image of the Madonna, countersigned as above. . . . .	46	0
Other silver ornamentations . . . . .	46	0

**Gold**

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
The crown of the Madonna in gold . . . . .	7	2
The crown of the Child . . . . .	7	7½
Two hearts joined, in gold . . . . .	6	0
Heart in gold, of the Electress of Saxony, with two rings within . . . . .	7	7½
Crown of silver gilt, with two heads of silver gilt . . . . .	11	0
Bracelets with ornaments . . . . .	1	3
Ornaments in pearls . . . . .	0	18

**Besides the Silver and Gold Items**

A comb of coral, gilt.  
 A breast ornament.  
 A cross of beryl.  
 Two others of same.  
 A star of silver, with topaz.  
 Two ovals, one of Clement XIV and another with  
 that of St. John Nepomucene.  
 A necklace of silver, with divers precious stones.  
 A cross and three pendants with pearls, sealed by  
 the municipality and by the convent.  
 A crown with twelve stars of beryl, and a star  
 formed of one white, and several coloured gems.

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
A lamp gilded	12	3
Five other lamps, of silver	38	0
Two angels of silver. (weight not given)		
Four vases of silver	6	3
A grand and small silver crown	11	8
Four cornucopia.		
Six table candlesticks.		
Two large, and one small heart.		
One cruet.		
Two chandeliers of silver displayed.		
Two cornucopia not displayed, which stand in the chapel of the Madonna	5	0
Basin and ewer in silver gilt	7	2
» » » vase and aspersory	3	8
Three chalices with patens gilt	8	0
Gilt chalices with paten	2	5
(Left by municipality)		

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
Three chalices of silver with patens, gilt	8	0
An incensory with boat and spoon	3	0
(Left by municipality)		

An ostensorium and box.

(Left by municipality)

	<b>lbs</b>	<b>oz</b>
Ornaments for mantle, and two crowns of silver	22	10
Ornaments for the steps of the altar of the Madonna	2	6
4 silver gilt chains, and cross in silver	3	7
Two medals, a reliquary, two rings	3	0
Six reliquaries, of silver	5	8
82 reliquaries.	(weight not given)	

(Here follows the list of a number of object of little worth left to the convent.) - - - **Not given in this book.**

« We the undersigned, deputed by the municipality to receive the objects of the said church of Saint Mary, declare that we have received all, according to the form of the above inventory. In faith of which, we inscribe our names this, 23rd March, 1798. First year of the Republic. »

**11.** The ring with the effigy of St. John Nepomucene was restored to the convent by some unknown hand in 1820. But the rest disappeared completely. Some of the articles, such as the heart with the marriage rings of the Electress of Saxony, and the crowns of gold granted by the Chapter of St. Peters, were, in historic terms, of a price more precious than the metal or workmanship which gave them a very high value. The poor Fathers tried to make up for the robbery of the crowns and other decorations of the sacred Image by substituting what best they could instead. Their lands, as in the present persecution, were confiscated; and some were never recovered by them even on the return of peace. Up to the time of writing (**c.1883**), the invariable curse, which long experience proves to be the fate of these ravenous persons who, to enrich their families, do not scruple to take the property of the Church, has fallen upon most of the sacrilegious « **purchasers** » and, instead of founding wealthy houses, as they had hoped to do, their families have, instead, lost not only what they gained from the Church but also what they had

previously held as their own patrimony. Besides which they, of course, lost cast (**position in society**), the esteem of men, and the benediction of heaven. A notable instance of this malediction may today be seen in the fallen condition of one family, immensely wealthy a few years ago, and who are now living in a state of beggary within three miles of the Sanctuary they plundered.

**12.** The years which succeeded 1798 were sad years for all of Italy as well as for the church of Our Lady of Good Counsel at Genazzano. It is true that the coming of the Russians under Suwarrow (**Alexander Suvorov**<sup>1</sup>), caused the French « **liberators** » to loose their hold on the country and on the Holy See. It gave time for the Cardinals to elect a successor to Pius VI. That successor was Pius VII. All know the long and eventful history of that celebrated and most saintly Pontiff. After being restored to his States by the policy of Napoleon who had succeeded in making himself absolute master of the French, Pius VII soon found out that, instead of a new “noble minded Charlemagne”, he had to deal with the meanest and most narrow souled despot (**Napoleon**) who had ever appeared with the genius and fortunes of a conqueror. Alexander, Caesar, Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, all were scourges to millions, but none of them could be called “mean” in the sense in which Napoleon was undoubtedly mean. They were all generously grateful to their friends. Not one of them ever found in his career, a friend so beneficent, so faithful, and so forbearing as the great Pius VII was to Napoleon. Yet scarcely had Pius VII crowned that Emperor, who, backed by the fiery valour of France, made an easy conquest of the old fashioned continental armies than he experienced (just as Talleyrand, and even the uncle of Napoleon, Cardinal Fesch, and others had experienced) that he had to deal with one who, at heart, was a tyrant, selfish to the last degree, suspicious and ungrateful to an extent never before witnessed in one aiming to be called a hero. Hence the imprisonment (**of Pius VII**), the outrages and sufferings to which the Pontiff was long consigned by Bonaparte until, through his mad expedition to Moscow, that despot was hurled from the height he had reached. There, his boast « **The Pope's excommunication will never take the guns out of the hands of my brave soldiers.** » was, we know, mocked at by Providence. The cold of Russia did actually force the muskets from his soldiers' hands, and the tyrant himself was crushed and humbled to the dust by the action of the elements.

These years were terrible, not only for the Pope, but for Italy, and the Papal States especially. Napoleon was no friend of the religious orders. His plan was to force the Church to advance his ambitious designs. In Genazzano, after the annexation of Rome and the States of the

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Suvorov - see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Suvorov](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Suvorov)

Church to his Empire, the religious had again to leave their convents. In common with their brethren, they had also to endure suppression and expulsion at the hands of the victor of Austerlitz and Jena.

**13.** After the tyrant's final defeat, however, at Waterloo, and the return of Pius VII, we find the Fathers restored to Santa Maria in Genazzano, and enabled once more to think of replacing something of what had been lost to their church and beloved Sanctuary. Poor as they were they found means (**resources**) to replace with a beautiful work in copper (richly gilt) the massive silver fastenings taken from the Shrine of Our Lady. This now (**1883**) adorns the case of the sacred Image, and makes up by its rare artistic beauty for what it wants in precious material. Benefactors again appeared, and their votive offerings once more filled the walls of the Sanctuary with hearts, and crowns, and models of broken or diseased limbs, made whole by the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

In 1835, Monsignor **Cosmo Corsi** (afterwards Cardinal Archbishop of Pisa), at his own expense, constructed in marble the four side altars of the aisles. In 1839, the floor of the Sanctuary of Our Lady was formed in the beautiful fashion in which it at present exists. A year later, the façade of the church was completed after a design of Father **Giusto Fanucchi**, the Prior of the Augustinian convent at Bracciano.

**14.** Fortunately for the church of the Madonna in Genazzano, this Father was gifted in no ordinary degree with artistic taste and with great knowledge not only of architecture but also of church decoration. He had, furthermore, the good sense, often found wanting in non-professionals who choose to be their own architects, of not confiding in (**trusting**) his own judgment. In the many works which he constructed for his Order, (amongst which may be mentioned the very beautiful chapel of St. Mark at Corneto), he invariably consulted the best professional architects he could find, and especially those of Civita Vecchia. It was with much regret that he realised, while attending to the completion of the Façade of Santa Maria, that its interior was anything but decorated in keeping with its really fine design. Its inner roof was bare and its walls were covered with odd inscriptions of much piety but of little public significance and of execrable (**inappropriate**) taste. Zealous, like all his brethren, for the house of his beloved Madonna of Good Counsel, he determined to do what he could to remedy this glaring defect. He studied out (**outlined?**) a plan for its embellishment which could hardly be surpassed, and he had the good fortune not only to get the approval of the first (**foremost**) professional skill in Italy, but also the active support of his enlightened General and of the Prior and community of Genazzano, in having his plan put into execution. This plan was to have the whole roof decorated with that wonderful stucco which the early Romans used so well and to such

an extent, and which the genius of Raphael rediscovered and made such remarkable use of in the corridors of the Vatican. The walls and pillars were to be covered beneath for several feet with marble, and above that by the finest scagliola (**imitation marble or other stone**), while the floor was to be all of marble. The walls around were, moreover, to be decorated with paintings in such a manner that when the ornamental stuccowork of the roof would be gilt, the interior should form one majestic whole.

Considering the means (**resources**) of the Fathers, the design was vast, but they set about putting it into execution with incredible ardour. The stucco-work was confided to the ablest artist of Italy in that line, Signor **Giuliano Corsini** of Urbino, well known as the undertaker of works perfected in Corneto, Rimini, and Viterbo; and who had also been employed by the celebrated Roman architect **Virginio Vespignani** in the basilica of St. Paul and other churches.

He succeeded in his task to the satisfaction of all who study his splendid work at Santa Maria in Genazzano. The roof was completed in 1856, but the rest of the design was, by a series of unforeseen events, put off until very recently (**recent to 1883**).

**15.** Meanwhile, much was being done to repair the injury caused by the French occupation. Several material improvements were effected. Cardinal **Pedicini**, in 1840, caused the whole of the gilding of the Sanctuary to be renewed. The frescoes, as they are now seen there, were executed by the best artists that could be then found in the Eternal City. The Espousals of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph are the work of the painter **Achilles Ansiglioni**. The Nativity of Our Lord, with the prophets Isaias and Jeremias, and the angels underneath are by the same. The Prophets Daniel and Ezechial with the angels beneath, are by **Ernest Sprega**. The flight into Egypt and the Angels on the vault of the tribune, are by **Paginini**. The very well executed likeness of Pius the Ninth, attended by Cardinal Amat and in the act of contemplating the sacred Image, is the work of **Reinaldi**.

**16.** Notwithstanding the improvements thus effected in the Sanctuary, the church in general remained for several years in an unadorned condition. At last, upon the appointment of **Prior Martinelli**, (brother of the Cardinal) some ten years since, a new vigour was infused into the works. The funds of the Pious Union, which are all devoted to the purposes of the church and Shrine, were given over to a committee formed of the Cardinal Bishop of Palestrina, the Cardinal Prefect, Protector of the Order of St. Augustine, and the Prior of Santa Maria in Genazzano. Since then the whole interior of the building has been renovated and decorated. The pillars and the lower portion of the walls have been encased in marble, and the upper portions completely covered

with the finest scagliola (**imitation marble or stone**). The best Roman painters have been engaged to adorn the walls with beautiful frescoes.

17. The writer cannot undertake to pronounce a judgment upon these latter works, but he has asked an artist friend to give him an opinion upon them. In reply to his request, the artist - himself one of the most promising painters in Rome - sent him a letter, a translation of which he here gives for the benefit of such of his readers as may hereafter come to visit the church of the Sanctuary. This artist says -

« The aspect which this church presents to the spectator is very beautiful. On entering, one is struck with the appearance of the chancel, rich in the marbles of its high altar, its balustrade and its pavement. Its vault — which is magnificently decorated in stucco, panelled, and full of rose representations, cornices, borders, and other ornaments — is entirely gilded over to perfection. In the perspective, where the orchestra is placed behind the high altar, above the choir, are two paintings in fresco. The one to the left hand represents the Immaculate Conception, in which the Most Holy Virgin is seen descending from Heaven and about to crush the head of the infernal serpent. On the right is the Assumption of Our Lady amidst the angelic hosts into Heaven. In the middle, upon a movable panel which covers the organ, David is represented in ecstasy and in the act of singing the praises of God upon the harp. At each side is an angel with a scroll — upon which is read the words « *in corde et organo laudate Deum* ». **These three paintings are by Signor Tito Troja of Rome.** »

On the right side are three other frescoes of large dimensions. In the first, Most Holy Mary is seen seated upon a throne with the Child Jesus in Her arms. At Her feet are St. Monica and St. Augustine receiving the Cincture. In the second is a representation of the Visitation, in which the Virgin Mother is seen welcomed by St. Elizabeth who comes to receive Her, and both are in the act of salutation. Behind them are seen St. Joseph and St. Zachary who are also in the act of salutation, and above are represented two young women who are spectators of the whole scene. The third is the Annunciation. Here the Archangel Gabriel is seen making the great Announcement, and, at the same time, presenting to Most Holy Mary the lily of holy purity. The Virgin, in astonishment, receives the salutation. On high are two choirs of angels, at whose head is seen St. Michael who presents the sceptre to Our Lady. **These three paintings are the work of Virginio Monti.**

Following the passage round the high altar, we come to a very beautiful representation of the Presentation of the Virgin in the temple. There is here a sun effect and the picture is well peopled with figures. The little Child is seen alone upon the higher step of the Sanctuary and is followed by Sts. Joachim and Anne with several women. There are the priests and ministers of the Old Law in their robes of office, with others who await, at the summit, the coming of the holy Child. Pharisees pass by, with interested looks at the new acquisition to the children of the Temple. At the lower end are groups selling pigeons and other things for the use of those coming to make offerings. These figures are a study. The middle painting represents the birth of the Blessed Virgin. A splendid effect of night light. Amongst the first figures, and seated in the middle, is a woman who holds in her lap the new-born Infant.

The light is thrown upon this figure with exquisite art from the lamp which burns near and from other lights suspended in the centre of the chamber. Above, at a distance, is seen the bed on which reclines the mother, St. Anne, and at the side of this bed St. Joachim is seated. Other women are near, and others, with lights, enter the room. The beauty of the Infant, the expression of motherly interest and pleasure upon the features of St. Anne, the calm joy of St. Joachim, and the womanly interest depicted in the faces of all the other female figures, show the masterly power of the painter in this fresco. The effect of the lamp-lights in the chamber and upon all the figures, has been rarely equalled and can hardly be surpassed. The expression upon the features of the young female figure holding the Infant, shows rare talent; and, altogether, this picture, large and full as it is, may well be regarded as a masterpiece. **Both this and the former are the work of Signor Prospero Piatti.**

There is a third picture here also, of St. Augustine driving the heretics out of the Church, **executed by Virginio Monti.**

It is well worth while, before leaving this place, to examine the wood-work in walnut of the choir and the marble of the balustrade and high altar, all of which possess artistic value.

Leaving the chancel, the vault of the nave — gilded like that over the high altar — catches the eye at once, and manifests the quality of the stucco-work of Signor Corsini and the beauty of the design of Fr. Fanucchi. Here, near the lunettes of the clerestory (**Dict. - the upper part of the nave, choir, and transepts of a large church, containing a series of windows**) windows, and painted in fresco, are twelve female figures of great attractiveness. They are all taken from the Old Testament and are as follows. Commencing on the left from the Sanctuary is seen; 1. Esther, 2. Judith, 3. Bethsabee, 4. Deborah, 5. Jahel, 6. Rachel. Then, on coming round, is seen 1. Sara, 2. Rebecca, 3. Mary, 4. Ruth, 5. Josaba, 6. Abigail. **All these are the work of Signor Troja** and strike even the most casual eye as being very beautiful in their place.

At the end of the noble vault, on the arch over the principal entrance of the church, is a very fine picture by **Professor Luigi Fontana** — the crowning of the Virgin in heaven. Our Lord is represented placing the diadem upon His Mother's brow. The Eternal Father is seated on the orb of the world and, with uplifted arm, commands that the crown should be placed. Cherubim, Seraphim, Angels etc. on wing, crown the upper portion of the picture. And in the distance is seen Adam and Eve, patriarchs and prophets, the first martyrs of the Church, confessors, bishops, other angels, martyrs and virgins, St. Joseph, St. John the Baptist, and almost all the representations of heaven are found here. Finally a circle of angels — child-figures — give a finish to the whole.

In the triangles of the arches beneath the cornice, corresponding to the symbolical figures of the Old Testament, are painted twelve *putti*, child-figures of angels. These are placed so as to harmonise with the female figures, and are **the work of Signor Tito Troja.**

The grandest painting of the whole Church, however, is the great fresco over the entrance door, which represents the coming of the sacred Image to Genazzano (**on 25th April 1467**). The situation of the town itself is admirably rendered. The habits of the Italian people in the



fifteenth century have been accurately studied, and the costumes of all the figures are in strict keeping with the period. The history of the event has also been well kept in view. The church of Petruccia forms the principal piece in the scene. It is represented as unfinished, the steps alone completed, and two new columns which are made very conspicuous for effect, are represented as standing. The accessories of a building in progress are well portrayed. The period during which it occurred is made known by several figures, which also bring to mind the feudal state of Genazzano at the time, and the customs both of its lords and its people. The Prince Colonna is represented coming from the chase, accompanied by his wife and son. These figures and those of their attendants, horses, and accoutrements are studies. The crowd at the fair is as numerous as the limits of the painter would permit. There is the Burgomaster with his rough, peasant look, and yet his rich robe of office. Peasants in all their degrees. The vendors of fair-wares and the frequenters. The sacred Image is seen on high surrounded by angels and celestial spirits in great number but rendered indistinct. On the platform of the unfinished church, Petruccia is represented kneeling with hands outstretched, and near her are several figures of Augustinian Fathers. The look of intense devotion on the face of the holy Tertiary, and the satisfied, calm content of the Fathers, made to contrast with the stupefied, dazed astonishment on the faces of the crowd, are well given. The more intelligent, and yet surprised, look on the features of the Colonna and the devotion cast into the handsome faces of his wife and son, are all put very naturally. The whole forms perhaps **one of the first works which the painter Prospero Piatti ever produced**. It caused a great sensation amongst the art critics in Rome, and numerous photographs of it were sold there and in Italy generally.

Passing from before this magnificent picture and entering the left aisle, we come to a small altar of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, above which, in the lunette, is a fresco which shows him at the moment the Madonna appeared to him when he prayed for the souls in Purgatory. These are represented in a sea of fire in the foot of the picture. **This is the work of Signor Cesare Caroselli** who also painted the fresco on the lunette of Jesus teaching in the temple.

Here, after passing a picture on canvas of little value, we meet the holy Sanctuary of the sacred Image, and passing on, we cross before the high altar and come on the other side to the altar of the Most Holy Crucifix. Here are found some old frescoes restored with great care by **Signor Troja** and two figures of Our Lord bound to the pillar, an Ecce Homo, and, over the sacristy door, a Christ in the garden by the same artist. Passing down this aisle we come to the altar of St. Thomas of Villanova, which is very beautiful both in design and colour, and beyond this is a very powerful representation of the death of St. Joseph **by Vannutelli**. Two pictures are yet to be executed to make up the full number required at the extremity of the vault where stands the fresco of the Wonderful Apparition. One is to represent the miraculous Translation from Scutari, and the other the crowning of the sacred Image by the Chapter of St. Peters. **Both are confided to Signor Prospero Piatti**, the eminent artist who painted the Birth of the Virgin, Her Presentation in the temple, and the Wonderful Apparition.

## Chapter XXIII

### DEVOTION OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

1. Extent of devotion to Our Lady in Italy. - 2. Its manifestations. - 3. Exhibition of it in works of genius. - 4. Practical devotion of the people. - 5. Open manifestation - Shrines - Their number. - 6. The people as such « **saturated** » with devotion to Mary - Proofs - Churches, chapels, sanctuaries, houses, streets, shops, familiar discourse, exclamations. - 7. Objections made about the Sunday in Italy - The condition of the Church and the Holy Father etc. etc. - 8. Damage done outside Italy by these objections - Notwithstanding their want of reason. - 9. Answer in brief. - 10. Explanation about the « **Sabbath** ». - 11. « **Externalism** » in religion - The Italian Catholic's day - The early morning Masses - Practices of piety - A reason for the existence of beggars. - 12. Purity of the Italian Catholics. - 13. The Clergy of Italy - Slanders of the Protestant press - Reason for the large number of clergy - The Regulars - The Cloister. - 14. The Seculars - Their selection - Training in the world. - 15. Religion in great cities - In Rome. - 16. Conclusion.

1. In the earlier parts of this book we have seen, incidentally at least, a great deal about the devotion of the Italian people for Our Lady. That devotion is not confined to Her Shrine at Genazzano but overspreads all the land. It pervades every class of society. It fills the palaces of the great. It lights up the lives of the most miserable with love, and hope, and consolation. It seems never absent from the public religious mind. It remains even with the most abandoned when all else has departed. It softens the hearts of the most obdurate, it wrenches the victim of sin from the strongest evil surroundings, and stays the mouth of the blasphemer. Sectaries (**Dict. - members of religious or political sects**) of the deadliest dye succumb before death to its sweet, but irresistible influence. Its action is wonderful, whether we consider it as perfecting the just or converting the sinner. Indeed, if devotion to the Virgin Mother of God be, as it most assuredly is, a sign of predestination, no people on earth possess that gift to a greater extent than the people of Italy, taken collectively.

2. This devotion is exhibited in a thousand beautiful ways, all prompted by the love that has never ceased to fill the souls of the present and past generations. We have already seen, in the chapter of this work which treats of pilgrimages to the Shrine at Genazzano (**Ch. XV**), one of its particular, public manifestations. The same may be witnessed at Loreto and at a hundred other lesser shrines of Our Lady throughout the country. Yet that is but one form of testifying the popular love for Our Lady. The fertile ingenuity of the most richly gifted intellects and

imaginations in the world, has been exhausted for ages in devising means to manifest national, and family, and individual love for Mary the Mother of God.

3. It is needless to remind the cultivated reader of what that love has called forth from the masterminds of the past in Italy. The wealth of genius bestowed in such lavish measure by nature upon the great masters of painting, sculpture, and architecture, and perfected with such care by art, was nowhere exhibited in greater measure and with more success than when employed to glorify Our Lady. Who can recall the splendid conceptions of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Fra Angelico, or any one of the founders or followers of the mighty schools of Italy without thinking of the glories of Mary? Every event of Her life, every attribute of Her excellence, every benefit, general and particular, bestowed by Her maternal care upon Her clients, all have been immortalised by the heart and genius of the Italian masters.

And all this, however much due to the masters themselves, was but the expression of the national heart's love and will to honour Mary. The painters, the architects, the sculptors, and the princes of the period of the renaissance had to meet this national sentiment, which no doubt was their own. It was a sentiment, then, deeply, fondly, faithfully attached to God's Virgin Mother. It had been so right through all the previous centuries back to the very time when the sweet Image of the Madonna was rudely (**primitively**), but lovingly, painted in the crypts and upon the tombs of the catacombs. It continues still — strong, fervent, unconquerable, undying — even when men are planning not only to supplant the Church of God, but to eradicate the very thought of the Creator from the minds of His creatures. We have no hesitation in believing that it will continue in Italy until man's history is over, and the true glory of Mary, the Second Eve — the real Mother of the Living — shall be revealed to all Her faithful clients in the life that never shall have an end.

4. We do not mean to speak here upon the magnificence of the art treasures which the love of Mary has called forth in Italy. The temples erected with such lavish expenditure in Her honour, the altars, pictures, statues and shrines which may be found in all the churches throughout that land for the purposes of Her worship, are known to all. But there are peculiarities in the national devotion to Mary, of which it may be advantageous to speak, and from which the Catholics of other lands, who love God's Virgin Mother too, may obtain some practical information for their guidance in showing their devotion to Her and in reaping a harvest of profit from its practice.

5. In the first place, the Italian is never ashamed of manifesting his devotion to Mary. He loves to stamp it emphatically upon his public, external life. He shows this not only by occasional acts, such as

processions and pilgrimages, but by the every day occurrences of his life. The city in which he lives, the house in which he dwells, the ways through which he passes, the ordinary affairs in which he is engaged, all breathe this devotion to his beloved Madonna. He is not satisfied with the ordinary ways of manifesting his devotion, he must also have extraordinary means of testifying his love. Hence comes the number of special shrines of Our Lady which are found in all parts of the country. Not to speak of the greater shrines to which we have referred, it may be said that there is not ten miles square of Italy which does not contain some more or less remarkable, and indeed miraculous, painting or statue of Mary, to which the whole surrounding country come, if not in pilgrimage as to the greater shrines, at least in immense numbers, to satisfy their devotion. These special shrines surpass in number the very numerous Italian cities. The larger centres of population possess a great many. It would fill volumes to give a description of those to be found in Rome alone, to which histories most interesting are attached, and at which miracles have been performed for ages. To a lesser extent the same may be said of Naples and the other old capitals of states until recently independent. At almost every shrine the title of Our Lady is different: She is honoured under every appellation given to Her in the Litany of Loreto, or elsewhere in the offices of the Church, or by the devotion of the faithful. And when all these titles are exhausted, She is honoured from some circumstance connected with the locality, or the finding of the picture or statue venerated. Thus, the great sanctuary of Our Lady of Viterbo is called the shrine of the **Madonna of the Oak**, and that of Tivoli, the **Madonna of Guadagnola**, from the places where the pictures were, in both cases, miraculously discovered.

6. In truth, the Italian people, are, so to speak, saturated with devotion to Our Lady. The devotion, even of the worst of them, is so great that it everywhere requires something extraordinary to satisfy it. In every church there is always a chapel — in large ones several chapels or altars — erected to honour the Mother of God. And a town must be very small and poor indeed, which has not besides, a special church consecrated to the Madonna, to which, on stated occasions, the whole community may go in solemn procession, and to which individuals may repair, in their everyday needs, for graces and consolation.

Then, the stranger will be surprised to find in many shops, often in the most apparently worldly and business-like shops, a picture of the beloved Madonna, with a lamp constantly burning before it. There are pictures and statues of Our Lady placed at the corners of streets, in the fronts of houses and of vineyards, and in every residence, even in the poorest, there is sure to be one. In many of them, a lamp invariably burns before it night and day, and in all of them one is lighted at least on the

feasts of God's Mother as they occur throughout the year. There are very few Italians who do not wear the scapular and carry rosaries and medals, and it may in truth be said that the Madonna never leaves the minds and hearts of the mass of the Italian people. Her name is the most familiar in their mouths both in life and at death. She is sought for in every necessity. « *May the Madonna accompany you;* » « *may the Madonna guide you;* » are the blessings which Catholics constantly give to one another. Before Her sweet Image every head bows, every hat is raised, and every heart utters a prayer. And those who thus love Her are those who preserve their faith. They frequent the sacraments, they are devoted to the Church, and defy all bad influences to subvert in them the love and the practice of the Catholic religion.

7. The writer is very conscious of an objection which many from English Speaking countries are but too ready to make. Granted, they say, that the Revolution in progress (**in about 1883**) has done all the mischief it could, but how come the whole of Italy seems to present such a singularly irreligious aspect, even in matters which, to a large extent, must depend upon the will of the people themselves? How is it that in all the cities and towns, the Sunday is profaned to such an extraordinary extent? How is it that the worst literature in the world has circulation there? How is it that men can suppress the religious orders, harass the clergy in a hundred ways, and, finally, reduce the Supreme Head of the Catholic religion to the condition of a prisoner in the midst of a Catholic people, if the masses were not consenting parties to these proceedings?

The writer has heard the above objections (**criticisms**) so often brought forward against Italy that he deems it a duty to answer them fully. He knows the damage they do, not only to the repute of a great Catholic people and to the clergy of that people, but to Catholicity itself in English Speaking countries. They are brought forward in a hundred shapes by the Protestant, and the Infidel, and even by the bad Catholic, for the purpose of weakening the faith of the fervent. The divinity, the sanctity, and even the efficacy of the faith are held up to doubt and to ridicule by quoting the example of the country in which lies the centre and the citadel of its strength. The supreme authority of the Vicar of Christ is sought to be discredited by representing him either as no better in religion than those of whom he is, and amongst whom he lives, or as being impotent to make them, either clergy or laity, what they ought to be. Then the fervour and self-sacrifice of such faith as that of the Irish people, or of converts from heresy in English Speaking lands, is sought to be damaged by the well known effect which a plausibly sounding (**alleged**) bad example of a whole Catholic people (**those in Italy**), is calculated to produce.

8. The argument is - Why are you being fervent when the Italians themselves are indifferent? Why do you make sacrifices for that which they do not think it worth while to keep? Why do you build up at such cost that which they, after an experience of many centuries, have had too much of, and now pull down? Why do you seek and cherish that which they drive away? Why, in a word, do you value that for which they will do nothing?

Now, even if all this were true, there would, of course, be no force in it against the Catholic religion itself. The Catholic religion is independent of any people. There will always be millions of Catholics on earth whose faith will be the same as that of the Japanese Sovereign who, when told something of the kind here referred to, replied that (**even**) if all men, including the Supreme Pontiff (if that were possible) denied the truth of the Catholic religion, he would be willing to shed his blood for it. But then, there are Catholics whose faith is not so strong. There are those whom bad example will damage; and there are those already weak, bad, or negligent, who readily seize upon bad example as a means of fortifying themselves in evil courses, and as a means of advancing to worse ones. On one occasion, the writer heard the following words being addressed by a Catholic to a fervent young priest: « had you been to Italy you would take things more easily, you want (**in**) experience. » And lay Catholics hear this. « In Italy the people don't keep the Sunday, don't keep the fasts, don't mind what the priest says, etc. etc.; therefore you are a fool to do what no Catholic does in Italy. » These assertions are false, but even if true, they prove nothing. The Church, wherever situated and at all times, has good and bad within her bosom. So it was in the days of Our Lord Himself. So it was in the days of St. Peter. So it has been since and so it will be forever. But the wonder is that, in Italy, the bad Catholics are so few, considering the trials which the faith of its people has had to endure, and that the good Catholics in it are so numerous and so fervent.

9. England, North-Germany, and Northern Europe generally, lost the faith in a trial (**the “so-called” Reformation<sup>1</sup>**) which, compared with the recent trials of Italian faith, may be looked upon as little indeed. This is known to all, and need not be here described. What we now say is, that the Italy — the bone and substance of Italy — which has preserved the faith, keeps it as fresh and fervent today as at any past period of its history.

English Speaking visitors cannot see this, without being first acquainted with the people as such, and with their mode of living. They would need to know the language of the country, and enter fully into the feelings, the ideas, and the manners of its inhabitants.

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<sup>1</sup> (The Great Heretical Rebellion.)

**10.** The customs of one country, even the religious customs of one Catholic country, may not be the same as those of another. The Italian would be inclined to regard the faith of the well-to-do Catholic in English Speaking countries who hadn't an altar of Our Lady, with its ever lighted lamp, in his best room, as being little faith indeed. The English Speaking Catholic, accustomed to the Puritanical idea of the sanctity of the « Sabbath, » (which is not the Sabbath at all, by the way, but the pagan Sunday kept now by a law of the Church instead of the real Sabbath and, for the same reasons, **(is regarded)** as a festival,) would be, and often is, scandalised to see an Italian peasant buy a few articles of family necessity after Mass on « **the Lord's Day** », the name the Church gives to the first day of the Jewish week.

Yet both may be mistaken. The former (**the Italian**) may not have less love for God's Mother, because he does not advert to the lamp and the household altar; and the latter (**English Speaker**) may be easily excused, or be, by proper authority, dispensed, in using a portion of the day normally set apart by the Church for the special service of God, in doing some necessary work of buying or selling. A great deal of the pharisaic cant that we hear, about the manner in which the Italian peasants, — not the Atheists of great towns —, keep the Sabbath would be effectively refuted by a simple reflection on the actual extent of the binding effect of the Sunday upon conscience; and the possibility of its obligation being removed (i) by dispensation or (ii) by necessity.

No doubt, there can be no excuse for the formal violation of the day, in defiance of the Church, and in contempt of religion. But, the Italian people as such have little recourse to such excuses. That is the action of the enemies of Catholicity in the country; and exists, not because of the wishes of the people, but in spite of the people and, of course, in spite of the Church.

**11.** Again, though the Italian people have obtained the repute with us of being “external” in their religion, — and indeed they do love, and much love, the beautiful ceremonies of the Church, — still their religion is far from being confined to “externals”. Long hours before the English Speaking visitors leave their hotel beds, the Italian population in cities and villages are up and stirring, and up and stirring too simply because of religion. As early as half-past four, even on winter mornings, the Church of Santa Maria in Genazzano is, as we have already seen, crowded by a congregation of people who desire to hear Mass before going to their daily labour. For thousands in every city Mass is not confined to the Sunday. The devout attend it every day. The works of St. Alphonsus Liguori, which are very common, lead some millions in Italy to practise, without ostentation, meditation, visits to the Most Holy Sacrament, and works even of the highest perfection. Those who seem in

the streets and highways to be no better than Sabbath breakers and people without religion, are often Christians, as devout and fervent as any in the world. If there are beggars in Italy, it comes from the fact that there is no country in Europe where all classes, even the labouring classes, give larger alms.

**12.** Furthermore, notwithstanding so many calumnies to the contrary, the Italian Catholics are a people singularly pure in their morals. The large cities, of course, like large cities everywhere, produce their crop of social evil and crime. But the country towns, of from a few hundred souls to some few thousand inhabitants, are pure because they are religious. Each town forms a large family in which, as in Ireland, disgrace would be worse than death, in the question of female purity. But a stronger reason is that the Italian woman's life is passed in the practices of religion almost as much as if she lived in a convent. She is led to this by the constant familiarity with the life and, as it were, the living presence of the Virgin Mother of God Whose holy example is ever before her eyes.

**13.** Then the clergy of Italy are slandered to a most unwarrantable extent in the Protestant literature of English Speaking countries. They are represented as lazy, idle, ignorant and, sometimes, without any proof whatever being adduced, as being vicious. They are also represented as being far too numerous.

In answer to this latter accusation, it must be borne in mind that, even if the clergy in Italy were reduced solely to the person of the Sovereign Pontiff, they would still be considered by those who make the objection, «as far too numerous». (**These people have another agenda.**) If the priests are rather numerous, it comes from the fact that they are the offspring of such devout lay people as we have described. Italian fathers and mothers, being intensely religious, rear sons fit for the sanctuary (**seminary?**), and delight to see them consecrated to the service of God. Italian zeal has provided the means (**resources**) to keep God's ministers. Thousands of these ministers live most poorly on the alms of God's people. They lead holy, laborious, and mortified lives. The cloister covers their abodes, abodes great and small of all the religious of Italy. No one of the opposite sex to that of the inmates, ever treads beyond the sacred line dividing the convent or monastery from the outer world. The inmates, except when compelled by necessity, must be within these enclosures after sundown. (**Large**) Numbers of religious orders add to these ordinary rules others still more severe. Hence there could not be found at any time in the Church, a body of more saintly-living men, than the regular clergy of Italy.

**14.** Then, as to the seculars. First, nothing in the Church surpasses the care taken of the young ecclesiastics in the seminaries of Italy. The youth who shows signs of a vocation is, of course, jealously watched by



his parents. The least spot upon his young life would prove fatal to his advancement. At a very early age he enters upon his studies under the care of priests most eminent for holiness of life and for learning in his diocese, and under the eyes of the Bishop himself. He is thus guarded and trained in ecclesiastical knowledge and discipline until he reaches manhood. The seminaries of Italy are training schools not only in virtue and religion, but in every branch of science capable of forming not only the ecclesiastic but also the polished gentleman. Hence the stranger who has heard only calumnies about them, is often surprised upon meeting the reality. He likely regards the cultivated gentleman he meets, as an exception. But he finds as he goes further, that his exceptions are the rule, and his rule the exception. There is not in the world a body of men superior in dignity of appearance to the clergy of Rome, and, in large degree, to the clergy of Italy generally.

After leaving the seminary, the young priest is placed in a position where the eye of a superior, or of more than one, is continually upon him. Not only his reputation and his salvation but his prospects in life depend upon the exactness of his conduct. Along with this, he is usually placed near his family, and lives with them. This may have some drawbacks in the case of parochial clergy, but it has many advantages. The young priest is preserved by the care of his dearest friends. The mother that reared him often lives to see him grow old in the service of God. At all events, the custom so operates that scandals amongst the clergy are more rare in Italy than in any part of the world. If we except the unfortunate Gavazzi<sup>1</sup> and other apostates ensnared by secret societies, they scarcely exist at all.

**15.** Now, as to the laity. The visitor to any of the cities of Italy will find the churches crowded, at an early hour of the Sunday and festival mornings, with fervent worshippers, amongst whom not only are men found, but men are often found predominating. This is, as it ever was and ever will be, observable, especially in Rome. There the Lenten services and other occasions of devotion are so crowded that, in the larger churches such as the Minerva and St. Augustine's, every available space to the very altars is filled by men chiefly, listening to sermons of an hour's length and more. On such occasions as Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Ash Wednesday, and the Solemn Commemoration of the Faithful Departed, the whole population seem to be occupied with no other thought but that of religion. **(Recall that this is being written in 1883)** This occurs too, it must be remembered, when the Church is completely deprived of power, and when no motive but the pure love of religion can have any effect upon the people; — when, as we know well,

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<sup>1</sup> May be a reference to Alessandro Gavazzi  
See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alessandro\\_Gavazzi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alessandro_Gavazzi)

every effort of the State is exercised to drag them in the direction at least of indifference, if not of worse. Also, we find in the Catholic societies which spring up in defiance of the Government, in the sacrifices many make for the necessities of religion, in the movement to lessen Sunday trading, and in the assistance largely given to the Pope, that there are signs of a greater fervour than ever overspreading the land. The Church, stunned as it were, after the severity and suddenness of a first shock, is showing strong signs of activity. In a newness of life and vigour, the immense population of the country will soon prove that its faith is not only active but vigilant and enterprising, determined to withstand the efforts of the foe that sought to seduce and to strangle it.

**16.** Without writing a long treatise we cannot here go further into the fact that the mass of the Italian people, clergy and laity, who do or do not live in large towns, are as full as ever of faith and of religion. It is unfortunately true that some thousands of people in great cities and a few priests and religious out of the hundreds of thousands of holy and faithful men in Italy as a whole, have actually gone against religion. But when we consider what Italy has gone through, the wonder will be, not that the spirit of evil has obtained so much, but that Italian faith, on the whole, has been so triumphant.

To avoid departing from our scope we cannot here enter into the nature of these trials, which are but too well known to the readers of modern history (**as in 1883**). Our object in this chapter has been simply to glance briefly at *the devotion of the people of Italy to Our Lady* and some of its most remarkable manifestations. We could not do this with any effect for the great body of our readers, without meeting the objections so commonly made against the faith of Italy by the anti-Catholic press in English Speaking countries. We all know the damage these objections — ill founded and badly authenticated as they are — do to the Catholic faith in general, as well as to the character of a generous, pious, and highly gifted people; a people to whom Europe and the world at large owe the most valuable traditions and treasures of antiquity; modern civilisation; progress in the arts and sciences; and what is more, under God, their very Christianity.

In this chapter we have not entered into the wider question of the nature of the worship which the Italians in common with all other Catholics manifest to the Virgin Mother of God. We are conscious, however, than any work such as this would be incomplete without treating of a subject so very important, — so necessary for those who have erroneous notions of its nature, and so useful for all, whether within or outside the fold of Christ. We shall therefore devote the next chapter to a simple and popular explanation of the Catholic doctrine of the worship

and invocation of Mary the Virgin Mother of God, and of its immense utility to all Christian people.

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## Chapter XXIV

### THE WORSHIP OF MARY

1. Its effects. - 2. Shipwreck in faith through its absence. - 3. Need of Good Counsel from Mary. - 4. The doctrine of the worship and invocation of Mary. - 5. An objection in the Protestant mind. - 6. The nature of the Catholic worship of God and His saints explained. - 7. The knowledge of our affairs and the interest in them of the angels and saints - Their power with God - Admission of Protestants. - 8. Mary's superior dignity - In Her creation. - 9. The progress of Her merit - Her childhood - Her condition before the Annunciation. - 10. Her merit after. - 11. Her trials. - 12. Her merit from them. - 13. An ordinary objection met. - 14. Utility of prayer to the saints, and especially to Mary. - 15. Mary left by Jesus to us at the Cross - Her love. - 16. Value of the honour paid Her. - 17. Necessity for devotion to Mary in these times. - 18. Mary opposed to Satan's arts in our days. - 19. Her quality as Virgin Mother of Good Counsel.

1. The previous chapter has been written principally to show to English Speaking readers the fervour of devotion to the Mother of God which exists in a land wherein it was supposed to be dying. All know what the faith of Italy has endured during the last fifty years. Devotion to Mary has not only saved it, but has also rendered it strong, fervent, and imperishable. It is devotion to Mary, the Mother and the Giver of Good Counsel, which will also save the faith of English Speaking races, both in their island homes and in their widespread migrations over Northern America, Australasia, South Africa, and the East and West Indies. In all these lands a new Church has arisen in this century (**1800s**), — a Church which we may confidently hope will continue faithful to the end of time, with that fidelity which has been the characteristic of the people to whom Providence has been pleased to confide the chief work of planting it, in an empire so vast and, in all probability, so enduring<sup>1</sup>.

2. But without that devotion to God's Mother so characteristic of England and Scotland in the days of faith, — in the times of the Margarets and the Edwards —, and so characteristic of Ireland at all times, this will be impossible. And in our days an ordinary fervour will not suffice. **Shipwreck in faith** has occurred before our eyes amongst the oldest families in England. Families which had held fast to it during the long and dark night of persecution, have lapsed into indifference and into worse. We have examples of this. When scarcely a breath of persecution

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:**- Mons. Dillon is, clearly, referring here to "The British Empire". History has proven that it was not as enduring as he seems to have thought it would be when he was writing this book.

blew, and when rewards (except the most shadowy) were not offered, but were barely hoped for from the favour of a minister, some men of ancient blood and high lineage have been enticed away so far as to strike a blow — puny perhaps, but none the less malicious — at the Vicar of Christ and at all that Catholics hold most dear. Others, from apparently no cause but inertia, fall away. Shipwreck in faith occurs too, in the Colonies and in America, amongst the descendants of men, and even amongst men themselves, whose ancestors in Ireland suffered everything rather than renounce their religion. In none of these cases is devotion to Our Lady ever strong. They are those whose Catholicity, in relation to Our Lady, is « minimal » or non-existent; whose inclination, both in theory and in practice, is to make little, rather than much, of the Catholic doctrine of the worship and invocation of God's Most Holy Mother. The misfortune happens to those who love to mix with Protestants, from a desire to sink those Catholic doctrines with which Protestants disagree. It is born of that spirit of worldliness and base sacrifice of principle, which is characteristic of mean minds. But it exists also from **the want of proper instruction** and of solid devotion. From whatever cause it proceeds, there could be no danger greater to the soul. If a man wishes to tide over (**be carried over**) the strong currents of infidelity, he must not be ashamed of God's Mother. To save oneself from the dangers now threatening the Catholics of that great section of the human race for which this work is written (**English Speakers**), one ought to have, at least, that greater, stronger, living, loving faith in Mary which is characteristic of the worshippers who come to the Shrine of the Mother of Good Counsel in Genazzano; — over whom the tide of infidelity has swept in vain, and against whose faith all the arts of Satan have been employed with as little effect as arts of the same nature have been employed in the past by heresy, armed with irresistible might, against the people of Ireland.

3. And there is also a very special reason why the Mother of God should now be worshipped under the title of Our Lady of Good Counsel; **because, under that title, She meets a special need. That need is the want of Good Counsel in the world**<sup>1</sup>. The devotion is, as the devotion to Jesus Christ in His Sacred Heart, and as the devotion to St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, a devotion reserved for the wants of the faithful in the dangerous days coming towards the end of time (...??). Devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel is needed in like manner: for if it be true that to Her alone is reserved the power of crushing all heresies throughout the whole world and in all time, never was it more necessary to manifest that great power than in these days when all the streams of

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<sup>1</sup> Note added by Eugene Shannon in 2017 - Mary's Title of **Our Lady of Good Counsel** represents one of Her most preëminent functions in Her Rôle as **Co-Mediatrix of All Graces**.

past error and malice unite with newer streams more deadly and widespread, to form **a vast deluge of falsehood and error**, meant by its author and his agents to wash Christianity out of our minds. It is the cunning of the infernal serpent, which has planned all this and made it universal. It is Satan's power and sleepless astuteness which nurture and direct it. It is, for it must be, Mary, therefore, Who is destined to crush him — to crush his head — to leave not one of his machinations disentangled and obliterated until all are effaced by Her might. **It is Hers to give the world that Wisdom, and Counsel, and Strength** necessary for its last and most terrible combat. By her Most Pure, Virginal, and Maternal Dignity, by the immensity of Her merit and Her share in the work of Our Redemption, She must end **(the terrible combat)** in crushing to atoms the head of that deadly enemy of God and man, who desires to strangle **Her Child** in the souls of those for whom that Child died upon Calvary.

4. These are strong words, yet words all too weak to convey to the minds of the faithful a true idea of the power of Her to Whom are applied, by the spotless and infallible Spouse of Christ Her Son, the very words of the Holy Ghost, « in me is Counsel ». They are words which, to many millions of our fellow citizens, sound strange, if not worse than strange. Yet, how many such people do we not all of us know who only need a little instruction to lead them to the knowledge of the truth? This writer, who has had long experience amongst Protestants and whose good fortune it has been to receive hundreds of them into the Church during twenty years of missionary life in Australia, cannot, therefore, lay down his pen without going a little into the reason for this strength in his words.

He is conscious that the work (**this book**) that he has written for those of his brethren « of the household of the faith » (**Catholics**) will not reach many of that household; and that, of these, some will, if only for the sake of a friendship for this writer personally, actually read what he has written. Therefore, for the good of all, he desires to speak at some length, and plainly, upon the Catholic doctrine of the worship and invocation of Her, upon one of Whose beautiful titles he has written this volume; — that is, upon all that Catholics believe and practise everywhere in honour of Immaculate Mary, the Virgin Mother of God; and which they manifest at shrines like that of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano.

5. In the first place then, he desires to answer a thought which, though it may never be expressed, will, he knows by experience, arise in the Protestant mind, upon glancing over such a work as this. That thought is: —

- Why all this extravagance in treating of the Madonna?
- Why so many and such varied titles?
- Why such pilgrimages, devotions, and votive offerings?

- Would it not be better to spend this wealth of fervour and devotion upon the worship due to God alone?
- Why do so much for a mere creature such as Catholics confess Mary to be?

6. It is true that those Protestants who perversely persist in attributing to their Catholic fellow citizens an idolatry are, nowadays, very few indeed. Catholics now, and always did, abhor idolatry. There are few Protestants who need to have it explained that the worship paid to Mary is not like the adoration due to God alone. The vast majority of them know, as well as Catholics do, that the Catholic worship of Mary is as far from idolatry as the finite from the infinite, as the creature is from the Creator, that it is not only distinct but absolutely different. They know that the worship that Catholics give to Our Lady is altogether a relative honour rendered to a creature, — higher than all other creatures in very deed, but yet only a creature —, for the sake of God alone. If they are unacquainted with the theological terms by which Catholics well and clearly distinguish -

- the supreme adoration (*latria*) given to the Deity only, from
- the relative worship (*dulia*) rendered to God's angels and saints, and
- the worship called *hyperdulia* of the same nature as this latter but more intense and extended given to Mary, God's Mother, the Queen of saints and angels,

they know the distinction substantially well enough. And all Protestants practically (**in practice**) confess and act upon that Catholic doctrine. They are continually giving some person or thing — the Bible, for instance, their ministers etc — some honour for the sake of some relation with God. They have no scruple in kneeling to the Queen (**Victoria**), because none of them mean, by such an action, to make Her Majesty a goddess.

And then, Protestants nowhere blame scriptural personages, such as Abraham, Lot, and others for worshipping angels, for falling down and, as it is written, «adoring them»; for they thoroughly understand that such adoration or worship was not intended to be that supreme adoration due to God alone. (Gen. XVIII. 2. XIX. 1.) They know too that the worship which the Patriarchs paid to these heavenly beings was most pleasing to God Who had sent them, exactly in the same way that respect paid to the ambassador of an earthly ruler is pleasing to that ruler, because it derives all its value from the reference it has to the representation of himself.

God has also rewarded, and so approved of, the favour thus shown to His servants; because it was all shown for His sake, — on account of

the splendour in which He had chosen to envelop them, for their fidelity to Him, for the posts they held before His throne.

7. So of all such worship. Neither do intelligent Protestants of our day doubt that the angels and the souls of the servants of God enjoying with them the felicity of heaven, both can and do, take the deepest interest in all that concerns the salvation of the souls of mortal men struggling for heaven here upon earth. It is, as Protestants confess, a small part of our business to know how this happens, how they can learn what goes on here below; how they can hear our prayers, read, as it were, our every thought and respond to our supplications.

But if anyone should demand instruction on a point so plain, we need only say that, if Revelation tells us that the matter is so, then we know that God has power to effect it (**cause it to be so**). All we are concerned with is the fact. And wonderfully clear that fact is made to us. The most secret thought of a man is, for instance, as a rule, his inward sin; and then perhaps, his inward repentance. Of both, God tells us that the heavenly spirits have cognisance. He tells us that the angels witness and complain of our transgressions; and this, of course, must be done without leaving the Beatific Vision. He tells us that when any sinner returns there is more joy amongst them than for the good works, also known to them, « of the just that need not penance ». « I say to you, there shall be joy before the Angels of God upon one sinner doing penance » (Luke XV. 4). This is only what we should expect from their exalted and illuminated state, from the intensity of the charity with which they are filled for those on earth, so dear and so interesting to God. They must also be filled with the truest compassion for our condition. Knowing how much we have at stake, knowing the infinite joys of heaven and the infinite torments of hell, they desire with an everlasting longing that we should enjoy the one and escape the other. They know the true value of the sufferings of the Son of God; and, in their love for Him Whose praises they never cease to chant, they desire, with Him, the salvation of those souls, for any one of whom He would again willingly suffer all He endured on Calvary.

Nothing therefore, can more easily be comprehended by reason, than the interest of the blessed in all that concerns the salvation of immortal souls. It accounts for that solicitude, that joy amongst them all « for one sinner doing penance », escaping eternal damnation, gaining a right to a share with them in eternal glory. The terrible anger of the guardian angels against those who give scandal to their charges is urged by Christ as a reason not to give scandal. That they should pray — ask for favours as well as for vengeance, is surely reasonable. Then, the angels know and are solicitous about our sins and repentance. If this is so, then it is clear that they would, if they could, help us to repent and keep us from



sin. It is also clear that God has regard to (takes account of) their solicitude and their prayers for us. The angel prayed for the people of the Jews and for the Holy City, and was heard. (Zach. I. 12.) Angels heard the prayers of Lot and Abraham and granted their requests, of course only by permission from God. The souls of the prophets Jeremias and Onias are represented in the dream of Judas Maccabeus as praying much for their people and for the Holy City. (2.Mach.XV.12.)

St. Peter, confident of his own salvation, promised, whilst living, to intercede after his death for the Christian people. (II. Pet. I. 15.) And in truth, it was this same grand help, given in the New Dispensation with greater plenty than in the Old, that St. John saw in the vision of the « four and twenty ancients », with « golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of the saints », who « fell down before the Lamb ». (Rev.V.8) Indeed, it appears just as proper, in view of the knowledge which the heavenly spirits have of the affairs of men, that they should intercede for us, as that people on earth should intercede for one another.

And this latter is surely pleasing to God and profitable, else the Apostle of the Gentiles (**St. Paul**) would not have so earnestly recommended it by word and example. God is inclined to do much for favourite servants, living or dead. He has shown this in the case of Moses living; and of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, dead.

It was God Himself Who commanded the friends of Job to go to Job, that he might offer sacrifice and prayers which God absolutely refused from themselves directly. And Job we know was heard. (Job.XLII.7)

Whatever our Protestant friends may have imbibed by education against these truths, they now admit them in practice, if not in theory. Else, why such expressions as « God and His Angels be with you »? And speaking of a deceased parent, they say, « My sainted mother watches over me from Heaven. » These are common expressions in their mouths, and show the power of truth over the fiction, — the cruel fiction of man, which corrupted the clear truth about God to the disturbance of relations, so holy, between the living and the dead.

**8.** But if all this be true of the other blessed, how much more true of God's Virgin Mother Mary.

Leave aside the imaginings — all true, as will be seen hereafter — of those Italian writers who speak in such apparently extravagant language of the wonderful prerogatives of the Madonna. Look at Mary in the bare light of the Bible, — in the light of Reason enlightened by Revelation —, and see what She is: She stands out before us unquestionably as **the Virgin Mother of God.**

Then why, let us ask, a Virgin? Why a Virgin Mother? Why so unusual a miracle? Why? because from Her, and from Her alone, was to

come the Humanity of the living God. In that Humanity man was to be saved. It was, therefore, because of this that the Woman was to be the means of crushing the serpent's head. The nation of the Jews was chosen and exalted above all the other peoples of the earth. Why? Because it was destined to preserve the true religion and to give the Redeemer to the world. But it was through Mary alone that it was to give the Redeemer to the world. The sceptre was not to pass from Juda until a Virgin of its race « *should conceive and bring forth a son whose name should be called Emmanuel — God with us* ». Therefore came all that beautiful imagery which foreshadowed the coming of the « Virgin Daughter of Zion ». Therefore the Church calls Her « the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the honour of Her people ».

We may here pause and consider the wonderful Being which that nation produced. We know with what harmony God **always adapts means** to His Divine ends. The smallest insect is complete for its purpose in the natural order. The same wonderful adaptation exists in the supernatural order. Abraham, Moses, David, Judith, Solomon, Esther, — all were prepared for their missions by supernatural agency. But their missions were diminutive in comparison with that of Mary. They could be, and they were, defiled by sin. She alone never was. Our reason tells us that if God became man at all, He should take His Humanity from the most exalted of His creatures. He loves humility, but not degradation in His own sight, — not sin, not inferior spiritual excellence. His standard of excellence is often different from the standard of excellence set up by His sinning human creatures. It was but meet (**appropriate**) then that the Being destined to give the Humanity which was to be for ever hypostatically united to the Divinity, — which was to form the connecting link between the Creator and man, His creature — should be of the highest order according to His standard. Mary must, therefore, have been wonderfully perfected for Her exalted office. No spiritual excellence should be wanting in that soul, no natural excellence should be wanting in that body, which was to give of its flesh and blood and life, the flesh and the blood and the life of the Humanity of the Great, the Eternal, the Living, and the All-Powerful God. Our reason alone would, therefore, lead us to expect this excellence in the Creature destined to give the Humanity of Christ; and after such an intimate union, destined also to be His most devoted Guardian, His Protectress, His Friend, His Counsellor, in a word, His Mother. Then it is clear that Mary must have been created with at least all the excellence which God had ever given to any one of His creatures. It would be contrary to our ideas of congruity (**harmoniousness**) to think that, at any moment of Her existence, She was inferior to any one of the Seraphim, to even the chief of the heavenly host, St. Michael. If, at the first moment of Her existence, She was not as

great as God could make Her, She was, at least, greater than any work He ever did make, or ever intended to make, excepting of course, the Humanity of His own Son.

9. And this excellence was destined to progress by merit to an extent which, to us, is almost as incomprehensible as the infinite, so far is it practically (**in practice**) beyond the reach of our intelligence. If, as the ablest theologians hold, Mary was endowed with the use of reason at least from the moment of **Her birth**, and, consequently, capable of meriting through the merits of Christ expected, just as did Her fathers in Israel, then how immense must not have been this progress. When any soul is in the state of grace, we know that the increase of sanctifying grace in that soul comes from the perfection with which supernatural work is performed. The soul obtains an increase of sanctifying grace for every one of such works, if performed with perfect intensity of fervour.

St. Thomas Aquinas, whose reasonings are now admired even outside the Catholic Church, teaches us that it is doubled; so that if any work be done with such an intensity of fervour, it obtains a double amount of sanctifying grace for that fervour. If then we compare the first fervour to two, the result will be four; if four, eight; if eight, sixteen; and so on in the same proportion, doubling the amount of grace with the performance of each act. Now it is certain that Mary was without any sin, original or actual — without any imperfection whatever in Her actions. « Thou art all fair, O my beloved, and there is not a spot in Thee », are the words of Solomon, attributed to Her (**Mary**) by the Church. All Her actions were done with at least perfect fervour, if not with a fervour beyond comprehension greater than that of any angel or saint that ever did or ever will exist. Men who make calculation of the increase of money at interest, know that all the wealth of the world could not now pay the accumulation on a pound, had it been lent at ordinary interest in the time of Adam. The same calculators would exhaust their art in vain, to find out the amount of merit the stainless daughter of Jacob realised in a single year, even in a single day of Her earthly existence; for, being as perfect as She was, every act of Her life must have merited a twofold increase of grace.

In a small work of profound learning, used in the Irish College at Rome during a novena in honour of Mary, this fact is put forward in that simple manner common to the writings of St. Liguori, and in so striking a light that it will well bear quoting. « And », the author says, « as Her (Mary's) charity was not retarded in its operation by any negligence or tepidity (which could not be admitted (**put forward**) without doing an injury to the sanctity of the Mother of God), it is clear that She performed each act with all the fervour of which She was capable. Behold then the privileged soul setting out on her career of merit. By the first act that She

performed She doubled the grace received from God. This again was doubled by the next, and went on increasing in the some proportion with all Her succeeding acts. What mind then can conceive the graces She acquired. Supposing Her to have performed wondrous acts only as often as St. Francis de Sales is said to have made “acts of the presence of God” (**a type of prayer acknowledging the presence of God everywhere**) — every quarter of an hour — at the end of five hours She would have acquired graces more than 500,000 times as great as the highest of the Seraphim — supposing the grace of that exalted being to be the grace with which She began Her spiritual life. And if we prolong the calculation to the tenth hour, we shall discover Her to have exceeded the sanctity of this holy spirit (**the Seraphim**) more than five hundred and forty thousand millions of times.

« But what shall we say, if we protract the calculation to the end of the first day? If we continue it for a whole week? If for an entire year? If for ten or twenty years? If for Her entire life?

« What shall we say, if She performed Her acts not merely every quarter of an hour, but every single moment, as divines (**clerics and theologians**) commonly assert? What shall we say, if her first “capital” of Grace was not simply the grace enjoyed by just one angel but by the countless hosts of blessed Spirits? Yes, and of all the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins — of all angels and saints put together. For it is written, Her foundations are in the holy mountains, Yes, « the Grace of the Virgin », says the learned Suarez<sup>1</sup>, « in the first moment of her sanctification was more intense than the last moment in which men and angels are consumed. » Ah! no wonder, the pious reader will conclude, that the Church should acknowledge her incompetency (**inability**) to extol this Holy Virgin in adequate terms, « by what praises to proclaim Thy praises, I know not ».

**10.** There is nothing at all extravagant in these words. They are but the reflex of (**representative of**) what all the saints of God have taught of Mary, and of Mary when She was destined to be, but was not yet the Mother of God. The Angel Gabriel, as tradition tells us, and as the Scriptures have it, giving Mary the first salutation, showed the truth of this. « *Hail! full of grace, the Lord is with Thee* ». These words are used, we must remember, before She became the Mother of God. She was, even at that early moment, far above all angels in merit. Formed by the power of God, She was, by exaltation (**what was conferred on Her**), and acquirement (**what She earned**), not unworthy to be the Mother of God. But the moment that event took place, imagination (**our ability to imagine or comprehend**) loses itself in the endeavour to follow the

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<sup>1</sup> Francisco Suárez (1548-1617), Spanish Jesuit Philosopher.

greatness not only of Her dignity, but even of the increased immensity of Her merit. Let us see this.

**11.** With the formation of the Humanity of Christ within Her, Her Crucifixion commenced — a Crucifixion so severe and continued that, to bear it, needed all Her powers (**both**) conferred and acquired. She had to suffer for Her Son in the keen agony caused to Her by the suspicions of St. Joseph. Her perfection prevented Her from speaking one word in Her defence. She endured the trial until God Himself was moved to liberate Her.

She suffered, as we all often think upon, on the weary journey and the terrible treatment She was subjected to when coming to Bethlehem where Christ was born. Scarcely had that hard trial passed when blows fell crushingly upon Her young Mother's head and heart. It was joy to bring Her little Infant to the Temple of His Father, but it was the load of a three and thirty years long sorrow to hear the prophecy of Simeon in His regard. The sword of sorrow destined always for Her, hung over Her head and over the head of Her Child, and every day, and every hour, and every moment, excruciated Her soul, until at last it pierced that soul with a keenness of pain never felt by a mere mortal before or since. It was joy to see, in the persons of the Kings of the East, the adoration of the nations about to be redeemed; joy to find the sorrows of Her suffering Spouse lightened by the relief they brought, when none in Bethlehem were found to give a helping hand in the time of his bitter destitution; but, again, it was woe to be compelled to flee over the desert leading to Egypt, while the children of the mothers of Bethlehem were being massacred in order to reach the very Child no mother in Bethlehem seemed willing to receive.

Hers were always the sorrows of the poor. She had to taste the cup of woe reserved to the widow without means for her orphan. She had to bear the grief of the mother whose only child is consigned to a public death of shame and pain by public authority. In fact, there is no agony, no want, no disgrace incidental to human misery, which that singularly holy, that perfectly innocent and most elevated of all creatures, — as we have seen She was, even before the Incarnation had been consummated with Her consent, — had not to endure, and, in a degree so intense, that it surpassed in an eminent manner all human woe. This continued even after Christ had ascended to heaven; for tradition tells how lovingly and how often She lingered over every spot where He had spilled His blood in the Passion; She was still, as it were, continuing Her own Crucifixion, until the moment came when, like Him, She too closed Her mortal eyes in death.

By His power She arose from the tomb and was assumed to the very highest heavens, where, placed above all other creatures, She

continues Her true office of Mother of the Living, — the office of the Second Eve.

**12.** If it surpasses our powers of calculation to reach the extent of merit obtained by Mary in a single year before she became the Mother of God, and when She was only the « Vessel of Election » (**the Chosen One**) destined for so great a dignity, what can we say of a single day's merit after she became God's Mother? What can we even imagine of such a merit, elevated by intense sufferings endured without a shadow of imperfection for the sake of God alone? Every moment extended that merit far beyond human conception. Every moment elevated Mary higher and higher above the dignity of the highest beings created; and there was a deep reason for all this.

What a mortification for Lucifer who would (**wanted to**) make himself like unto God. He would « place his seat above the stars and be like unto the Most High ». He was cast down to the depths of hell, — from the mountain of eternal joy and light, to the deepest abyss of pain and darkness. He had his revenge in the fall of Eve. But now another Eve, the perfect model of humility, — the daughter of the sinner Eve, of the sinner David, of the sinner Ruth, of the sinner Tamar, of sinners in every generation — passes before him, conquers him, and crushes him. Ascending from this little earth, resplendent with a glory which even he with all his natural powers cannot comprehend, — so far does it extend, so great is its immensity; — She is placed for Her humility where he would place himself in his pride, — « above the stars », — above the stars not merely of our firmament, but above all the stars of heaven, above the Angels and Archangels, the Principalities and the Powers, above the Cherubim and Seraphim, and all other beings created in holiness, brightness, happiness, and beauty to adore the Great and Living God.

Lucifer, who desired to be equal to the Most High, is made the most low; while She, the most lowly, a fact which She Herself tells us that God had regarded (**took account of**) in exalting Her, is indeed elevated near the Most High, — so exalted, so immense in elevation, and power, and glory, that no tongue can tell the extent of Her magnificence and power. There is nothing to prevent us from believing that, in consequence of the good which She, above all creatures in heaven, still continues to operate on earth, Her merit and Her glory will advance, externally at least, until time shall be no more, « Who is that » asks Her ancestor, Solomon « Who progresseth as the morning advancing, fair as the moon, bright as the Sun, formidable as an army set in battle array »? It is Mary, the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God. The Light of the world. The Enemy of Lucifer. She who crushed the serpent's head. The Mother and Giver of Good Counsel.

13. A love for Jesus Christ, God Incarnate as He is, an ordinary appreciation of His Divinity, a calm survey of what it has pleased the Adorable Trinity to arrange for His Incarnation, will lead any reasonable Christian to view Mary the Virgin Mother of God in this light. And viewing Her in this light, it will be easy to account for all the love and devotion which Catholics now, and in all times past, have shown to Her. The words of Her Son are objected (**are put forward as an objection**), « For whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother. » But who amongst all the friends and servants of Christ ever did « the will of His Father in heaven » with a fidelity at all comparable to Mary? Whom can we conceive amongst creatures, suffering more for God, serving God better than His own Virgin Mother? It was not then a simple office of dignity, however high, that the Second Eve held; it was one of service, the greatest, the most painful and long continued ever suffered, and suffered purely for God's sake.

It would be impious to suppose Her otherwise than deeply concerned for the cause of all this, — man's soul. Her love for Her Son, Her interest in all that concerned Her Son, none can call into doubt. Since then that Son has so loved man as to lay down His life in such torments for his salvation, how can we suppose Mary indifferent to that supreme work? An ordinary good human being, a saint say, is never found without charity for his fellow men. To be a saint, he must love his fellow creatures next to (**his love for**) God Himself. As the love of God increases in any one so does the love of man, until like St. Vincent de Paul, like St. John of Matha and millions of others, he thinks it a happiness to expend all his strength, his means, his very life for the salvation, and even for what is infinitely less, the alleviation of the sufferings, — even of some small temporal sufferings — of his human fellow creatures. He advances in love until like a St. Francis Xavier, like a St. John of God and others, he will kiss, yea, even suck the putrid sores of the diseased, to lighten their passing sorrows. And this is most pleasing to God, Who never fails to reward most copiously any act of charity, no matter how small, done for our neighbour suffering from any pain whatever in mind or body. Can we, therefore, believe that God's Mother, so far in advance of every other creature in the deepest love of God, could be less solicitous to do what is pleasing to Him than any of His saints? That She is less in Her charity for Her neighbour — for man — than all these saints put together? We cannot. And then, if an ordinary angel or the ordinary blessed spirit of a saved man in heaven, takes such interest, demonstrates such charity for us as to rejoice at every conversion, — whenever such conversion happens, and in the case of every sinner, no matter how steeped in guilt — how can we suppose God's Mother, God's

tender Mother, to be indifferent? Surely to suppose such a thing would be not only contrary to reason but would be cruel and impious.

**14.** But now when we know it to be the truth that the blessed in heaven reigning with Christ both can, and do, know what passes here below; when we know that their intercession has power with God for us; when we reflect again that **prayer**, in the case of adults having the use of reason, is so necessary that, without it, God will not grant the pardon of sin, nor in fact give salvation at all; then indeed we must be foolish if we do not make use of **prayer**, not only to God, but to His saints, knowing their interest in us; and knowing too, that without our **prayer** to them, — thereby fulfilling the absolute requirements of God — they will no more help us than will God Himself. Hence the benefit of applying to them, by supplication, and the other forms of prayer in use amongst us.

But where in heaven, under God, can we look for charity to us, or intelligence or power, greater than in Mary? The truth is that the Blessed Virgin is to us one of the most invaluable mercies of Jesus Christ. He loves us with an everlasting love, and this everlasting love was displayed not only in dying for us, in giving us all that existed in His very Being, but finally in giving us His Own Ever Blessed Mother.

**15.** This He did upon the Cross. She was the last of His gifts, given only before He surrendered His own soul, for our sake, to His Eternal Father. *Ecce Mater Tua* — Son behold thy Mother, were His last words to us. *Ecce Filius tuus* — Mother behold thy son — were his last words to Mary. Her heart, before so full of compassion and charity, now opened with an almost limitless love for every human being, all the more intense as the misery of that human being may be the greater. Boundless must be Her love for souls, purchased as they were by the Blood of Her Son. Would She willingly let that Blood be spilt in vain?

We have seen that Her office is to crush the serpent's head. Is She Herself ignorant of that office? Is She indifferent to the acts of the infernal enemy of Her Child? Will She, if She can help it, leave anything undone to crush his efforts everywhere, and in every soul until the end? Her mighty merits were not for Herself alone. She was certainly holy, certainly full of grace, before the Incarnation of Her Son. That immense ocean of merit, beyond human comprehension, which She acquired after **(the Incarnation)**, though indeed increasing Her own glory, was for **(the benefit of)** all of us. If we sinned, God could look upon one of us at least Who had never sinned, and Who had served Him with such a fidelity that Her prayer, joined to the supplication of any poor sinner on earth, would be powerful to move God's mercy to accept that sinner's return and to save a soul so helped by the power of Mary. Nor is it wonderful **(exceptional)** that the very grace to return may be obtained by Mary's prayer. God has made Her a mother who thinks only of her child



and of the pain she endured in bearing him. That Mary bore Jesus without pain is true, but She bore us in an agony such as no other mother ever endured. In this respect only, had She more children than Jesus. She brought forth all of us in the travail she endured at the foot of the Cross. It is incredible (**not plausible**) that, if She can prevent it, She will permit the devil to have one of these souls from out Her hands. It is impossible that it can be so without (**it being**) that soul's own fault. Oh the value of "the little" (**that we do**) that enables Mary to save the sinner! — the value of that "persevering little"! Who can estimate it?

**16.** From what we have hitherto said, and without quoting a line from a single Catholic Doctor, we can easily comprehend all that the Catholic Church teaches and encourages with regard to devotion to Our Lady. We can understand how St. Bernard, in his love, called Her, « *Our life, our sweetness, and our hope* », — meaning that, practically (**it is an actual fact that**), through Her boundless influence and immense charity, She is so according to the desires and intentions of Her Son. We can also see how true it is that every effort that we make to pay Her honour goes entirely to Him through the most beloved, most faithful, most honoured, and most meritorious of all creatures, — His own Mother. And thus we come to see that every little flower placed upon Her altar by even the tiny hands of an infant, is a sweet odour of the love of Jesus offered to Him because of the tender, ineffable love His Mother inspires. We come to understand that the poetry and eloquence of Catholic writers, who compare Our Lady to everything beautiful and grand and fair in nature and in grace, are but, after all, telling a part of the truth regarding Mary, Whose greatness and glory are above, not only what their pens and tongues do say, but also far above what their minds can conceive though She is a creature infinitely under God in every attribute.

We come finally to see the virtue and the wisdom existing in Sanctuaries like that of Genazzano. We come to understand why Mary's charity, through the power of Her Son, is able to give sight to the blind; health to the weak; even life to the dead; help to all that need it; why it is that She interests Herself in whatever concerns us here below; why She can pour consolation into our troubled spirits; defend us from our enemies; direct us in all our affairs little and great; and finally and above all, give us that wisdom, strength, and light, — in one word (**in a nutshell**), that spirit of Good Counsel, which infallibly leads us through all the ways that we are to walk in life, to a happy death and to the assured hope of seeing Her glory in heaven for ever.

**17.** This then is the devotion which these pages are written to advance. Never were the times on earth so circumstanced as to need it more. (**Mons. Dillon was writing in 1883**). The devil is deceiving the

world by folly. The time is come that has been foretold, when he is unloosed to seduce the nations. Any calm observer can see that the world is at this hour in positive delirium. Where amongst pagan nations (**of old**), could we find vices more apparently (**obviously**) diabolical than those which now prevail among the civilised nations of Europe? When before was there a propagandism so fierce, immoral, and satanical as that advanced by secret societies, by the Communism, Socialism, Nihilism, Knownothingism, and other deadly organisations which aim at the destruction of Christianity.

It is the old temptation of the serpent and the most effectual for his designs against man. — « Ye shall be as Gods - *knowing* good from evil. Ye shall not die. » « All the empires of the earth I will give thee... if *falling down* thou wilt adore me ». The world, inspired by the Tempter, will do all things for the needy if the needy accept Atheism and hatred for God and for religion. If the child needs education, the world will educate him but only at the same price. If the poor are to be fed, the orphan housed, the naked clothed, the sick cared for, the imprisoned comforted, it must be still to the exclusion of religion, and the acceptance of Atheism and antagonism to God.

If the public man is placed in pay or power, he must make profession in some way or other of hostility to faith in Christ, — a hostility never so acceptable as when it is complete. If youths are to be advanced, it must be by Atheism in universities where hatred, open hatred, and persecuting contempt for religion, are made fashionable. The same sad qualities are also the surest recommendation to (**those seeking**) after employment and promotion. With a strange unity and fatality in every land, all that is of earth — fashion, the press, public opinion, et alia, — all have been turned adversely to religion. The world is hostile, contemptuous, or at best contemptuously silent about the things of God. Impurity is deprived of its hideousness and, to a large extent, of its legal criminality. It is practised unblushingly. The “**pride of life**”<sup>1</sup> is rampant; and every day would seem to disclose the times which St. Paul speaks of as « the last ».<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following is copied from <https://www.gotquestions.org/pride-of-life.html> - The phrase “pride of life” is found only once in the Bible, in **1 John 2:16**, but the concept of the pride of life, especially as it is linked with the “lust of the eyes” and the “lust of the flesh,” appears in two more significant passages of Scripture—the temptation of Eve in the Garden and the temptation of Christ in the wilderness (**Matthew 4:8-10**). The pride of life can be defined as anything that is “of the world,” meaning anything that leads to arrogance, ostentation, pride in self, presumption, and boasting. John makes it clear that anything that produces the pride of life comes from a love of the world and “if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (**1 John 2:15**).

<sup>2</sup> Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon - There was hardly ever an era in the history of the world and of the Church when somebody was telling us, most emphatically, that the then state of the world was so terrible that “the Last Times” were clearly upon us. They were all incorrect. St. Paul was incorrect; Mons. Dillon was incorrect about this. My personal opinion is that “the Last Times” are many thousands of years away, if not tens of thousands of years. We should not be trying to convert

18. In these sad days above all other days, it is proper to meet the efforts — the last supreme efforts — of the devil, by the power of Her who crushed them from the beginning and will crush them to the end, — to lift up, for the benefit of the faithful, as high on the earth as we can, the standard of Our Lady of Good Counsel; for the necessity of having recourse, in such evil times, to Her Whom the Church of God is never weary of putting before us as the Seat of Wisdom and the giver of Good Counsel, must now be apparent to all. These are the special qualities by which Mary, the Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Ghost, is able to confound all the designs of Satan, however deeply laid and however carefully executed.

We have seen that She not only progresses from the glory of the morning of Her creation, pure, bright, and spotless as it was, to that of perfect day, « *fair as the moon and bright as the sun*, » but also that She is « *dreadful as an army set in battle array* ». She has from God a universal and constant mission to accomplish. The pride of the devil is mental (**in his mind**). He confides in (**relies on**) the subtlety, in the deceit and cunning of his devices, in his knowledge, in his experience, in his power, in summary, in his intelligence. And in this, he is naturally as great as when he was first created. « *Non diminuta sunt in daemonibus* » writes St. Thomas « *bona naturalia* ». All the natural faculties the devils ever had they still have, although damned. And their power is great. Our wrestling says St. Paul is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers. It is against those who once had place amongst all the choirs of the heavenly host, whose numbers are great, whose concert (**uniformity of purpose**) to do man harm is perfect, and who are all under the orders of the prince of darkness, who has the faculty of making even his earthly victims (**those of us who are under his sway**) to be « *wiser in their generation than the children of light* ». What other power could call into existence, so universally, the forces of secret machinations, which at this moment, in every country, strive with complete unity of action and identical malignity to ruin both in mass and in detail (**both collectively and individually**) the souls redeemed by Christ.

The devil is fierce, « *knowing that now there is but little time* », and therefore his forces are more active and more united than ever. More than ever, at this moment his agents preach « the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life »; and, more than ever before, victims (**under his sway**) are made by him. Never in all past generations were men found so completely diabolical, so perfectly open in their hatred for

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people towards God by suggesting that there is some imminent doom facing us. That approach seems to me to be close to gimmickry. The true way to God involves understanding and love in the context of how things are now.

God and of all that belongs to God. Nothing is left undone to accomplish designs so completely satanic. All heresies are reproduced. All forms of persecution are re-introduced. The advance of men in natural knowledge, the discoveries of scientists, the unveiling of some little of the infinite riches and knowledge in the Creator, — all are turned against the Author and Giver of these and « *of every other good and perfect gift* ».

The very same pride and folly that damned the devil and his associates, is now clearly visible amongst the children of men. « *Ye shall be as gods* ». Break the Creator's law and ye shall know good from evil. Fear nothing, enjoy the present. God, it is true, says otherwise. Experience and instinct may say the same. But the Tempter and the temptation prevail. Then there is no death, temporal or eternal, for the followers of sin or the votaries of pleasure to fear. « *No, you shall not die the death.* » Enjoy the world, destroy order, property, government, ideas of sin and punishment, whatever, in a word, incommodes (**inconveniences**) you. Seek every enjoyment, above all, voluptuous enjoyment. Remove whatever stands in your path. There is no soul, no sin, no punishment. Look to self. Be careless of all others. Destroy without scruple whoever stands in your way: a man is no more than a beast. Such is the preaching now amongst all the organised hosts of Satan, and nations and individuals bow down before it. Who can save them? **Mary the Mother of Good Counsel**. She, as the Church teaches, is destined to destroy all errors throughout the whole world. Who can meet the dark designs of Satan? She alone Who was destined to crush his head, — that head, the seat and centre of all his hellish astuteness and design.

**19.** We cannot place too much stress upon this quality (**or office**) of Our Lady. Advancing always « *fair as the moon, bright as the sun, formidable as an army in battle array* ». Now more than ever Her Counsel, Her protection, Her knowledge, Her power, (**given to Her by God,**) are required by us. And now, more than ever, should all, both pastors and parents, have recourse to Her as the Seat of heavenly Wisdom. By acting to extend devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, they secure an infallible guide, a city of refuge, a tower of strength against the face of the enemy, for all those committed to their keeping. How blessed to explain this devotion! « *By me, kings reign, and the framers of laws decree judgments* ». Those who are vigilant, who take the trouble to keep close to the Mother of Good Counsel, find Her in all Her advancing beauty and strength. She loves those who love Her, and gives eternal life to those who make Her known. God grant then, that Her name and Her glory may not cease to advance, until every part of the Church on earth becomes filled with devotion to the Mother of Good Counsel;

**until every diocese** shall move for that which many already possess, Her Proper Mass and Feast and Office, **that** so the priests and their people may together have cognisance of the desire of the Church to have Mary honoured as Mother of Good Counsel;

**until Her Image is in every house**, **that** so fathers and mothers, and sons and daughters, may advert to the dangers that surround them in these disastrous days;

**until Her sweet likeness holding the Infant Jesus to Her breast is placed in every Catholic school**, **that** so the young from their earliest days may draw from Mary that Counsel they are so certain to need throughout life;

**until all Catholics have near them and with them Her beautiful appealing features**, **that** so they may, in their every vicissitude, have recourse to Mary, and ask in prayer at Her feet the strength and light to guide them through all the ills of life, to the rest and joy of a happy eternity.

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## Chapter XXV - APPENDIX

### THE ALTAR OF THE CRUCIFIXION

The Church of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genazzano, has a side altar over which is painted a life-sized fresco of the Crucifixion of Our Lord, which has a most interesting and even miraculous history. The painting is very ancient and belonged, probably, to the church which existed before the buildings of Petruccia were commenced. It was, consequently, held in great veneration by the people of Genazzano. After the church of Petruccia was completed it occupied the space at the epistle side (**right as seen by the congregation**) of the high altar, corresponding to the space at the opposite side, in which stands the Sanctuary of the miraculous Image itself. In the church which succeeded that of Petruccia, it occupied the same position, but was elevated to a greater height in the wall on which it always stood so as not to lose its proper place over the altar when the pavement of the church was raised to the present level.

Its strange history is this. In the year 1540, the Prince Colonna of the period, rebelled against Pope Paul III upon a question of the taxation of salt. The Pontifical troops, in consequence, besieged the principal fortresses of the Colonnas and, amongst others, that of Genazzano, which they took and held for a considerable period. It happened that, while quartered in the town, a party of these soldiers, after the manner of their class, betook themselves to gambling and drinking. One of them proved unfortunate. He lost his all. Maddened by his loss and excited by wine, he commenced to blaspheme in a terrible manner both God and His saints. Leaving his companions, and seized by some satanic frenzy, he entered the neighbouring church of Santa Maria, near the old entrance of which the life-sized figure of the Crucifixion stood. He gazed at the sacred fresco for some time, but instead of being moved to repentance by its pleading sorrow, he became still more furious; and, as if his God had been the cause of his misfortune in play, he drew his sword and struck at the Crucified figure of Our Saviour. He made one tremendous blow at the face, another at the breast, and a third at the legs of the image. Those who witnessed this diabolical act were filled with horror, which was all the more increased by the miracle which followed. As if these wounds had been inflicted on the living Body of Our Lord, blood streamed from every one of them, and even covered the sword of the miscreant who caused them. Several of his fellow soldiers had witnessed this insane sacrilege, and after the astonishment which succeeded its perpetration had subsided,

they at once determined to punish their wretched companion, who, far from showing any signs of repentance at the sight of such a miracle, had sought safety in flight. They followed and overtook him in the very piazza where he had lost his money in play and there, it is said, they cut him to pieces with their swords.

That was the history of the occurrence as given by De Orgio, Buonanno, and others. But this writer has heard another version of the soldier's fate from an old Father of the Augustinians. It is that the unhappy man escaped the death he so justly merited, repented, and ended a holy and penitential life as an Augustinian lay brother. However this may be, the sword with which he struck the sacred Image is still in existence and carefully preserved in the church. It bent of itself in three places almost as soon as it had struck the sacred figure, and never could be straightened after. It is therefore kept with great care, in a glass case near the altar of the Crucifixion, as a perpetual record of the miracle.

The altar of the Crucifixion, after so great and unusual a miracle, has become, of course, an object of special interest to the pilgrims to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel, and to all others who frequent the church of Santa Maria in Genazzano. Canon Bacci did much to ornament it in the last century (1700s); and at the present moment, when the whole church is being decorated and filled with valuable frescoes, the altar of the Crucifixion has been embellished anew and surrounded with figures of Our Lord at the Pillar, Our Lord Crowned with Thorns, and other suitable paintings, at the expense of Cardinal Martinelli, the brother of the present Prior of the Augustinians in Genazzano. The Holy See has enriched this altar with special indulgences. It is a privileged altar every Friday of the year for all who celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on it. Every Friday also, the community chant before it the *Vexilla Regis* and the prayer *Ante Oculos*. It may be here mentioned, that in 1688, by order of Msgr. Colonna, the soldier's sword was straightened in his presence by the smith, Andrew Barbarano, who used fire and hammer for the purpose. This, however, was no sooner accomplished than, in the presence of all, it instantly returned to its original bent position which it retains to this day. An inscription underneath the case containing this remarkable weapon, gives its history as we have narrated it, as follows : -

/cont.

DISCITE IVSTITIAM  
MONITI NEC TEMNERE DIVOS.  
CVM NVMEROSA MILITVM COHORS IN HOC  
GENESTANI CASTRO MORARETVR  
TEMPORE PONTIFICATVS PAVLI III.  
IMPIVS QVIDAM MILES,  
ADVERSO LVDI EVENTV,  
DEVVM, AC SANCTISSIMAM VIRGINEM  
EXECRANS : HVC INGRESSVS,  
IN EIVS FILII CRVCIFIXI SANCTAM IMAGINEM,  
E REGIONE OPPOSITAM,  
MVLTOTIES ENSE DISTRICTO, EFFVSOQVE  
SANGVINE COPIOSO IRRVIT.  
A COMMILITONIBVS CONCISSVS,  
PCENAS MERITO LVIT.  
ENSIS AVTEM IN DEPICTAM FORMAM  
MIRACVLOSE RETORTVS  
IN HVIVS ECCLESIE SACRARIO  
AD PERPETVAM REI MEMORIAM ASSERVATVR

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## Chapter XXVI - APPENDIX<sup>1</sup>

### SAN PIO

1. Circumstances favouring the extension of the devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel - **(Four specific circumstances)**. - 2. Purchase of San Pio for the Irish Augustinians by Prior Patrick Glynn - **(As a)** destination. - 3. Situation of its buildings - **(Beautiful countryside)**. - 4. Its grounds, the site of the Imperial Antonine Villa - **(Excellent water supply)**. - 5. Ancient aqueducts **(in the vicinity)** - Their uses for baths and fish-ponds. - 6. Size of the **(Antonine)** Villa - Balmy air - Distinguished occupants. - 7. Genazzano, the Palace of the Colonnas etc. built from **(the)** ruins **(of the Antonine Villa)**. - 8. The villa of Ovid adjoining **(the)** grounds **(of the Antonine Villa)** - His banishment decreed because of occurrences which took place there - Æneas Sylvius (Pius II) weeps over the ruins. - 9. Pius II, through Father Philip da Massa, founds San Pio **(in the fifteenth century)**. - 10. Reasons for calling the Convent by **(the)** name **(of Saint Pius)** - Oddo Colonna, Pope Martin V, builds the church of St. Nicholas and floors St. John Lateran **(with materials)** from the ruins **(of the Antonine Villa - Pope Pius II decides, during his visit, that the Convent should be named after the martyr Pope Saint Pius)**. - 11. The Capuchins settled **(somewhere)** in **(the ruins)** before the Conventuals. - The Architect of San Pio. - Plan of its church and monastery. - 12. The Conventuals hold San Pio until the coming of the French under Bonaparte - Suppression - Return. - 13. Final suppression. - 14. Circumstances of its purchase by Prior Glynn. - **(Use of property for agriculture under Italian Government ownership. - Low cost of Purchase. - Low cost of Restoration. - Modern appearance)**. - 15. The Irish Augustinian students there, a guard of honour to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel. - 16. Its alumni destined to carry the Gospel abroad. - 17. The words of Leo XIII to the Bishop of Sandhurst and Prior Glynn. - Irish generosity. - Subscriptions. - Altars. - Article from Dublin Freeman.

1. We have said in the introduction to this work that, at the present moment, many circumstances connected with the Sanctuary of Genazzano indicated very clearly that devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel was destined soon for an immense extension and more especially in those many countries where the English language is spoken, and where, up to the present, the devotion, even in name, is little known.

In the first place, the Church of Santa Maria, the condition of which seemed in the days of Petruccia to have occasioned the Miraculous Translation of the Sacred Image from Scutari, is approaching final

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:**- In the printed (1884) version of this book that I own the numbering of some of the sections of this Chapter included some errors, e.g. there were two sections given as number 5. This, in turn, threw out of kilter almost all of the subsequent section numbers. I have re-numbered the sections to match the Contents given on this page. I have also expanded some of the material in the Contents, the original of which seems to me to have been rushed.

completion. Its solemn dedication is fixed for the September of the present year (**1884**). In the second place a large number of prelates, priests, and people from every English Speaking country, now come to visit the Shrine. In the third place, railway communication and hotel accommodation, the want of which hitherto made a pilgrimage to Genazzano so difficult, are upon the point of being supplied. And finally, English Speaking visitors are made at home there, by the fact that the Irish Augustinians have established themselves in the locality.

2. Good fortune, or rather a merciful interposition of Providence, has enabled the Very Revd. P. J. Glynn, the Prior of the Irish Augustinian College in Rome, to come into possession of the venerable church and convent of San Pio, built by the Conventual Franciscans in the Pontificate of Pius II (**1400s**), upon the site of the famous Imperial Antonine Villa, which we have described in the chapters about Genazzano. The generosity of the Irish people has enabled Prior Glynn, not only to purchase, but to improve this fine establishment, and to such an extent that it is now one of the very first (**foremost**) of its kind in Italy. Moreover, by the desire of his Holiness Leo XIII, expressed to the Prior and the Bishop of Sandhurst, at an audience in the January of this year (**1884**), it is to be devoted mainly to the work of educating members of the Augustinian Order, not only for Ireland, but also for Great Britain, America, and especially for Australia. It will, therefore, soon have a community speaking the English language, and acquainted with every country from which English Speaking visitors come. This is an advantage, not easy to overestimate, for such visitors in a foreign land; and the utility of which, as connected with the Shrine of Our Lady in Genazzano, is in many ways very great. As a work, therefore, about that Sanctuary (**intended for English Speaking people**) would be incomplete without some notice of this valuable institution (**San Pio**), we shall give our readers a description of it and also, before we finish, of the illustrious province of the Augustinians to which it belongs.

3. And first, with regard to the material structure of this convent. It stands on the fine road leading from Genazzano to San Vito, about ten minutes walk from the Sanctuary. It is splendidly situated, not in, but overlooking the town and the ancient castle of the Colonnas. The building itself is certainly the most beautiful one to be seen in the country around Genazzano, nestling as it does in its groves and vineyards amidst the most enchanting scenery of Latium. Its southern elevation corresponds to the façade of the palace of the Caesars, which once occupied this location and the location of its grounds. The ruins of the same palace, called the Antonine Villa, also furnished the materials with which it was originally constructed.

4. This palace had, as we have seen, a most interesting history. It is impossible to determine who first selected its position, or who first possessed it. The prospect from it was charming, the air balmy and salubrious, and the surrounding soil very fertile. It was always famous for its wine, and for a magnificent supply of the purest water. In the glens on either side run now, as ever, streams supplied by the many springs with which the hill itself and its adjacent slopes abound. None knew the value of water both for use and ornament better than the Romans. Rome, with its magnificent aqueducts, is itself a striking example of what its ancient inhabitants did to obtain an abundant supply of the precious liquid for domestic and public purposes. But even in the ordinary country villa-residence of a rich patrician, not to speak about the residence of an Emperor, no pains were spared to render the water supply perfect. The ruins of the aqueducts which penetrated the slopes adjacent to this residence of the Claudii, and which ran for miles into the very bowels of the mountains, tapping on their way every spring of value and bringing an unfailing supply to the palace and the grounds, are well worthy of the inspection of the visitor. One of them, repaired by the care of the Colonna family, has supplied the town of Genazzano for years with the sweetest water. The others lose themselves far off in the mountains and, here and there, their broken fragments still do good work in supplying the thirsty peasant with cool, refreshing beverage, even in the driest seasons.

5. The writer has been curious enough to go over the ruins of these old aqueducts with the venerable Vicar Forain of Genazzano, the Very Rev. Don Filippo Vannutelli, who knows every divergence of their courses, and through whose family property several branches of them run. The masonry seems as strong as the day they were first formed, and the water passages as large as that which brings the celebrated Acqua Marcia to Rome. The magnitude of these works alone indicates the splendour of the villa they were formed to supply. And not a drop of the precious liquid was permitted to be wasted. After supplying the baths and all the wants of the establishment, the stream ran to a vast basin, the site of which is still called the « *pescara* » or fish-pond, formed by throwing a strong dam across the glen to the south of the residence. Thence the overflow passed on to the base of the hill where it supplied a large lake. Here the public baths were erected, the ruins of which yet attest their former grandeur. The hillsides and the undulating slopes surrounding, were laid out in sacred groves befitting the worship of Robigo and of Flora or Venus, to whose impure rites we have already alluded. The large mound upon which Genazzano now stands, formed the gardens where the famous « roses of Palestrina » were carefully cultivated; and, stretching away towards the plain, was the wide flat upon which took place the other

games, the chariot races, and all the sports in which the Romans delighted.

6. The Villa was so vast that its buildings extended from the garden wall of San Pio to the grotto of Buonanni, nearly half a mile distant. Successive Emperors improved it. Tiberius, whose paternal property it was, recovered from a severe illness in its pure and balmy air. The wife of Adrian is said to have greatly loved it. It was used by other members of the Imperial family; but most of all, as we have seen, by the adopted sons of Antoninus Pius from whom it took the name, ultimately, of the Antonine Villa.

7. It was from the ruins of this Villa that the town of Genazzano, as well as San Pio, was built. Its carved stones, its statuary, its mosaic work, all contributed to form the palaces, churches, and private dwellings of the little city. Its rare marble columns still adorn the castle of the Colonnas and the Sanctuary of the Madonna. A solitary granite shaft with an exquisitely carved capital, alone remains on the old site and sustains the refectory roof of San Pio. In a garden belonging to Don Filippo Vannutelli, there is a large table formed of most beautiful mosaic work, found recently at a depth of forty feet from the surface of the vineyard of the Convent of San Pio. This depth shows the height to which the ruins of the Villa, after contributing to so many buildings elsewhere, elevated the locality.

8. It is not our intention here, to inquire as to whether or not the Palace, the magnificence of which is attested by these ruins, was so much frequented by its new master Augustus, as Archpriest Senni and other historians would have us believe. Senni certainly brings an immense amount of learned research and, it may be added, of ingenuity, to show that the Emperor both enlarged and extended the establishment to make it worthy of the Imperial court, and capable of accommodating his Praetorian guards and retinue.

He further informs us that (**large**) numbers of rich Romans, with that instinct which leads the patrician and the aspiring citizen to follow the court, contrived, by buying out the old proprietors, to have their villeggiatura within easy reach of the Imperial Palace; and that, amongst others, the Poet Ovid, a professional courtier, had, adjoining the land of the Emperor, the villa which he so pathetically mourned over in immortal verse while in exile. There, Senni says, the Poet became a witness, if not the guilty party himself, in the scandal which caused Augustus to banish both his daughter (or granddaughter) and Ovid to different and widely distant parts of his Empire. The writer, again through the kindness of Don Filippo Vannutelli, visited the location of this villa of Ovid. Certainly, no more beautiful locality could be found in Italy for a Poet to dwell in. There, one may see the mountains, the trees, and the rural

objects of enjoyment which he described so graphically while in Pontus. It is near the via Claudia and is very likely to be how Senni represents it. But, however the controversy about that villa may be decided, it is certain that where San Pio stands a majestic villa once existed; and it is equally certain that its ruins were used and designated as we have described. Moreover, notwithstanding the devastation of its buildings by the Colonnas, many splendid remains subsisted as late as the lifetime of Pope Pius II who visited them, and who wept over a desolation which he thought should have been a restoration. This Pope was, as we have already stated, the celebrated Æneas Sylvius, who did so much to cause the renaissance of arts and literature in his day.

9. It is to Pius II that we owe the existence of San Pio. How this came to pass, and how he visited the ruins happened thus. As we have said elsewhere, Pius II was one of the first (**finest**) classical scholars of his age. He was also a most prolific writer. The fame, however, which he acquired as simple Æneas Sylvius, was lost in the immensity of the Pontifical dignity. Yet he never forgot the worthy (**notable person**), and was amongst the best patrons of learned men that ever lived. One of the most erudite of the Conventual Franciscans of his time, Father Philip da Massa, had great influence with him, and used it as a true monk should. He obtained permission from the Pope to build two convents, the one at Palombara and the other upon the ruins of the Antonine Villa. To these houses, Pius II granted all the privileges of the Franciscans by a Bull bearing the date October 25th 1458. The Pontiff was naturally interested in both institutions; and upon having to visit Subiaco, on the occasion of the descent of Charles of Anjou upon Italy, he determined to return to Rome by way of the ruins of the Antonine Villa, and of Cave and Palestrina.

10. Senni gives a detailed account of this visit, and of the reception prepared for the Pope and his court by Prince Anthony Colonna. Pius II did not rest at the castle. He preferred to spend the time at his disposal at the Convent which, by then, in 1461, must have been fully built. The ruins of such as the Antonine Villa were still, at that time, extensive and magnificent. And this too, notwithstanding the action of Pope Martin V (Oddo Colonna) a native of Genazzano. This latter Pontiff loved his little native city much, and he greatly embellished it, but it was at the expense of the Villa as a source of building and other materials. He floored (**provided with a floor**), in mosaic and marble, the church of San Nicolo, in which he had been baptised, with the mosaics and artistic ornamentations of this old palace of the Caesars. Further still, he found, in its remains, sufficient marble to floor, as we find it floored at the present day (**1884**), the whole of the basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome.

Long years before, the rare marbles, the pillars of jasper and nero-bianco, and the more precious stones, such as those which decorate the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Good Counsel, were taken from the ruins of the Villa. The numerous palaces of the Colonnas were full of them, and the more perfect statuary of the villa was scattered through Italy. Nevertheless, there was yet much to be seen. The perfection of the various aqueducts, the natural beauty of the situation, the broken statuary, the pillars and mosaics still existing, all affected Pius II deeply. He remembered that, however the Antonines may have been defective, they were immeasurably superior to the majority of the pagan Emperors of Rome and, as simple rulers, superior even to many Christian ones. Yet they too had persecuted, or had permitted the persecution of, the Church. It was under Antoninus Pius, a man milder by far to the Christians than Marcus Aurelius, that St. Pius I had suffered martyrdom. The thought, therefore, came into the Pope's mind, to dedicate the new church and convent to his only namesake amongst his predecessors. He, therefore, willed that it should be called St. Pius, and added to his previous favours to the convent, a plenary indulgence on the feast of that martyr, July 11th. He thus established in the villa of Antoninus Pius, the memory of St. Pius the martyr, and by this act perpetuated his own name in connection with a Saint so celebrated.

**11.** It would appear that the Capuchins had also established themselves, some time previously, somewhere in the ruins. The erection of the little church of Saint Mary of the Fields, or of the Camp, still existing near San Pio, is attributed to them; and the building now used as a *fienile* (barn) is said to have been their convent. The cause of their leaving is not known. They probably found a better opening in Paliano. The Conventuals were high in the favour of the Colonnas. It was, Senni thinks, the architect of that family who built San Pio, as well as the church of Petruccia and the convent of the Augustinians attached. Many points of resemblance are noted between them. The ancient church of Santa Maria appears to have contained side chapels, as does that of San Pio. This latter edifice faces the main road, and its style is both beautiful and well adapted for a religious community. Like Santa Maria it contains a nave with a large space in front of the high altar, and a chancel, in which is another space capable of being utilised as a choir for religious. The sacristy is large and convenient, and the whole building admirably lighted. A noticeable feature is the vestibule in front, in which there is a very beautiful fresco of the Virgin and Child, thought to be by Guido<sup>1</sup>. A lofty tower acts as a campanile, and gives a monastic and picturesque

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<sup>1</sup> Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:- Probably Guido Reni (1575-1642)  
See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido\\_Reni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guido_Reni)

appearance to the mass of buildings beneath its shadow. The convent adjoins the church and consists of two lofty storeys with an inner court, around which large cloisters sweep above and below, at a breadth of about fifteen feet. The walls, owing principally to the abundance of material supplied by the ruins of the Antonine Villa, are massively built; and, although the structure already contains forty apartments, it would be easy to add as many more at a comparatively trifling expense, by raising the walls to the height usual in Roman monasteries. Around the lower cloisters and in the church, are found some excellent fresco paintings, chiefly contributed in the fifteenth century by the Colonna family. They relate principally to events in the life of St. Francis of Assisi.

**12.** The Conventual Franciscans retained possession of this beautiful convent, until the advent of the French under Bonaparte. This « **liberator** » confiscated all their possessions and set them adrift. On the restoration of the Pope to his temporal dominions, the religious returned, but could regain only the convent buildings, a small vineyard, and nothing more. Where once a large and flourishing community had existed, sufficient support could be found for two Fathers only. There was no longer any revenue to sustain the fabric and, in consequence, both church and monastery fell gradually to decay. This was its condition when it pleased Divine Providence to permit the Piedmontese (**in 1870**) to take possession of Rome and the last remnant of the Ecclesiastical States was left to Pius IX.

**13.** Small as was the little community of San Pio, they had to suffer with the rest of their brethren. Two or three old priests, one of whom had been a missionary for years in Turkey, were there, with some lay brothers as old as themselves. They loved, with the love of the aged, the walls they knew in youth, and which had in years past sheltered so many mighty men of their order. They expected that, at least, they would be left to die out in peace. But one morning, while their mid-day meal was laid in the refectory, the officers of power appeared, and without permitting them to take a single article or even to eat the dinner that stood upon the table, they cast them out upon the road, to seek food and shelter as best they may. The poor old fathers and brothers tottered down to Genazzano weeping, while the officers who had so bravely expelled them, sat down to the dinner, and then afterwards proceeded in their own manner, to take possession of what the convent and church contained.

**14.** After the expulsion of its inmates from San Pio, a caretaker was placed in charge and, in a little time, a friend of the Government appeared who, for a nominal rent, obtained the privilege of doing what he pleased with all he found there. He turned the buildings at once into a store for hay and grain, its corridors and garden into a place for calves and pigs, and set about making all he could out of his bargain. It is something to

defeat the cupidity (**greed for money or possessions**) of such miserable and soulless men.

The place would suit Fr. Glynn admirably for all the purposes he had in view for his increasing community of Posterula. His Irish students would there be near their beloved Madonna, and could benefit by all the supernatural graces of Her wisdom. The place which patricians and emperors selected for their villa, was just as healthy as ever. The old convent could be made to arise from its ruinous condition at, no doubt, some expense. Its walls were as massive as the walls of a citadel. He determined to be its purchaser. He knew that to no one else could it be so valuable as to him; that, at least, no one careless of (**not worried about**) Church censure was likely to give anything approaching its true value for it. He bought it.

Thus, fortunately, San Pio passed at a low figure into the hands of the Prior of the Irish Augustinians in Rome. It was absolutely necessary to have such a place, if only as a villeggiatura. The Summer months, at least the months of July, August, and a part of September, are so unhealthy in Rome that all the colleges are provided with country residences whither their alumni are drafted not only to escape fever, but also to recruit strength for the severe studies which must be prosecuted when the schools of Rome are open. The Irish College for Seculars, and the Irish Dominicans, are provided with villeggiature (**plural of villeggiatura**) in Tivoli. The Americans, the Propagandists, the Scottish and the English, have villeggiature at Frascati and other localities on or near the Alban Hills. We believe that, of all the colleges in Rome, the college of the Irish Augustinians was, at that time, the only one totally unprovided for in this respect. In consequence, fever often attacked its inmates, the lives of the students were jeopardised, and their future utility on the mission was endangered by laying the foundations of a life-long delicacy of constitution. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary, especially as the alumni of the Roman house were increasing, to have a place to which to retire in Summer. By the good fortune of obtaining San Pio this great desideratum (**need**) was secured. Moreover, (**with the buildings**) land was obtained planted with olives and vines, and suitable to produce garden-stuff to any amount. Thus wine, oil, fruit, and vegetables could be produced cheaply for the use of the community. A large sum, however, had to be spent in order to render the buildings habitable, after the ruinous condition to which the want of funds on the part of the Conventual Franciscans, during eighty years, had reduced them. Then the still worse condition to which they were brought, during the comparatively short occupation of the individuals who obtained them in tenancy from the Government. As, however, the masonry was sound, it was surprising what a careful outlay accomplished. The ancient convent put on quite a



modern appearance. Judicious changes were made in doors and windows. The church needed only overhauling to appear as when first built. And the whole, when it left the hands of the workmen, looked as if erected within the past ten years.

The purchase was certainly an excellent one. To build the church and convent as both now stand, and to secure the advantages of water supply, land, and out offices, at least £10,000 sterling would be required even in Italy. His Grace, the present learned and practical Archbishop of Tuam, who came on a visit to San Pio last year, with their Lordships, the Bishops of Down and Connor, Elphin, Achonry, and Sandhurst, estimated the value in Ireland at £20,000 sterling. The whole cost, however, of both purchasing the convent buildings and making the necessary repairs, has been but £3,000 sterling including all expenses.

**15.** But, for the poor Prior this was a large venture to undertake in, it must be remembered, a foreign land; however, his confidence in God and in the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, was great. His fondest idea was, moreover, to place a body of his fellow countrymen to act as a guard of honour to the holy Shrine upon which San Pio looks. He rightly considered that the atheist and the scoffer would be slow to make any attempt to profane that Shrine while there would be, nearby, a strong band of fervent young Irishmen, devoted to God's Mother, as the Irish always are. The atheistic scoffer, or the member of an anti-clerical league, may sneer at a poor Italian friar. He may even be insolent in a church, but he will think twice before he provokes an Irishman, not to speak of a body of athletic young Irishmen, whose presence in a neighbourhood makes those scoffers, now so common in every country, wonderfully civil to ecclesiastics generally. One of the uses, and not the least then, of San Pio is that its inmates will form a perpetual guard of honour for the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

The purchase of San Pio, therefore, may be regarded as a great and providential blessing. It utilised a noble building which otherwise should decay, or pass to profane uses; and it affords, to the young Augustinian, all the advantages of a traditionally great and beautiful locality, where the most precious treasure — the Madonna of Genazzano — confided to his Order, has dwelt for ages; a chosen spot to which the traveller to Rome may come and enjoy all the beauties of the historic scenes of old Latium, together with a pilgrimage to one of the most famous shrines in the world. The Irish visitor to San Pio cannot fail to be gladdened when, while recalling its memories, he looks upon the marble slab on its principal front and he reads « *Libera Proprietà del P. Patrizio Glynn, di Limerick in Irlanda* »; and over the portal of the once famous Villa of the Caesars and reads « *Collegium Augustinianum Hibernense.* »

16. But although the convent is now out of debt, Father Glynn needs yet much to put its vineyard in order, to furnish the house and church, and to make San Pio what he desires it to be, not only a Villeggiatura for Posterula, but a stepping-stone between the novitiate of his Order (**in Dublin**) and the finishing house of studies in Rome. He designs it for a retreat where young men, after coming from the novitiate in Dublin, may make their philosophical studies, and at the same time learn the language of Italy, and become gradually acclimatised in the country before going to Rome itself. This must be a very great advantage for the Order. But, perhaps, the highest object to which the new home can be devoted is that which the Pontiff himself indicated and to which we have before referred, namely, that San Pio should be formed into a house not only for the supply of Augustinians for Ireland, but also for such of them as might carry on the great work of the Irish race, and of their own peculiarly Apostolic Order, on the foreign missions, and especially on the mission of Australia. Since the Holy Father has committed to the Irish Province of the Augustinians the sole care of the vast Vicariate of Northern Queensland, the uses of this fine house of studies cannot be overestimated.

17. The words of the Pontiff to the Prior of Posterula were very plain and very expressive. This writer heard them from the venerable Bishop of Sandhurst (**Martin Crane O.E.S.A.**) who, upon the occasion referred to, introduced the Prior to the Holy Father, and has, moreover, obtained permission from the venerable Prelate to publish them in this volume.

Leo XIII (**the then Pope**), born and reared at Carpineto at the other side of the Latin valley, knows Genazzano and San Pio well. He had given permission for the purchase of the convent and vineyard and heard of the magnificent manner in which the buildings were restored. He asked Prior Glynn from whence came the funds, and whether the Irish Augustinian house in Rome had supplied them. The Prior assured him that the Roman house did not lose a penny by the purchase of San Pio. Whence then did so much money come? From your Irish children, Your Holiness, replied the Prior; and the latter then explained to the Pope how he obtained the money. « *The Irish Cardinal and such of the bishops, priests, and people of Ireland to whom I applied, when they heard the money was to get San Pio out of the hands of those who had expelled the religious, and to make it an Irish college, destined to diffuse the Catholic faith at home and abroad, gave me in two months no less than £3,000 sterling and would give yet more were it needed.* » The Holy Father expressed his satisfaction at this, three times over, and added, « *The Irish people, not only in Ireland, but in America, Australia, and wherever they are found are foremost in sustaining Us, the Vicar of*

*Christ, as well as in planting the Catholic faith. San Pio should not be restricted to being a mere villeggiatura for the Irish Augustinians in Rome, but, as it is well adapted for a permanent college, do you establish one there, where Irish Augustinians may be trained for the sacred ministry to spread the blessings of the faith not only in Ireland, but everywhere, and especially (turning to the Bishop of Sandhurst) in Australia. This is my wish.* » The good Prior and the Bishop were both greatly astonished at these remarks of the Pope. No previous conversation had passed upon the subject. It came from the Vicar of Christ quite spontaneously. On the same occasion, Leo XIII pronounced a splendid eulogy upon the faith of the Irish, and specially referred to the offerings continually brought to him by Monsignor Kirby, whom he emphatically designated as truly a holy man « *He is truly a holy man* » è veramente un sant'uomo, and one whose example was immensely beneficial to the young students being trained at the Irish College of Saint Agatha, for the mission of Ireland.

The improvements at San Pio, therefore, continue. The establishment, so famous in Pagan and Christian times, daily puts on a more Irish appearance. The Artist — one of the foremost in Rome — restoring the frescoes of the convent, is also engaged forming and decorating three very fine chapels. They are dedicated to Our Lady of Dolours, to Saint Patrick, and Saint Brigid, and are exquisitely designed. It is understood that some devout subscribers in Ireland are bearing the expense of these beautiful works. This of itself proves how far our illustrious Holy Father, Leo XIII, was right when he praised the generosity of the Irish. No one knows better than does His Holiness how truly Apostolic is the faith of the Irish people. They love to advance the cause of Christ and of devotion to Mary in every land as well as in their own. Persecuted themselves for so many generations, none know better how to sympathise with the persecutions endured by their Catholic brethren everywhere. A call from any land — but more especially from the Catholic land of the Popes (**Papal States**) — suffering for conscience sake, awakens the generosity, and arouses the enthusiasm of the entire nation. The moment, therefore, that it became known that Prior Glynn had rescued — sustaining thereby the noble traditions of his race — a venerable and historic sanctuary from the grasp of the spoliator, all classes of his countrymen came to his assistance. And, though Ireland was suffering at the time from the effects of the famine of the previous year, in a few months more than the sum needed was placed at his disposal. His very first appeal was met by such a response that the Freeman's Journal of the day wrote as follows, echoing, no doubt, the sentiments of those who so liberally subscribed to San Pio: -

***Freeman's Journal, Saturday October 8th 1881.***

We publish elsewhere a list of subscriptions received up to the present, towards the liquidation of the large outlay incurred in the purchase of the renowned and venerable Monastery of Saint Pius, near the quaint old town of Genazzano, one of the most picturesque and historic spots of the Italian Peninsula. It will be a memorable incident in the records of the convent of the Irish Augustinians in Rome, that the Very Rev. Superior in that popular house was enabled to mark the celebration of Patrick's Day of last year, by rescuing it from the spoliators who had so long had possession of the grand old shrine, around which so many sacred memories clustered. The site itself had been formerly occupied by the palace of the Roman Emperors, and Antoninus Pius resided there at frequent intervals. Former excavations at the place brought to light various portions of the Imperial villa, and the porphyry pillars and columns of paragone which now beautify the Sanctuary of St. Mary in Genazzano are admitted to have belonged to the palace of the Emperors. The monastery was founded by Pius II and was richly endowed by the Colonna family, one of whose illustrious members, Pope Martin V, was born in the ancient Palace close at hand. The Order of Conventuals, to whom the charge of the sacred edifice was (**previously**) confided, continued to minister there almost from its very foundation, down to the year 1877, when the holy inmates were driven forth from that consecrated home with ruthless cruelty. No mercy was shown them, and everything that they possessed was remorselessly torn from them. From that time until the Feast of St. Patrick, 1880, the Monastery was handed over by its sacrilegious owners to all sorts of profanities, and the beasts of the field were sent to stable in its cloisters. With praiseworthy zeal and courage the estimable and energetic Prior of Saint Mary in Posterula, Rome, - the Roman Convent of the Irish Augustinians - undertook the re-purchase of the Monastery when it was offered for sale by the Italian Government, and regained the venerable Monastery for its olden purposes of Divine praise and worship. Father Glynn, the devoted and courageous priest of whom we have spoken, did not hesitate to burden himself with the weight of this purchase, for he was conscious that his Catholic fellow countrymen at home would not see him borne down beneath the brave venture. He has come here to ask for aid in his work of piety and of charity, and our columns today testify that he has not come in vain. He has found cheerful hearts and hands to encourage and to help him, and we feel assured that he will not have long to wait for further generous help. Father Glynn proposes to stay a little longer in Ireland and will, we are sure, gladly and gratefully receive, at the Augustinian Convent, John St. in this city, any contributions that may be forwarded to him.

## Chapter XXVII - APPENDIX

### ROMAN ECCLESIASTICAL EDUCATION

1. Words of the Holy Father (Leo XIII) in encouragement of a Roman ecclesiastical education. - 2. Irish faith. - 3. Its perpetuity in distant lands, interested in a Roman ecclesiastical education. - 4. Review of the past connection of Rome and Ireland. - 5. The days of religious persecution. - 6. Colleges established for the Irish by the Pontiffs - Houses given in Rome to the Irish Dominicans - Father John O'Connor - To the Augustinians - To the Franciscans - Father Luke Wadding - The Irish college - Cardinal Ludovisi - Jesuits, Carmelites and other religious orders - Houses elsewhere for the Irish. - 7. Benefits of a Roman education to Irish faith. - 8. Help from the Popes for education in Ireland. - 9. Knowledge obtained of Ireland's wants by the Holy See. - 10. Colleges in Rome for England and Scotland. - 11. Greater necessity now than before. - 12. State of the Church in distant colonies. - 13. General dangers intensified at a distance. - 14. The best possible ecclesiastical education obtainable anywhere to be had in Rome. - 15. Reasons - Unity increased by the love the student has for his Alma Mater. - 16. Effects of Rome on a student - The past and present Rome. - 17. Retrospect of the Roman theological schools - The Catacombs - The period of the early Councils and early Fathers - The middle ages. - 18. Roman ecclesiastical education in our own days - Students of various nationalities in the city - Their manner of life. - 19. The great schools of Rome - Recent events not able to disturb ecclesiastical learning - The Sapienza and its chairs - Transferred to the Apollinare. - 20. Other schools - The Dominicans at the Minerva - The Roman College. - 21. The Propaganda. - 22. Other schools. - 23. Students as seen in Rome. - 24. Utility in their amalgamation. - 25. Canon Law in Rome. - 26. Association with the Roman clergy. - 27. Value of a student's recreation in Rome - Christian and Pagan monuments. - 28. A student's vacations. - 29. A College for Australia in Rome.

1. The words of the Supreme Pontiff to the Prior of the Irish Augustinians relative to the future of San Pio open a subject in which the readers of this work cannot fail to be interested: namely, the value of an ecclesiastical education in Rome for Priests destined for the ministry in distant nations, and especially in those many great and promising new countries where the English language is the vernacular. It is a circumstance also worthy of remark that the Holy Father chose to speak upon a matter so important to a missionary Irish Bishop from Australia, and to an Irish ecclesiastic whose duty is to train youths for the sanctuary in Rome. He also referred, on the same occasion, to that generous Irish zeal which had built up the Church of God in so many nations, while labouring to restore, at the same time, the external splendour of its own Church after the ravages of three hundred years of persecution. It was Irish zeal that gave San Pio, placed as it is under the shadow of the great Sanctuary of Our Lady of

Good Counsel and under the very eye of the Vicar of Christ, for the purpose of giving a Roman ecclesiastical education to students destined to keep the faith alive in Ireland, and to spread it elsewhere throughout the earth.

2. We are happy to be able to refer to these facts, because the result for good which this chapter is meant to produce will be advanced or retarded by the action, or the want of action as the case may be, of the same zeal that procured San Pio and that called forth the encomiums (**praises**) of the Sovereign Pontiff. All nations converted to the faith naturally seek the means of practical union with Rome from which the stream of Catholicity came to them. No nation has a past more inseparably wound up with Rome than the people of Ireland who have carried and still carry the Cross wherever they go; and whose next care (**main concern**) is to plant it enduringly in the new homes they form in America and in Australia, in England and in Scotland, and wherever else the designs of Divine Providence have placed them.

3. To carry out to perfection this latter work, to preserve and extend still more the faith which Ireland has been the instrument in planting, a better means cannot be conceived than to provide permanently, and abundantly, in Rome for an ecclesiastical training for at least a notable (**large**) portion of the clergy destined to continue the work of evangelisation in after generations. A slight reflection on (**a brief consideration of**) the past will make this very apparent by the light of experience. And then we shall see that reason and absolute fact combine to prove the necessity of providing speedily and generously for a work always so agreeable to the sentiments of faith, and so much in consonance (**harmony**) with the traditions of Ireland — and of England and Scotland too — especially in the days when faith was exposed to trials most terrible and long continued.

4. And in the first place, it must be remembered, that Irish faith was, from the very commencement, indebted to the zealous care of the Sovereign Pontiff for the mission of St. Patrick. The Apostle of Ireland also owed the perfecting of his own ecclesiastical education to the schools of Rome in which his sacred studies were completed. There can be no doubt but that others, like Palladius and many of his fellow labourers, had the same advantage. Pope St. Celestine gave him not only that pastoral staff emblematic of the primatial authority, but also supplied him with the means and, no doubt, also with the men necessary for his holy enterprise. So commenced that constant inter-communication of which, notwithstanding the destruction (**absence?**) of so many ancient records, we have continual glimpses of the history of the early Irish Church. The same spirit and habit of inter-communication afterwards caused the influx of students to Ireland, in the turbulent times succeeding the destruction of

the (**Roman**) Empire of the West. The schools of Ireland were then not only opened by the apostolic charity of that nation, but they were filled with the apostolic teachings of Rome. They were safe. The same spirit of heavenly unity with the Holy See brought, afterwards, many thousands of Irish missionary saints and scholars to evangelise the provinces (**of Europe which had been**) paganised, brutalised, and enslaved by the barbaric hordes. All these turned with loving eyes to Rome. It was the grand place of their pilgrimage, the place whence they drew the streams of light and knowledge from the days of St. Patrick to those of St. Malachy.

5. The same spirit of loving recourse to Rome lived on to the days of persecution (**roughly 1500s to 1700s**). And then, when Ireland was deprived of every means for the education of her ministers, when her grand monastic establishments were all confiscated, when her churches and their revenues were forcibly converted to heretical uses, when her clergy, secular and regular, were banished, when the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and all the ordinances of religion were prohibited under terrible penalties, when the severest measures and the best calculated that perverted human ingenuity could devise, were taken to destroy Catholicity, it was that same strict union always subsisting between Ireland and Rome, that saved the faith of the people.

6. The moment that saw the blow descend upon the Church in Ireland, saw also the zeal of the Roman Pontiff excited, and soon placed in magnificent relief the value of a Roman ecclesiastical education. Then arose those monastic and other colleges which Ireland, small as she is, possesses in greater number than any other nation outside of Italy in the Eternal City. The Popes, and all whom they could influence, came to the relief of her suffering, faithful people. Foundations were established and well endowed.

The Irish Dominicans obtained the ancient and remarkable basilica of St. Clement, with the monastery and grounds attached to it, from the generosity of the Pontiff. They further obtained, through the zeal of the celebrated Father John O'Connor of their order, the fine Cardinalitiate church of St. Sixtus on the Appian Way, with its extensive monastery, once the home of St. Dominic himself, and its grounds which now form the municipal gardens of Rome. Later on, the vast monastery of St. Michael in Tivoli was given to them as a villeggiatura.

The Irish Augustinians were almost as richly provided for. They obtained the church and grounds of St. Matthew which lay between the basilicas of St. John Lateran and St. Mary Major. Here was venerated the

famous painting of **Our Lady of Perpetual Succour**<sup>1</sup>, which is now again rendered celebrated by the Redemptorists<sup>2</sup> in whose new church, built near the old one of St. Matthew, the painting has been placed.

The Irish Franciscans, through the exertions of the celebrated Father Luke Wadding, obtained the church of St. Isidore near the Pincian Hill, with its monastery and grounds.

And then Cardinal Ludovisi, Archbishop of Bologna, and his heirs, provided, for the benefit of secular clergy, the famous missionary college which Pope Gregory XVI removed from its original site to that of St. Agatha, where it now stands, one of the foremost collegiate institutions in Rome.

Moreover, the Capuchins, the Carmelites (Calced and Discalced), the Jesuits, and the other great religious Orders in Rome opened wide their gates, to confer upon the sons of Ireland all the advantages, and that of course gratuitously, of an ecclesiastical training in Rome, to equip them for the arduous missionary career they had to go through, in the stormy and long continued period of the penal days (**roughly 1500s to 1700s**). The example of the Popes, in unceasing generosity to Ireland, influenced the Catholic nations of Europe to emulate their charity to our suffering Church. So arose in France, in Spain, in Portugal, and in the Netherlands, those educational institutions with which the people of Ireland are still so familiar. But Rome held amongst all these (**places**) the preëminence, and obtained, from the will of Irish students, the preference. Many of them, educated at other schools on the Continent, never ceased until, like St. Patrick, they finished and perfected their studies beneath the shadow of the Vatican. For a lengthened period, therefore, a very notable proportion of the missionaries of Ireland, if not a majority of them, obtained thus the signal advantage of a Roman ecclesiastical education.

7. It is impossible to over-estimate such an advantage at any time, but more especially at such a period of trial as were the penal days. It not only provided Ireland with a zealous, learned, and incorruptible priesthood, but also with a priesthood intensely attached to the Centre of Unity by affection and by principle. Thus it happened that, when it meant death for a Bishop or a Vicar General to appear in the country; when to be a religious was to be an outlaw; when the priest-hunter's occupation was declared by act of Parliament to be an honourable profession; when any ecclesiastic was exposed to be banished; and when death on the gallows

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:-** In more recent times, this painting, and also Our Lady under this title, have been referred to as **Our Lady of Perpetual Help**. I'm not convinced that this is appropriate. "Succour" has a broader meaning than "Help".

<sup>2</sup> **Note added in 2017 by Eugene Shannon:-** The original image of **Our Lady of Perpetual Succour** was transferred from the Augustinians to the Redemptorists in formal procession in Rome on the feast of **Our Lady of Good Counsel** 26th April 1866. I have seen minor visions on each of their Feast Days. "Colours" on 26th April 2014 and "Shadows" on 27th June 2015. And I know why.



was decreed against him if he should return from banishment, martyrs like Archbishop O'Hurley and Archbishop Plunkett<sup>1</sup> willingly laid down their lives sooner than deny the power given by God to St. Peter and to his successors; confessors like Archbishops Conroy, Creagh, McEgan, and others endured the rigours of prison and persecution; while priests in hundreds hid themselves in mountains and caverns to minister at the mass-rock and by the stormy seashore to people who were as tried as they were themselves for devotion to the Holy See, to God's Mother, and to God's Vicar.

8. A large number of those who thus signalled (**distinguished**) themselves by sufferings and by martyrdom, were ecclesiastics blessed with the advantage of having made studies in Rome. Their education in the Eternal City not only benefited themselves, but obtained also large help for the advantage of Ireland from the Pontiff and from all whom the Pontiff could influence. The late Cardinal Cullen has more than once referred to the immense sums of money which the Holy See forwarded for the education, not only of the Irish priesthood, but of the Irish people. When it was treason to commit « the crime » of educating any Catholic child, this money kept the lamp of learning, as well as of religion, burning in Ireland. Just as the Catacombs sheltered the early Christians from the power of the Caesars, so the hedges of the country sheltered the Irish children, instructed by the aid of the Pope. From those primitive seminaries went forth « to places beyond the seas », and to Rome especially, the holy youth of Ireland, to return, in time, educated and ordained, and able to take the place of the missionaries who were called, by means of the prison, the gallows, or long toil, to their heavenly reward.

9. Another inestimable advantage reaped by the Church in Ireland from the number of its Roman students in those disastrous days, was the reliable knowledge the latter were able to give to the Holy See as to the condition of the country, which was then constantly in a state of change. If the violence of the tempest abated, if hope, like that from the **Confederation of Kilkenny**<sup>2</sup>, appeared, or if a storm, like that of the Puritan rage under Cromwell threatened to blow, the Holy Father was able to act accordingly - to send large aid, like that brought by **Rinuccini**<sup>3</sup>; to move the great Catholic powers to make a diversion in favour of Ireland, as in the days of Elizabeth; to send succour, as in the times of the Commonwealth (**under Cromwell**) and of William III when it was no longer possible to externally defend the religion or the

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<sup>1</sup> Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:- Now Saint Oliver Plunkett, having been canonised by Pope Paul VI on 12th October 1975.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederate\\_Ireland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederate_Ireland) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Kilkenny](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Kilkenny)

<sup>3</sup> Giovanni Battista Rinuccini:- See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni\\_Battista\\_Rinuccini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Battista_Rinuccini)

independence of the people. Thus too became known to Rome the ill and the well deserving of every class; and so we find immense aid given to faithful Irish Princes, like that obtained from Clement XIII by the two great Northern Chieftains, **O'Neill and O'Donnell**<sup>1</sup>, whose ashes repose beneath the shadow of the Vatican at St. Peter's on Montorio, near the very spot where the Prince of the Apostles laid down his life for the faith.

**10.** The same zeal and charity shown by the Popes to Ireland during the long dark night of her affliction, was also shown by the Fathers of the Universal Fold (**the Popes**) to the equally suffering Catholics of England and Scotland. The old Saxon Hospital for pilgrims from England was turned into a college where a priesthood might be educated to sustain the faith in a land so desolated, and so successfully desolated, by heresy (**namely England**). Scotland obtained, for the some reasons, the College of St. Andrew. And it was, of course, the care and influence of the Holy See which caused Rheims, Douay, and other institutions to be founded for the benefit of Ireland, England, and Scotland in those long continued, disastrous days.

**11.** The advantages which a Roman education conferred upon our ancestors in the past are, we believe, now more than ever required by the English Speaking Catholic world at home, and still more abroad. We say abroad, because of the material distance which, of itself, renders the necessity of moral union with the Holy See all the more urgent and imperative.

**12.** This will be apparent from a consideration of the present state and tendency of the world. The earth is fast putting on the mantle of Infidelity. Movements, strong, subtle and universal, attack, not only the centre, but also the uttermost limits of the Church of God. The popular cries and other attempts to deprive the rising generations of their faith, are not only found in the old Catholic nations of Europe, but these cries and attempts are successful in the United States and in Australia, and are moving rapidly over every possession of Great Britain at home and abroad<sup>2</sup>. The unity of the Christian family is attacked by divorce; and other Christian bulwarks, supposed at the beginning of this century to be impregnable in English Speaking lands, are slowly but surely giving way. Nowhere else can the future defender of the faith (**priest**) obtain the light and knowledge, the help and grace, to meet these evils courageously and to combat them successfully, as well as when he is near the person of him who holds the very place of Christ, who exercises the authority of God,

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flight\\_of\\_the\\_Earls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flight_of_the_Earls)

<sup>2</sup> At the time that Mons. Dillon was writing this book, The British Empire was very extensive. It was said that "the Sun never set on the British Empire". He, like most people, would probably have assumed that it would continue for a very long time.

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British\\_Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Empire)

and whose duty it is, not only to feed by infallible teaching the whole Catholic Church, but to watch for dangers and to provide the means to meet them, by the living assistance of the Holy Ghost (**the Holy Spirit**) which never can fail him.

Then again, Catholicity depends upon its Unity. Without unity it is nothing, and worse than nothing. Those countries that lost unity, and consequently Catholicity, in the past, invariably began by growing cold to the Holy See. They had amongst them few, if any, who drank at Rome of the streams of ecclesiastical knowledge. **Coldness passes easily into hostility**<sup>1</sup>. National, sectional, individual spirit, may at any moment inflame and render practical this hostility. The past gives many sad lessons of what may happen after, to rend asunder the seamless garment of Christ. The passions of a prince like Henry VIII of England; the fury, or the “offended party” spirit, of a once good religious like Luther; the selfish and national pride of prelates like **Photius**<sup>2</sup> and **Michael Cerularius**<sup>3</sup>; can then easily wrench the priceless gift of faith from an entire people, or even, as in the case of the Greeks and Protestants, from many races and peoples. Now, if prelates like **Cardinal Hassun**<sup>4</sup> were multiplied amongst the Orientals (**Greeks**) at the period of their schism; if men like Archbishop Plunkett and Archbishop O’Hurley were found as plentiful in England as they were found in Ireland during the progress of the heresy of Edward VI and Elizabeth; if missionaries of the stamp and education of the men that St. Ignatius sent from Rome had been scattered, in the days of Luther, as widely in the North of Germany as they were afterwards in the South, the advance of those rebellions, which now end in open Infidelity, might have been averted from modern civilisation both in the East and in the West. Too much localisation, too much estrangement from the Holy See, too much of that spirit which produces **Gallicanism**<sup>5 6</sup>, when it does not end in open schism or heresy, was at the root of the fall of these nations from the faith, - a fall which, in all human probability, might have been averted if a notable portion of the clergy had been blessed with an ecclesiastical training in the schools of Rome.

**13.** In the present state of the world (**1884**), Catholicity seems, at least to the writer of these lines, to be just as much exposed to danger as

<sup>1</sup> Note added by Eugene Shannon in 2017 - This would be a quotation worth remembering.

<sup>2</sup> Photios I of Constantinople (c.810-c.893) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photian\\_schism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photian_schism)

<sup>3</sup> Michael I Cerularius (c.1000-1059) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_I\\_Cerularius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_I_Cerularius)

<sup>4</sup> Antoine-Pierre IX Cardinal Hassun (1809-1884) - Patriarch of Cilicia (Armenian), Lebanon. Cardinal Hassun died in Rome on 28th February 1884, which was just before the first publication of this book.

<sup>5</sup> **N.B.** See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallicanism> AND <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Gallicanism>

<sup>6</sup> Note added by Eugene Shannon in 2017 - See book recommended at end of Section 15.

at any past period. Influences at the command of the enemy (**Satan**) are in existence within and without which, without watchfulness, may end in calamities to millions. The world is not wanting in the example of men who find it hard to submit to the will or desire of the Supreme Authority, when that will or desire may run counter to some cherished fancy, opinion, or sentiment. The class to which **Döllinger**<sup>1</sup> belongs will never die. It is found in every nationality, from time to time within the Church.

Catholicity, to guard against it, needs a **Priesthood** sufficiently numerous, sufficiently educated, and sufficiently zealous to be influential with the masses. This is now almost self-evident. Sovereigns once held supreme power. The power, however, has passed largely to the people everywhere, and, it may be said, completely to the people in English Speaking countries. The necessity therefore, which once existed, that the priesthood should be influential with the Sovereign now requires that it should be able to control, direct, and influence the people. It must be well instructed and powerful in word and work. It must be pious, prudent, learned, zealous, and devoted to the Vicar of Christ.

And then priests must not only have these qualities in a few scattered members of their order, they must also be sufficiently numerous in order to command influence. But when a priesthood is both numerous and influential, when it is impregnated with that spirit of loving attachment to the Centre of Unity which a Roman education gives, any opposition which the demon may excite against the Supreme Principle of Authority becomes perfectly impotent amongst the people. This is a matter so very plain that it scarcely needs more than to be mentioned in order to commend itself to every Catholic of intelligence. It contains an unanswerable argument in favour of a Roman education for those destined to minister in the distant lands for which this volume has been written.

**14.** But while thus speaking, the writer wishes distinctly to state that he has no intention whatever to breathe one syllable against that excellent education which ecclesiastics at present receive in their own countries. When that education is imparted in seminaries where the ecclesiastics are kept according to **the wise rules laid down by the Council of Trent**; where they are subjected to salutary discipline and blessed with the example of pious, learned, vigilant, and orthodox superiors; where they are kept rigidly separated from association with lay students; where they are kept sufficiently long at study and discipline; where they are imbued with a true sense of obedience and loving docility to the Holy See; then their training may be brought to a perfection as great as that which could be obtained in Rome itself. That is so far as the

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<sup>1</sup> Ignaz von Döllinger (1799-1890) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignaz\\_von\\_D%C3%B6llinger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignaz_von_D%C3%B6llinger)

training is concerned. But that training, perfect in all its parts as we suppose it to be, would unquestionably be all the better by having added to it the benefits which a few years spent in the Eternal City can confer upon an ecclesiastical student.

And if this be sound reasoning for the students of any nation whatever, it is accentuated by other considerations when we treat of countries situated at a great distance (**such as Australia**) from the Centre of Unity, and consequently more away from the vigilance of the Vicar of Christ.

**15.** Let us now glance at a few of the many reasons which lead us to argue thus.

In the first place, every student is naturally inclined to love his *alma mater*. He clings to its recollections. He enters into its teachings. The examples of the obstinacy of disciples in following the opinions of their masters, are surpassed by the obstinacy of men educated in colleges following and defending whatever peculiarities these colleges or universities teach. Hence came in the past the various, long-continued schools of the philosophers. Hence come in the present day the tenacity of attachment which has distinguished the various permitted opinions of divines (**theologians etc.**) in the Catholic Church. « *Teach a young man the way in which he should walk, and in his old age he will not depart from it* »<sup>1</sup>, is as true of ecclesiastical, as it is of that primary and general education by which men receive the principles of faith or of heresy from their parents.

Like the language and the religion which he received at his mother's knee, college teaching becomes a part of the very life of the ecclesiastical student; and, instead of being modified, it rather becomes intensified with old age and grey hairs. Even increase of brain-power does not deflect him from its influence. On the contrary, the greater the power, the greater is, generally, the pertinacity of the disciple. Psychologist or Ontologist, Molinist or Thomist, **Gallican** or **Ultramontane**<sup>2</sup>, cold or hot, just as he has been formed, so, as a rule, he wishes to remain. If, when called upon, he gives up a cherished opinion in obedience to the Vicar of Christ, it is because his school has taught, as all Catholic schools must teach, the necessity of obedience to the Vicar of Christ. If to this there be an occasional exception, it only proves the general rule which alone concerns the legislator and provider for future contingencies; and that rule is — in the way that an ecclesiastical education forms and moulds the priest, so does he remain throughout his later life and ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 22:6

<sup>2</sup> See following book recommendation - "The Triumph of the Holy See"

**Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon:-**

Generally speaking, a typical modern reader will not be familiar with the political and other difficulties which faced the Catholic Church during the 1800s. If you would like to have better knowledge of this period of Church History, I would recommend the following book -

**The Triumph of the Holy See**

**by Derek Holmes**

***A Short History of the Papacy in the Nineteenth Century***

16. Now, if all this be true of the student trained anywhere, it is much more so of the ecclesiastical student educated in Rome. In Rome lies the source of the very jurisdiction — *the raison d'être* — of the priesthood for its influence upon men. There lives the Infallible Teacher in that doctrine and morality which all authorised teachers in the Church spend their best years in learning. There is the centre of the vast government of the Church of Jesus Christ. There the student of Canon Law not only studies its principles, but also sees it in its full and ordered and beautiful action, regulating every occurring emergency amongst the faithful spread under the care of the Bishops of the Fold throughout the earth. There the Church History of the past is centred, and there the Church History of the present is made. There the ceremonies and sacred songs of the new Sion, had their origin; there they have been, and are, regulated; and there they are carried out with an order and a precision which cannot be easily seen elsewhere. There, in brief, dwells the sacred person of the Vicar of Christ Himself, the Successor of St. Peter, the Rock upon which the power of God Almighty built the Church, and against which the « *gates of hell* » are never to prevail. This is as certain as any other dogma of Catholic Faith.

In Rome, and in Rome alone, the young ecclesiastic, during the course of his college years, has numerous opportunities of seeing the Vicar of Christ. He hears his voice, speaks to him, lives, as it were, in his presence; and comes to understand how, amidst all the greatness of his divine office, God permits « *the gates of hell* » to assail him. Thus he sees, as vividly as the faithful did who saw St. Peter in chains, the verification of the promise that, no matter how apparently triumphant for the moment, these gates never can prevail; that the chains and the crosses are the impediments over which the Supreme Pastor of God's fold passes to future victories and extensions, so that, « *out of many hearts, thoughts may be revealed* »<sup>1</sup>. Rome treasures the memories of past conflicts, invariably followed by past triumphs. There the student sees the long mouldering remains of the marbled magnificence of the Caesars. The

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 2 : 35

ruins of their palaces, their temples, their monuments, their amphitheatres, their luxurious baths and villas lie upon every side. In that city they oppressed, murdered, banished, or imprisoned the Vicars of Christ for three hundred years. It was a long contest, but every pang endured by a Pontiff was an increase to the Church and a blow to the power of the emperors; until, at last, the latter passed completely away, leaving only those mouldering traces of their greatness which Rome preserves; while the Pontiff and the Church are still as strong and as enduring as then to meet the full force of a world which is now, as ever, in arms against them. In the contemplation of these, and of all subsequent conflicts endured by the Popes, of which the Eternal City gives the evidences, the youthful ecclesiastic sees illustrations of all he learns. He comes to realise, as he nowhere else can, the divine nature of the Sacred Institution to which he gives his life, and the true position of the earthly Head of that Institution, without whom no portion of the Church can live. Therefore, his heart comes to beat with every pulsation of the heart of the Vicar of Christ. He sympathises in his sorrows, and becomes a participator in his joys. Thus, explicitly by his studies, and implicitly by his surroundings, he becomes impregnated with the true and perfect spirit of the grand Unity of Catholicity; and ultimately becomes, as so many thousands of Roman students have become, not only in one age but in every age, a true Apostle, and, if needs be, a Martyr for the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church.

17. The great ecclesiastical schools of Rome are now, as indeed they ever were, the foremost in the world. From the days when St. Peter himself filled its first theological chair, and taught, not only the laity, but the clergy also, the pure doctrines of his Master, down to this hour. Christendom not only received from Rome its authoritative teaching and discipline but also loved to send from the most distant regions its foremost children to “drink in” there, as at the fountain head, all that ecclesiastics should know. Because the Church was always One, she was always Roman. Rome is the metropolis of the Kingdom of Christ, and, consequently, the centre, not only of its government, but of its teaching. From the beginning, we have evidences that many from afar sought the schools wherein the Roman clergy were taught, and they did that so that they might perfect themselves in sacred science. This, in some degree, accounts for the (**large**) number of Greeks and others among the earlier Popes, (**who were**) elected by the Roman clergy and people because of the excellence of their doctrine and the holiness of their lives. The sacred science manifested by the Roman clergy, as a body, from the very beginning, is a proof of what the theological schools of Rome have been from the earliest periods.



According as the light of ecclesiastical history is shed upon the Eternal City of the first Christian ages, we see more clearly the schools of Rome energising and extending, until they are revealed in the full splendour of their power amongst the very first universities of the ages of faith. By the favour of the Popes, and because of the spirit of strong faith spread everywhere over Christendom in those ages, other cities in every country of Europe, had great Catholic schools for a time. But these latter schools were not perpetual. Their fame, however great for a period, passed away. Some grew heretical like those of England, Scotland, and North Germany. Others grew Gallican like the great theological schools of France. Others died of inanition (**lack of mental or spiritual vigour and enthusiasm**) or fell victims to revolution, like those of Italy at the present moment (late 1800s).

But the great ecclesiastical schools of Rome never died, and never decayed. They flourished in the early persecutions in the crypts of the Catacombs. In them, deacons like St. Laurence, and Pontiffs like his master (**Sixtus II**), were perfected in sacred science. From them went forth to all parts of the vast Roman Empire, and, to use the words of Tertullian, to regions «*far beyond the flight of the Roman eagle*», those early apostles who spread the faith so widely, and so well, that, in the days of Constantine, no part of the then known world was left unevangelised - no region was without its martyrs for the name of Christ. Those wonderful schools taught the sacred science which rendered the Roman clergy, in the earliest days, the admiration of the world, and rendered the Roman laity full of that sublime knowledge which we find so strikingly manifested by numbers of them at the examinations preceding the martyrdom which was so commonly their fate.

But that science which persecution confined in the bowels of the earth, or drove into the deserts of Egypt, filled the whole world at the moment peace came to the Church. The wealth of the literary and philosophical schools of the pagans passed, with their riches and their power, to the service of Christ. Great Christian Universities arose in all the cities famous for learning in the East and amongst the Greeks. Athens became at once something like Paris became afterwards. Alexandria, Antioch, Smyrna, Constantinople, prefigured the glory of the medieval universities of Spain, Germany, England, and the Netherlands.

But even in those days the Roman ecclesiastical schools held the theological supremacy. St. Jerome, who was nothing else but a Roman ecclesiastical student; St. Augustine, who from there, directly or indirectly, received his science; St. Ambrose, of whom the same may be said; Pope St. Damasus; the Legates from Rome who presided in the name of the Roman Pontiffs at General Councils held in the East; St. Leo



the Great, and a host of others, demonstrate the sublime superiority of the schools of Rome in those early days. And so it was subsequently.

The soundness of doctrine in the Roman Church, the guardian of the Deposit of Faith, was never doubted. But also, the learning of a human kind in which that precious Deposit was encased; the splendour of literary, and every other kind of knowledge, with which it was accompanied; and the genius of its teachers, were at that time as remarkably superior to those of all other centres of learning as at any subsequent period.

**18.** But it is in our own days that the advantages of a Roman education are most apparent. The glory of the great centres of ecclesiastical learning, both of the early Eastern and of the medieval periods, is departed. Theological science, sufficient for the wants of the clergy in Catholic countries, no doubt holds its own in seminaries constituted on the lines laid down by the Council of Trent. The necessities of the people are thus everywhere more or less perfectly provided for. These (**other**) holy retreats of science may be regarded as of value (**only**) in proportion as they are an extension of the precise ecclesiastical education given in Rome itself, and in proportion as they cultivate love and devotion to the person of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, - the Centre, and Principle of Unity. If they depart from this, if they grow even cold in this, they cease to be useful and become noxious. But while they, as all others who have preceded them, may fail, the Roman ecclesiastical education, having such a strict connection with the Infallible Teacher of the Doctrine of Christ, must remain for ever, sound and supreme.

Thus today, as in the days of St. Jerome, of St. Gregory the Great, of Innocent the Third, of St. Bonaventure, or of St. Ignatius Loyola, the Sacred City of the Popes may be likened to one vast seminary, where one generation succeeds another for the perpetuation of the Gospel-teaching which the Apostolic See extends throughout the world. That which is difficult to imagine of the Athens, of the Paris, of the Armagh, of the Oxford, or of any other of the great university towns of the past, where thousands of students were once congregated, may there (**in Rome**) be now witnessed. And, to the Catholic visitor to the Eternal City, it is a pleasant sight to see the streets daily teeming with these young students of « *every language and people and tribe and tongue* »<sup>1</sup> who come from every quarter under heaven to obtain the benefit of an ecclesiastical education at one or other of the great schools of Rome. Their varied and picturesque uniforms indicate the college, and sometimes the country, to which they belong. In their college homes they are formed to the

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<sup>1</sup> Book of Revelation - Multiple references.

strictness of ecclesiastical discipline, under wise, holy, and learned superiors. There too the lighter studies, such as church music and ceremonies, the language of Italy, their own vernaculars, and some modern tongues, are also taught; but the principal theological classes are held in larger centres to which the alumni of many colleges go for instruction as in the days of the Catacombs, of the Christian Empire, and of the Middle Ages.

**19.** These great ecclesiastical schools still energise (**give vitality and enthusiasm**) notwithstanding the events which have progressed so far to the detriment of secular Christian education in all Italy. The famous **University of the Sapienza**, for instance, is closed so far as its theological chairs are concerned. The voice of the Catholic teacher is heard there no longer, but that voice is not stilled in Rome. All the past utility of that far famed seat of learning still continues. The loftiest and best-stored (**very knowledgeable**) intellects in the Church, struggle (**compete**) for the chairs which were and are (**consequently**) filled with the ablest professors that can be found in the world. For instance, as a great chair becomes vacant by the death or promotion of its occupant, the various religious orders call from the remotest provinces their mightiest men in theological science to contend for its possession: Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, Benedictines, Augustinians, and all the men of the learned orders come forward. The foremost universities in Italy send their ablest doctors, and the most distinguished students in Rome enter the polemical arena to struggle for the prize. Before the judges, who themselves are the foremost theologians of the day, decide who to appoint, many days are devoted to disputing and to writing; and the palm (**prize**) is, therefore, invariably given to the most worthy. So, for instance, the chair *De locis Theologicis* was won by the now celebrated **Monsgr. Sepiacci**<sup>1</sup>, an Augustinian, some years ago. It had previously been held by a learned Dominican. And similarly of other chairs open to the competition of the learned men of every nation. The teachings (**courses**) of the Sapienza (**Sapienza University of Rome**), though suspended, have not ceased. They still continue at the Apollinare, the Pope's own seminary. There, at the present moment, several hundred students are daily taught. They comprise not only the alumni of the seminary itself, but those from the Capranican (**College**), the French, and other colleges.

**20.** At a little distance from the Sapienza, are **the famous schools of the Dominicans**, near their church of *Santa Maria sopra Minerva*,

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<sup>1</sup> Later was **Cardinal Luigi Sepiacci** (1835-1893). The reference to him here may be to do with his connection with the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy. Coincidentally, and subsequent to the publication of this book, Sepiacci died on the universal feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel - 26th April 1893.

in which are taught exclusively the philosophy and theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. These schools have received a great impetus through the action of (**our present**) Pope, Leo XIII, in favour of the teachings of the Angelic Doctor. The late chief professor, Cardinal Zigliara, elevated to the purple by this Pontiff, is now, with a large staff of learned Dominicans, engaged in producing a revised edition of all the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, with explanatory notes, at the expense of the Holy Father.

In the next piazza beyond the Minerva, as the Corso is approached, stood the far famed **Roman College**, the headquarters of the great Jesuit schools since the days of St. Ignatius. It (**too**) is now closed so far as theological teachings are concerned. Its members are banished. But its chairs are not silent. In the great **German Seminary** the teachings of Bellarmine, Suarez, and Perrone, are still studied by an immense body of students comprising not only the German, but the English, Scottish, and other nationalities who possess colleges in Rome.

**21.** Last but not least amongst these famed centres of orthodox teaching come the great **schools of the Propaganda Fide**, jealous as ever of their reputation as a stronghold of all manner of sacred science, and closely watched over by the Prefect and his able staff of officials. In these schools are taught not only the alumni of the **Urban College** itself, but those of the extensive **Greek College**, the students of the **Irish Pontifical College** of St. Agatha, those of the large and still growing **North American College**, the Maronite and Armenian students of **Cardinal Hassun's new college**, and others. There too, we hope before long to see congregated the alumni of distant Australia and New Zealand, destined to spread the faith in the very countries geographically most distant from the Centre of Unity, and who will, therefore, most literally fulfil the prophecy, *in omnem terram, exivit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum*<sup>1</sup>.

**22.** But all these by no means finish the record of the sacred schools of Rome. In the Eternal City every religious order on earth is represented, and in it too, the supreme governing power - as indeed it ought to be - of all of these, or nearly all, is fixed. The General and his court should be, as they are when there, close to the supreme Master of those chosen troops of Christ. There also, consequently, must be the principal schools of each order. And so it is. Some, like the Dominicans, attend the classes open to all; others are instructed by their own professors in the silence of the solitude of their several houses. But all are filled with the selfsame teaching, and all are equally under the active

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<sup>1</sup> **Psalms 18 : 5** - Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world.

superintendence of the Congregation of Sacred Studies, established to exercise the vigilance of the Vicar of Christ over a department of such supreme importance to the welfare of religion.

**23.** There is something of the miraculous in this never ceasing Roman teaching. It has not, as we have seen, been disturbed by political changes. It continues in sunshine and storm — whether in the Catacombs or by being passed on amidst the open encouragement of the Popes in the finest edifices of Christian Rome. The atheistic disturbances of today (**c.1884**) no more trouble its life than did the sacrifices and the games of the pagans. The future combatants for Christ are as little affected by the one as they were by the other. The visitor to Rome, whether the heretic or the indifferent of our day, sees with surprise the innumerable bands of students, beautiful in their modest, silent demeanour, pass through the streets and in and out of the churches with that easy confidence that children manifest in the house of their father, just as the idolater, the philosopher, and the Jew may have seen them at any time since the days of Constantine, in the Eternal City. The youthful hope of the religious orders are there in their varied habits; the future priesthood of many churches in many nations, in their picturesque and different uniforms. They pass one by at every turn in little bands through the crowded streets, sometimes while taking the brief recreation permitted them from study, at other times when going to, or returning from, their several great schools. Nowhere else can such numbers be found, at such an age who, both in countenance and in their every movement, demonstrate so clearly the possession of the grace of God. To see them, is to witness one of the proofs of the unshakeable nature of that faith of which Rome is the centre and the foundation.

**24.** In this very aggregation of the future clergy of the Roman See, and of every country in the world, there is much that commends itself for the advantage of religion. By it the future pastors of widely separated regions come to know the future labourers and governors of the Universal Church — the men who in time must occupy the places of trust and power in the various congregations of Rome, and, perhaps, the man who may one day be selected for the highest post of all (**Pope**).

The good that this does, and which it can do in our day more than ever, is simply incalculable. Friendships are formed between the churchmen of a coming generation which last for life, which never are forgotten. Students of all nations contend with the young ecclesiastics of Rome for the prizes of sacred science. The foreigner from afar gets a knowledge of the beautiful vernacular and of the usages of the Capital of Christendom whither he must always look. He knows and he is known to those upon whom will rest the responsibility of the most distant provinces. He becomes not only one in faith, in discipline, and in aim

with them, but he learns also with them the dangers that threaten, the difficulties that must be overcome, and the weapons that must be used in the warfare with the world of his day. Thus, the whole Church of God moves as a disciplined army against every occurring foe. When that foe is universal, and identical in the mode of attack, as in our own day, we cannot place too much stress upon the advantage of a Roman ecclesiastical education for the wellbeing of all the churches and especially of churches distantly situated.

**25.** But if sacred studies in general can be best made in Rome, there is one class, and a most important one, which cannot be made with completeness anywhere else. That is the study of **Canon Law**. This study is sometimes undervalued in its utility for countries where parishes are not formed, and where the secular arm does not sustain the decrees of the ecclesiastical tribunals. But it is a most important branch of study for all priests, even for those destined for the foreign or colonial missions. Canon Law directs the proceedings of all the congregations in Rome. And, **(even)** in cases where no positive enactment is laid down, the principles of Canon Law invariably guide. Moreover, when arrangements are contemplated for new and increasing Churches like that of the United States at the present moment, it is only experienced Canonists, such as the Cardinals who preside over the Roman Congregations and their assistants, who can deal with these new provisions in a spirit conformable to justice, and with a view to the stability and welfare of the Church. Then Diocesan and Provincial Synods, matrimony, censures and irregularities, cemeteries, dispensations, and a multitude of other matters coming directly within the circle of the duties of a missionary, can be dealt with safely and profitably only by those who have been favoured with a sufficient course of Canon Law. In Rome this Law is seen in practical action. The most learned professors are found there, and there its difficulties can be best and most easily explained.

There is another matter of much importance which cannot be overestimated in the case of those destined for a missionary career in distant countries. During the years of his stay in Rome, the young student learns to know how best and most effectually to check such **abuses** as the enemy is sure to cause to arise in distant provinces. His Roman education, and his knowledge of the ways of Rome, enable him to obtain a ready remedy, and so to save, in many cases, immense loss to souls, and to confer incalculable benefits upon religion. This is an advantage to the cause of Christ which can be better understood than expressed; and which all who love the Church of God will appreciate and welcome. It cannot be feared by those who mean well, and those who mean otherwise cannot, of course, be considered.

26. And then, besides the knowledge of the beautiful language of Dante, Petrarca, and Tasso, and of so many spiritual writers (**Italian**), which is acquired easily and, as it were, naturally, by the Roman student of whatever nation; and which — without the least prejudice to Latin, the language of the Church — is so convenient in one's dealings with all ecclesiastics in Rome, there is, in effect, in the Eternal City, an ecclesiastical association, which proves most valuable in its influence for good, upon the conduct and manners of the young levite. The Roman student that he meets with inherits a long and a glorious tradition. He is courteous to foreigners. He is remarkable for sound common sense. The Roman priests, whether princes or peasants, are certainly of the most cultured class in Europe.

If the empire (**governance**) of the world has left the Italians, it is certain that intellectual supremacy has not. A study of them will prove that, whatever may be their shortcomings, they are the fittest nation in Europe to rule the Church. Hence, it may be, that Providence has confided, practically (**in practice**), to them chiefly, the government of a far mightier and more extensive empire than that of the Caesars — an empire composed « *of every nation and people and tribe and tongue* ». No other nation in Europe that we know of, could rule that vast and varied mass of men, with less national prejudice, less human passion, and more calm, intelligent, cautious, and long-suffering care than they (**the Italians**) have exhibited, and still exhibit. The priesthood of Rome, in all its ranks, are an example of this. They are poor, and yet, to even the most casual observer, they seem in their comparative poverty to be the very kings of men. Amongst them are always to be found many who lead lives of the highest sanctity. Rome was ever a city of the saints; and generation after generation manifests the fact that no generation of its people is without these miracles of human sanctity who are afterwards placed on the altars of the Church. Those who live daily with these holy ecclesiastics may be too near to realise the perfection in which they spend their lives. But it is a sublime perfection for all that, and it does not fail to exercise its influence upon whomsoever comes within the range of its miraculous power. Learning, sanctity, genius are never wanting in the clergy of the Eternal City; and amongst them, the young ecclesiastic is elevated, refined, and, in every sense, improved and fitted for the post he is destined to occupy for the benefit of the world.

27. Besides, in Rome no moment of the student's time is lost. His very **recreations**, which elsewhere are taken in the walks of parks or gardens, are there passed amidst monuments which recall the greatest glories of mankind, religious and profane. No other spot on earth contains objects of such interest to the churchman and the historian.

On every day of the ecclesiastical year are celebrated, in one of the churches of Rome, some of the triumphs of Christianity in its saints and martyrs. It is one of the glories that the great basilicas have been erected in sufficient splendour to commemorate what is being recalled by a feast with all its accompanying solemnity; and then the vast architectural beauties of St. Peters or St. Paul Outside the Walls, of St. Mary Major, or St. John Lateran, are lit up with light and joy to give **éclat (brilliant effect)** to the grandeur of the ceremonial observances within their walls. Again, it could be a Triduum or Patronal Feast at some of the churches of the great religious orders or at one of the minor basilicas, which calls for attention (**attracts interest**). Another time, it could be the season of the ecclesiastical year, be it the sorrow of Lent or the joy of Easter, which is being kept in every church of the Eternal City with a fervent and general observance.

Inside the walls, outside the walls, wherever the steps of the student may be directed, there are a thousand memories to stir up within him the spirit of his faith. If he goes to the Church of St. Agnes or St. Sebastian he has beneath his feet the vast Catacombs in which the ashes of millions of martyrs are reposing. He may, now and then, explore and study these great cities of the Christian dead, and find upon their silent tombs and crypts, arguments (**meaningful words**) and illustrations to enrich his store of knowledge and to enlighten others afterwards. Every nationality has its monuments, every religious family has its most precious memorials of the past in Rome; and all are at the service of the ecclesiastical as well as of the archaeological student.

Nor are Christian recollections the only ones there. During the student's walks in the Eternal City, whether for duty or for health, he passes and re-passes the mightiest monuments of paganism: — the ruins of the palaces of the Caesars, the Colosseum, the Pantheon, the remains of the Forums, the Baths, the Circuses, the Aqueducts, the Walls of Servius and of Aurelius, the Arches, the Tombs, the Temples, and all else that rendered Rome famous in the days when she ruled the material world as she does now the spiritual.

**28.** Lastly, the vacations (**holidays**) of the Roman ecclesiastical student, spent as they are amidst the historic scenes and recollections of Latium, help the general work of his education. As we have already pointed out in the second chapter of this volume, hundreds of localities made famous in the pages of Livy, Cicero, Horace, and the other Latin classical authors with which the student for the Church is always familiar, may be visited. Then excursions can be made with ease to a number of the most remarkable retreats of the saints of old. There is within reach of all the villegiature of Latium, the great Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Counsel at Genazzano which is now, fortunately, a favourite place

of pilgrimage for the English Speaking as well as for all the other seminarists of Rome. From what we have said of this latter locality, it is clear that, even in Latium, no place could be found better situated for the purpose of an ecclesiastical student's retreat during the Summer vacation. Near it are the healthy heights of Olevano, San Vito, Civitella, and Palestrina, all admirably adapted for the purposes of a villeggiatura. It is not surprising that many seek land and villa-sites on these grand old Sabine elevations, where not only is the scenery charming and the recollections the most captivating, but where the air is the sweetest and freshest and most wholesome within reasonable reach of Rome.

The Summer vacation then, which in other countries brings so many temptations, dangers, and, in some cases, temporal inconveniences to the youthful aspirant to the priesthood, in Rome that vacation is turned to the safest and most profitable account. Neither study nor discipline is given up, but both are rendered lighter and more agreeable. The student worn out with many months of hard theological toil at the desk and in the schools, is permitted to rest and is enabled to enjoy the beauties of nature in a lovely land, which, though always beautiful, seems never so enchanting as in those very Summer months of villeggiatura-life, when it becomes a very garden of Paradise. At that time, the vines cover thousands of acres with their spreading leaves and branches, rich in ripening clusters of various coloured grapes. The orange and lemon, either budding or bearing fruit according to the altitude at which they grow. The fig tree bends beneath its luscious burden. The apricot, the peach, the pear, the apple, and other trees yield their harvest of fruit. The hay is made, the wheat is stored, the maize crop waves in the fields. The songs of the peasants, as they work in the vineyards or tread the wine press, mingle with the warbling of the nightingale and other singing birds.

The superiors of the seminarists are not slow to make those committed to their care profit by this season. Bands of young ecclesiastics therefore, may now be found enjoying long journeys to all the objects of historic and religious interest in Latium. The traveller will often meet them by the Falls of Tivoli, climbing the mountains about Subiaco, near the beautiful calm waters of the lakes of Albano and Nemi, or blending with the pilgrims that come to the Shrine of Our Lady of Genazzano. No wonder such days should be long remembered by the Roman student. And they are. They not only fit him for the hard work of the school year in Rome, but they cultivate his mind by that kind of «*travelled*» knowledge which renders him so acceptable to the world and so respectable in its eyes, by enabling him to have a personal and correct idea of places and monuments in which the educated of every nation take the deepest interest.



29. All things then being considered, a Roman Ecclesiastical education, especially for those destined for the sacred ministry in distant lands, is one which all interested in the welfare of the Church must appreciate. It would, of course, be useless to aim at giving such an education to all the Priests of any (**particular**) country. The writer has said, and wishes again distinctly to say, that in his advocacy of it, he has no desire whatever to deprecate the ecclesiastical education given elsewhere. He was himself educated for the priesthood without seeing Rome. A twenty years experience, however, on the distant mission of **Australia**, and some considerable observation in Rome, has led him to the conclusion that a Roman ecclesiastical education for a notable portion of the clergy of all distant countries is, for the reasons he has stated, a signal advantage to the Church in such countries. He believes that, for regions so situated as those of Australasia, such an education for a large proportion of the future clergy could not be easily over-estimated. It is an advantage which in part, if not entirely, could be conferred with ease upon many — say the most promising — of the students who are now preparing for the missions of Australia and New Zealand in the seminaries of Ireland, if the Australian colonies possessed in Rome a college of their own, such as America, Ireland, England, Scotland, Germany, France and other countries possess. Italy lies on the usual route of the steamers from Great Britain to Australia (**via the Suez Canal, which opened on 17th November 1869**). The expense of the journey to Rome need not, therefore, enter into any calculation of cost. Students could be kept in Rome as inexpensively as in Australia; and, if burses (**funds providing allowances for students**) were provided, even as inexpensively as in Ireland. This applies, of course, to the students who may come from Ireland. But the time is drawing near when the sons of the Catholic colonists settled in Australia may be reasonably expected to manifest vocations for the priesthood. Even at the present moment, the daughters of Australians enter, in very large numbers, into the various religious orders devoted to the purposes of education. And they prove excellent nuns. Moreover, the college of Bathurst (**St Stanislaus College**), established by the pious and zealous Bishop of that See (**Bishop Matthew Quinn**), is already a success. Several of its young alumni are the sons of Irish parents, and were born in the colonies. In the course of time their number will increase. For them especially, to whom the Australian Church of the future must look, an education in Rome would be of the greatest possible advantage. Not only would it confer upon them all that we have already pointed out in the case of the students of every other nation, but it would even do more for them than for others. It is generally admitted that a sojourn in Europe — an education obtained, at least so far as the higher studies are concerned, in

Europe — is most desirable for the native-born of Australia who may become priests.

There is always, however, a danger to their health, something to be dreaded in cold and damp latitudes. This difficulty is completely done away with in Italy, which is not only brought very near them by the Suez Route, but is also blessed with a climate resembling that of Australia.

Then as to the question of means. We have commenced this chapter by a reference to the connection between Ireland and Rome — to the value the Irish have ever placed on a Roman education. The Church of Australia is the most Irish outside of Ireland in the world. There is, therefore, a vast fund of generosity in Australia, which need be only awakened to the knowledge of the great advantage to religion we speak of, in order to raise the means to place that continent on a level with the many Catholic countries which, recently or in times past, provided for their national churches the advantages of a Roman ecclesiastical education. The writer has, therefore, ventured to place this subject before his fellow Catholics of Australia, and earnestly hopes that the Prelates and Clergy of that continent, and their Superiors in Rome, may be moved before long to take some steps in a matter he considers would be fraught with much good for a Church to whose service he has devoted his life.

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The following very interesting information regarding the Irish Franciscan College of St. Isidore, has been kindly furnished to the writer by the present Guardian, the Very Revd. Father Carey, O.S.F.

« On the 17th Dec. 1618, Father Luke Wadding arrived in Rome, forming part of the magnificent Embassy (**a deputation or mission sent by one ruler or state to another**) sent by Philip III to Pope Paul V in order to promote the definition of the Immaculate Conception of the B.M.V. He occupied the position of Theologian to the Embassy. For some time he resided with **Cardinal Gabriel a Trejo** in the Colonna Palace near the Basilica of SS. *Apostoli*; he then retired to the Convent of S. Pietro in Montorio beside the Church in which lie the remains of the famous Irish Earls O'Neill and O'Donnell. Fr. Luke Wadding, seeing the members of the Irish Province exiled from their country and scattered over the Continent of Europe, resolved on founding a College in Rome for the education of students for the Irish Franciscan Province. He purchased from Duke Orsini the ground upon which stand the present Church and College of St. Isidore. On the 24th June 1625 it was opened for the reception of students; and on the 20th Oct. in the same year Pope Urban VIII issued a Bull erecting and constituting it a College for the use of the Irish Franciscan Province. The first Professor of Theology was the renowned Fr. Ant. Hickey of Clare one of the best theologians of his time. The first Professor of Philosophy was Fr. Patrick Fleming nephew of the Lord of Slane. He was afterwards appointed Guardian of the Irish Franciscan College at Prague; but shortly after his arrival in that City he was martyred by the heretics of Saxony. Many celebrated men have gone forth from the Cloister of St. Isidore. Amongst them were Fr. Bonaventure Baron, Fr. Francis Matthews, martyred in Cork, Fr. John Ponce who took a very active part in the business of the Confederates of Kilkenny, Fr. Harold, and Fr. Francis O'Molloy, the author of the first printed Irish Grammar.

Father Luke Wadding also founded the Ludovisian College for the education of secular priests for the Irish mission. In the Church of St. Isidore, are many remarkable tombs. Here are buried, besides the Fathers mentioned above, Fr. Porter, author of several works, and chaplain to the « *Stuarts* »; Fr. Taffe of the Barons of Carlingford; Dr. Creagh of Limerick, who was private chaplain to Pope Alexander VII. In the church lie the remains of Miss Sarah Curran, daughter of John Philpot Curran and the affianced of Robert Emmet, about whom Moore wrote his touching melody « She is far from the Land ». She was received into the Church before her death. Here also lie Miss Bryen, betrothed to Prince Borghesi, and whose funeral sermon Cardinal Newman (then a deacon) preached, Mrs. and Miss Sherlock, etc. The following is the inscription on the tomb of the celebrated Father Luke Wadding as restored by Mr. Cashel Hoey.

D. O. M.  
R. A. P. FR. LUCAE WADDINGO HIBERNO  
VIRO ERUDITO  
VIRTUTIBUS ORNATO  
DE ECCLESIA RELIGIONE ET PATRIA  
BENE MERITO

LECTORI IUBILATO  
TOTIUS ORDINIS MINORUM CHRONOLOGO  
PATRI AC FUNDATORI  
OPTIMO ET AMANTISSIMO  
COLLEGIUM MOERENS POSUIT  
AERE D. HERCULIS RONCONII  
IN URBE ADVOCATI  
EIUS VERI AMICI  
OBIIT  
XVIII. NOVEMBRIS M.DC.LVII  
AETATIS LXX.

The Franciscan Fathers possess, at present, thirteen convents in Ireland. They have also established themselves in Sydney during the past few years, where they now conduct three flourishing and beautifully situated missions on the South side of Port Jackson, with remarkable success. The Very Reverend Father O'Farrell of their Order devoted many years to the mission of New South Wales, and when dying left whatever property he possessed to establish a foundation for his brethren in religion where he had long and profitably laboured.

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The following description of the ancient college obtained by the Irish Province of the Hermits of St. Augustine has been furnished by the learned historian of the Order, the Very Revd. Father Lanteri:

« **(Loose translation from Italian)** The convent of St. Matthew in Merulana was an ancient Priory, where the Crociferi Fathers lived. Suppressed by Sixtus IV, these were surrendered to the Sacristy of St. Augustine in 1475. Then he granted 25 gold florins each year. In 1650 there were only six brothers in the convent, despite it having places for 223. The convent was closed in 1652. It was offered to the Irish Fathers in 1656, who rejected it because of the poor state of the place. It was given to our Congregation in Perugia in 1661 in exchange for the convent of S. Maria Novella of Perugia which had been in the ownership of the Benedictine Nuns. On 10 March 1739, Clement XII, at the request of King James of England, granted the convent to the Irish Augustinians. In the time when the convent was under the rule of the Congregation in Perugia, the Venerable Donato, an Irishman, died in holiness in 1700. **(End of translation)** »

Before the suppression of St. Matthews Irish Augustinian Convent by the French, its last Prior was Father Philip Crane, a granduncle of the present Bishop of Sandhurst. Its last master of novices was Father William Doyle who trained the celebrated Dr. Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.

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The following notices of the manner in which the Irish Dominican Province came by the convents and churches of St. Sixtus, and of St. Clement, and about the celebrated Father John O'Connor O.P. who obtained them in the days of religious persecution in Ireland, will be read with interest by the student of ecclesiastical history. Both have been furnished to the writer by the Very Revd. Father O'Callaghan, Prior of the Irish Dominican College in Rome.

**De iurisdictione Adm. Rev. Patris Provincialis Hiberniae**  
ex "Hibernia Dominicana" et "Reg. Rmi Magistri Ordinis"

This part consists of three pages in Latin and has been reproduced as  
**Endnote 10**<sup>1</sup> without a translation.

**THE CELEBRATED INSTITUTION** known as the Irish College is one of the foremost ecclesiastical establishments in the Eternal City. It is admirably situated adjoining the Via Nazionale, the finest street now in Rome. Its church is very beautiful and gives a title to one of the Cardinal Deacons, the present Titular being the brother of His Holiness Leo XIII, Cardinal Joachim Pecci. The interior of this edifice has been recently embellished and enriched with several pictures of Irish Saints painted by Gagliardi in imitation of mosaic. Here is preserved the heart of the Liberator of the Catholics of the British Empire, the illustrious Daniel O'Connell, which he bequeathed to Rome. A mural monument in marble with a bust of the Great Tribune and an inscription, has been placed over it by Mr. Charles Bianconi once so celebrated in connection with the stage-coach system in Ireland. The college adjoining was, until both itself and the church were given for the purposes of an Irish College, a convent for *maestre pie*<sup>2</sup> (**religious teachers**) or teaching sisters for the poor. How it came to be given to the Irish was as follows. In common with all the collegiate institutions for English Speaking students in Rome, the Irish College, founded as we have already said by Cardinal Ludovisi as early as 1628, was suppressed by the French when they occupied the Eternal City at the close of the last century (**1700s**). It remained closed until 1826 when Mgr. Blake was sent to Rome by the Irish hierarchy to petition for its restoration. He was received most graciously by the then reigning Pontiff, Leo XII, who determined that the prayer of the Bishops should be complied with. Instead, however, of their ancient residence, the Irish obtained the one formerly occupied by the *Collegio-Umbro* at the *Botteghe Oscure*, with the adjoining church of *Santa Lucia de'Ginnasi*. The Pope nominated Monsgr. Blake as first Rector, and appointed Cardinal Francis Bertozzoli as Protector. Fortunately for the institution, the next Protector was Cardinal Mauro Cappellari, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide, who soon afterwards became Pope under the title of Gregory XVI. The reign of this great Pontiff was intimately connected with the spread of the Church in the vast missions then being established by the

<sup>1</sup> The Dominican Irish College of San Clemente - See Endnote 10.

<sup>2</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious\\_Teachers\\_Filippini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_Teachers_Filippini)

Irish people in America, Australia, and India. No man knew better than he did how much credit the Irish nation deserved of the Church, and, insofar as it lay in his power, he determined to favour them. Monsgr. Blake had meanwhile been succeeded in the Rectorship of the College by the celebrated Dr. Paul Cullen, afterwards the first Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin. When he was Prefect of Propaganda, Gregory XVI knew Dr. Cullen well and, as he probably had (**some idea of**) the great duties in store for him, which the latter afterwards discharged with such success for the benefit of the Irish Church, he determined to honour his assumption of the Rectorship of the Irish College with a singular mark of his favour. On the 15th February 1836 the Pope, therefore, paid the College a formal visit, and on the 16th June in the same year he made over to its Rector the present ample residence and the ancient and interesting church which the Irish students in Rome now possess. This was followed by a second visit from the same Sovereign Pontiff who in other ways also benefited the institution. An inscription commemorative of this event together with a bust of the munificent donor, was placed by the Rector on the first landing of the great staircase of the College. This inscription is as follows: -

GREGORIO·XVI·PONTIFICI·MAXIMO  
 QVOD·COLLEGIVM·HIBERNORVM·EX·GINNASIANO·DOMICILIO  
 IN·HAS·AMPLIORES·ET·AMOENIORES·AEDES·TRANSTVLERIT  
 ET·D·GREGORIVM·MAGNVM·IMITATVS  
 TEMPLVM·S·AGATAE·VIRG·ET·MART·SACRVM  
 A·DIVTVRNO·NEGLECTV·ASSERENDVM  
 ET·POPVLVM·ROMANVM  
 AD·VETEREM·ERGA·MARTYREM·PIETATEM  
 EXCITANDVM·CURAVERIT  
 COLLEGII·PRAESES  
 ANNO·MD·CCC·XXXVII

After the promotion of Monsgr. Cullen to the Primacy of Ireland, the present saintly and well known Rector, Mgr. Kirby, now Bishop of Lita, was appointed. In his time, immense improvements have been effected. The villeggiatura of the college in Tivoli has been made one of the finest Summer residences possessed by any College in the Eternal City. The number of students has increased and they are now perhaps the largest body of English Speaking ecclesiastics studying in Rome. The Australian Church owes the institution not a little. Several Bishops and priests who have successfully laboured on its various missions were its alumni. Others of them have laboured with great fruit in the United States and in Canada. By the original constitution of Cardinal Ludovisi, its founder, the College was placed under the care of the Jesuits. In 1773 it passed into the hands of the Irish secular clergy in whose care it has since remained. Its students attend the classes of the Propaganda Fide and the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation is now ex officio the Protector of the Irish College.

**NEXT IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF ITS ALUMNI**, comes the college for the students of the various missions of the United States, called

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<sup>1</sup> St. Thomas of Canterbury is now more commonly referred to as St. Thomas à Beckett.

the **NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE**. This is also the newest English Speaking College in Rome. It was established in the Pontificate of Pius IX and already has done an immense amount of good for the great and growing Church it is destined to serve. Under the able and zealous management of Mgr. Hostlott, the present Rector, it has taken immense strides. The number of its students has significantly increased. A fine villeggiatura has been provided for them at Grotta Ferrata near the Alban heights of Latium. Like those of the Irish College, the students of this institution are remarkable, even in Rome, for their great proficiency in singing and sacred ceremonies, — branches of ecclesiastical training which they learn in their respective institutions.

**THE ENGLISH COLLEGE**, situated in the Via Monserrato, is the most ancient institution for English Speaking Catholics in Rome. It was originally a hospital for English pilgrims. Its church is said to have been first built by Offa, a king in England as early as 630. In 725, Ina, king of the East Saxons, founded, in connection with this church, a hospital and school for his countrymen. In 793 Offa, king of the Mercians, increased the revenues of this hospital, and to him is attributed the erection of the ancient Church called the Most Holy Trinity of the Scots. The word Scott was then the appellation of the Irish, and came to be generally applied to the Caledonians who were converted to Christianity by St. Columbkille (**Columbcille**), and to the Northern English evangelised by Irish Saints, chiefly disciples of the Apostle of Scotland. A tradition exists to the effect that St. Thomas of Canterbury<sup>1</sup> lived in this hospital when he came to Rome to defend himself against the calumnies of Henry II. For this reason, probably, the church of the hospital was afterwards dedicated to him after he suffered martyrdom at the hands of the servants of his ruthless persecutor. A certain Mr. John Shephard and his wife left all their goods to this institution, and many English bishops and nobles were also its benefactors. When the heresy of Henry VIII, and his children (**Edward and Elizabeth**), desolated England there was little further use for the establishment as a hospital for English pilgrims. Through the influence of the celebrated Father Parsons S.J. and Cardinal Allen, the zealous Pontiff Gregory XIII dedicated its buildings and its revenues to the purposes of a seminary for the education of priests for the English mission. He then also increased its revenues and conferred valuable privileges upon it. Many a martyr went subsequently from its halls in the terrible reign of Elizabeth. It continued its work until it was suppressed by the French. Since its restoration it has been prolific in distinguished men, amongst whom the most eminent was Nicholas Wiseman, afterwards Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. Its present Rector, Monsgr. O'Callaghan has done much to advance its interests, and has been specially successful in restoring — or rather re-erecting — the beautiful Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury. For this, and for his careful and able management of the College for many years, the reigning Pontiff, Leo XIII, has been pleased to appoint him to the high, but deserved, honour of Domestic Prelate. Its students used to attend the theological lectures of the Roman college, the chairs of which have been transferred by recent events to that of the German-Hungarian Seminary.

**LIKE THE ENGLISH, THE SCOTTISH** had, from a very early period, a church and a hospital for their countrymen in Rome. These being abandoned upon the apostasy of Scotland, the great Pontiff, Clement VIII, anxious to

keep the faith alive in that country, founded a house for Scottish students opposite the Church of Santa Maria of Constantinople. He appointed as Protector the Cardinal Camillus Borghesi who afterwards became Pope under the name of Paul V. The latter, when Pope, appointed Cardinal Barberini, Protector, who also succeeded to the Chair of Peter, and took the name of Urban VIII. These circumstances were fortunate for the institution. In 1604 Clement VIII, its founder, transferred it to a place more agreeably situated and larger, opposite the Barberini palace, and gave it the adjoining church dedicated to St. Andrew, titular Patron of Scotland. In 1616 Paul V gave the care of the institution to the Jesuits. The college was suppressed by the French and remained closed until 1820, when it was re-opened under secular management by Pius VII. The students attended theological classes in the Roman College before the recent changes in Rome. Its Rector is Monsgr. Campbell.

While this chapter was passing through the Press a cruel blow was dealt by the legal agents of the Italian Government at the real property of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda. This act of spoliation is described as follows in a contemporary number of the *Tablet*.

The landed property of Propaganda, in value about eighteen million lire, has for a long time attracted the attention of the Italian Government. As far back as 1873 a law was passed forbidding land to be held in mortmain (**inalienable possession**); but it was not until VICTOR EMMANUEL was dead that the *Giunta Liquidatrice* thought of applying it to Propaganda. Early in 1880 the Giunta resolved that the international character of the property of Propaganda should no longer protect it, and accordingly offered the whole of its lands for sale. Legal proceedings were then commenced, and have been carried on with varying success from that time till now. Beaten in the Court of Cassation (**a type of high appeal court**), the Giunta appealed with well-founded confidence to the Supreme Court, and now it is finally decided that the Congregation is for ever incapable of holding real property in Italy. If this were all, it might seem that we had been over-hasty in describing **as confiscation** what in reality is only a forced conversion. But confiscation is the only word which rightly fits the appropriation to itself by the Government of more than half the property to be dealt with. If the lands were merely sold, the gain to the Government would not be apparent, and action would probably never have been taken, though Propaganda might well complain that **Italian bonds** were poor securities when taken in exchange for Italian farms. But it has been arranged that a tax of no less than thirty per cent shall be charged upon the whole amount of the property doomed to conversion. Again, there is a transfer duty of four per cent, and six per cent for land tax — making in all forty per cent. Then, for the benefit of the Government Ecclesiastical Fund — whatever that may be — there is yet another duty, a progressive tax, beginning at fifteen per cent on 10,000 francs revenue, and going up to forty per cent on larger sums. The result of this scarcely-disguised spoliation is to strike a blow at the Church, the full force of which can hardly yet be measured.



It is needless to say that Catholics in English Speaking lands, and Catholics of Irish birth and blood especially, will not permit the noble institution which conferred so many blessings upon them and upon their ancestors to perish, or even to be curtailed in its great work. No doubt our Bishops, whom it so much concerns, will everywhere move in the matter, and find means by which funds may be provided permanently in their respective countries, and at a safe distance from the rapacity of the **Freemasons of Italy**, to carry on the work of the Propaganda in its entirety.

Not merely the wise and provident administration of the Church in — materially speaking — nine tenths of the world, but also the Urban College itself, which has been so prolific in pastors and martyrs, is threatened by the present stroke. Australians, in founding a college of their own in Rome, would be carrying out the intent of the Urban College perfectly, while at the same time serving their own best interests. But, independently of that, the Propaganda has claims upon them, and upon all Catholics, which Catholic love and conscience will not forget. When these claims are made known; when a wise and careful system of investment and trusteeship is devised in every English Speaking country; not only will subscriptions and donations be collected, but, the writer feels assured, that the faithful, both clergy and laity, will gladly remember the Propaganda in the last dispositions of their property. There is no institution on earth where a comparative little has been made to do so much as the funds of the Propaganda have been made to do, by the care of the Popes and by the administrators of so great and so holy a charity. When we reflect upon the enormous sums amassed and expended by the proselytising « Bible » and other such sectarian societies in England and America, and compare the results with those of the Catholic Propaganda we come at once to see the value, even in an administrative sense, of the latter institution. It is devoted to the spread of the faith. It has done its work nobly, and that for centuries. It is the grand protest of Catholic zeal against heretical effort at proselytism. Catholics will not, cannot, let it die or even languish. The writer believes that this last attempt of Infidelity at the Spouse of Christ will bring such a response before many years from all parts of the world, and from Irish Catholic zeal alone, as will place the Propaganda in a better position than ever before, for the carrying on of its beneficent and heavenly mission.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A brief account of the origin, nature, and history of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide will be found at the end of the next, and final, chapter.

## Chapter XXVIII - APPENDIX

### THE IRISH AUGUSTINIANS

1. Augustinians, the Guardians of the Sanctuary, and propagators of devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel everywhere else, will also be so in English Speaking lands. - 2. Their position in England and Ireland in the past - Their suppression - Persecutions. - 3. Their condition during the penal days in Ireland. - 4. Love of the Irish for the Augustinians - Its reason - Bishop Comerford. - 5. Their condition when toleration was first granted to Catholics. - 6. Famous Augustinians - Dr. (**William**) Gahan O.S.A. - His "Sermons" - His "Catholic Piety" - His "Church History" etc. - 7. Dr. (**James**) Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin - aka **JKL**. - 8. The Augustinian novitiate in Grantstown in which he was professed - Coimbra - Effect of Dr. Doyle's writings on English statesmen. - 9. Other Irish Augustinians. - 10. Foundation of the American Province - Its progress - Present condition. - 11. Action of Irish Augustinians in Australia. - 12. Mgr. James Alipius Goold, first Bishop and Archbishop of Melbourne. - 13. Reasons for his going to Australia - Condition of the Catholics in the penal settlements of New Holland<sup>1</sup> - Their sufferings - Archpriest (**Jeremiah Francis**) O'Flynn sent by Rome but was sent back by the Governor. - 14. Father (**John Joseph**) Therry. - 15. His works for the scattered Catholics - His influence and labours - Consequences to Catholicity. - 16. Appointment of the first Bishop and coming of Father (**James Alipius**) Goold - His works as a missionary and appointment as first Bishop of Melbourne - His career as Bishop and Archbishop. - 17. Mons. (**Martin**) Crane first Bishop of Sandhurst. - 18. Conclusion.

1. In the progress of this work, much has been necessarily said about the guardians whom Our Lady was pleased to select for the custody and service of Her sacred Image. Faithfully, for over four hundred years, they have fulfilled that honourable trust. In their hands, the Sanctuary of Genazzano is today (**1884**) as carefully attended to, and more splendidly surrounded than ever. They have had to yield, and sometimes to succumb, to storms of persecution during that long period. They have been tried in every land. Many of their noblest houses in Italy are today as desolate as the mouldering priories of their once flourishing provinces in England and Ireland. Dearth of men and scarcity of means compel them now, as at other periods, to abandon convents and colleges which were once the pride of flourishing cities. But no persecution, in the past or in the present, has been able to force them to relinquish the blessed treasure brought to their ruined church of Santa Maria in Genazzano by angelic hands from Scutari in 1467.

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<sup>1</sup> **New Holland** - Old name for Australia

And then, as we have seen, their members have been, not only the jealously careful custodians of the Sanctuary, but also the most zealous propagators of devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, in all the lands which have been blessed by their ministrations. In Germany, in France, in Spain, in South America, in the far Philippine Islands, that devotion is, at this moment (**1884**), being propagated by the Augustinians as earnestly as in Italy. Now, in no countries have they a prospect so bright for their future as in the many regions wherein the English language is spoken, and for the benefit of which this effort (**the writing of this book**) to make known the glories of Our Lady of Good Counsel, is being made. It may be said with truth that these English Speaking lands are now the only ones where the Gospel of Christ is thoroughly free, and where the great religious families of the Catholic Church may exert their blessed influence for the benefit of mankind and for the greater glory of God without let or hindrance. It is, therefore, no wonder that the religious orders, harassed to such an extent in the old Catholic nations of Europe, should seek the vast fields opened in these countries to expend their energies, and raise up amidst the gathering darkneses of Atheism, a new and a glorious Church, filled with all the light and splendour, the reality of faith and the ardour, of the palmiest days of Christianity. They are doing so. And amongst these we find the sons of St. Augustine, who bring with them the memories of the ages of faith, a freshness of vigour and discipline recalling the days of St. Thomas of Villanova and of St. Nicholas of Tolentine; while they labour to extend amongst all classes coming under their influence, a deep tender love for the Virgin Mother of God — the surest foundation of the spiritual life — by means of that very devotion which this work is designed to extend.

2. There is something of the wonderful indefectibility (**resistance to failure**) of the Church herself, in this aspect of the Augustinians, as they energise (**give vitality and enthusiasm**) thus before our eyes, in that vast world where English is spoken. They were crushed to death under Henry VIII of England. Their fine priories which overspread England and Ireland, with the lands and tenements (**rented pieces of land**) attached - the blessed inheritance of the poor -, passed into sacrilegious hands. The strongest possible barrier was thus created, out of their very own means, to bar the return of their Order at any future time. The unjust holders of monastic property were then, and have been ever since, the most powerful and most rabid enemies of the Catholic religion; for they feared and hated those whom they had dispossessed. Draconian laws (**penal laws**), banishment, imprisonment, and a painful and shameful death, were decreed, and strictly enforced, against the despoiled religious in all then existing English Speaking countries. The effect intended was in part

secured, but, thank Heaven!, only in part. So far as the Hermits of St. Augustine were concerned, they disappeared completely from England, but not at all from Ireland.

Laws as bad as in England were also put in execution against them in Ireland. The ruin of their convents and of their means of support was as complete. The bitterest enemies of the Catholic faith held their lands and worked a tyrant's will upon their churches, convents, and even cemeteries. They were put outside the protection of the law, hunted down like beasts of prey, imprisoned, banished, and “hanged, drawn and quartered”. Some fell by the sword; others were trampled under horses feet; and not a few were starved or scourged to death. But yet (**large**) numbers remained (**in Ireland**) and ministered to their brethren despite the fury and the wiles of their adversaries. They lived in the caves of the mountains, in the clefts of the cliffs by the sea, in the shealings (**huts**) of the bogs, in the ruins of dismantled castles, in the recesses of forests. They travelled through the country disguised in a hundred ways, as mechanics and merchants, as herds and labourers. They lay hid in the cellars and garrets of large cities, and assembled their trembling flocks by night or before break of day in hay-lofts and barns; or, if in the open country, in some silent, sequestered nook, where the rock that served as their altar is still venerated today (**Mass Rocks**). So they lived like the rest of their religious brethren, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Carmelites, and others, until the fury of the tempest abated, and they were at last permitted to live in the land, and to minister in peace to its people.

3. The days of persecution in the British Islands, and in the widespread colonies and conquests which the trading energy of their people has, since the days of Elizabeth, added to the British Empire, those days have now happily ceased. The generation just passing away saw the legal fetters removed from the feet of the long oppressed Catholics<sup>1</sup>. The light of the Last Judgment alone can reveal to mortal eyes, the virtue and heroism of the martyrs and confessors who so bravely and patiently struggled through the long and terrible ordeal, without one ray of worldly comfort, without one particle of human motive to sustain them, and so interfere with the pure splendour of their merit in suffering for conscience sake — for God. In Ireland, for the most part, their histories cannot be written. As countless as the blades of corn that yearly fall before the sickle of the reaper, they fell rather than renounce their faith. Even the short glory of history was denied them. The acts of their martyrdom were destined not to reach future generations. Like the nameless millions in the known and unknown catacombs of Rome, they passed to heaven to be, at least individually, remembered there only.

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<sup>1</sup> Catholic Emancipation - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic\\_emancipation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_emancipation)

The Catholic people of Ireland had a language in those days without a literature (**The Irish Language**). It was a crime for them to learn to read or write even in the language of the oppressor (English). They learned the great truths of religion, they prayed fervently throughout life and, when called upon to renounce the Catholic Church or to submit to the extreme penalty of the law on the gallows, they made their last grand confession of the faith, for which or because of which they died, in words (**Irish**) which, though used by the most learned of the past, were unknown to and unheeded by the persecutors of the penal days. The missionaries, hunted as we have seen, had neither time nor means to record all the instances of the people's heroism. Sometimes, chance casts a gleam of light upon the darkness which enveloped their long Calvary; and thus, from a few instances, we may gather the nature of the Martyr Nation's faith. In general, however, the Irish people lived and suffered and died in an obscurity which hid them from the eyes of mortals then and in time to come. But their lives and their deaths were nonetheless bright before the great host of Heaven, and are nonetheless likely to live so throughout eternity. They were martyrs, for their millions passed to God from Erin (**Ireland**), after long life-sufferings and bitter deaths, inflicted upon them solely because of the hatred which the heresy that oppressed them had for their religion, and through their religion for themselves. Thousands of their pastors passed with them in various ways for the same reasons to bitter deaths, and amongst these latter a glorious place is held by the sons of St. Augustine in Ireland.

4. This was as it should be. The Augustinians claim **St. Patrick**, the Apostle of Ireland, as one of their Order - at least as a Canon Regular of St. Augustine. They exhaust much learned research to prove this point, and it is a point worthy of all that they do to elucidate it. In any case, it is certain that St. Patrick brought to Ireland the deepest devotion to the great Doctor of Hippo, whose fame was, in his day, fresh and potent in all the churches. « **The City of God** » and the « **Confessions** » of the son of St. Monica are familiar, and they have been so for fourteen hundred years, to all the peasantry of Ireland; and devotion to the mother who won that erring son to God is, and has always been, strong in the country. No wonder then, that the Canons Regular were welcomed to Ireland in the earlier ages, and that when the Hermits appeared with that peculiar fascination which Fathers of the Mendicant Orders have always had for the mass of Irish Catholics, they too were received with open arms.

These latter obtained from the native Irish princes, even more than from the Norman nobility, a cordial welcome. Their houses outside the English Pale (**a protected area around Dublin**) became so numerous that they formed a special province before the era of the so-called Reformation. But it was that which placed them in their best

light by showing them, in the manner we have described, as amongst the very foremost defenders and preservers of the faith in Ireland. From their colleges in the Eternal City, from those they had in France, Spain, and the Netherlands, hundreds went forward in every generation to Ireland to sustain its faith. Every gleam of light cast upon Irish History in the long, dark night which followed, shows (**large**) numbers of them working, and foremost in the cause of God's suffering people. The very first amongst the Irish Prelates, during the eventful period of the **Confederation of Kilkenny**, was an Augustinian named Monsgr. (**Patrick**) Comerford<sup>1</sup>, who was then Bishop of Waterford, and throughout the whole war the fast friend of the Nuncio, **Giovanni Rinuccini**<sup>2</sup>.

5. Moreover, the first dawn of freedom upon Irish Catholics in the last century (**1700s**) manifested (**showed**) the Hermits of St. Augustine at the work of evangelisation from which they had never once desisted since the days of Henry VIII. In all the great cities, in almost every town and hamlet in which was found a stone of their ruined convents, Augustinian Fathers emerged from the hiding places in which they had before ministered by stealth, and they at once proceeded to assemble their flocks in such temporary churches as the poverty of the long oppressed people enabled them to provide. Thus they came in the lanes and alleys of Dublin and Cork, Limerick and Galway, Callan and Drogheda, Dungarvan and Fethard, and other scenes of the former glory of their ancient institute. With the tenacity of the rook they clung, whenever it was possible, to the very ruins of their confiscated houses. When that was not possible, they kept within sight of them, and so continued the claims of the past. As the dawn of religious liberty in Ireland advanced to perfect day, they suited themselves admirably to every stage of its advancement. Men from their ranks were foremost — leaders in fact — in the great religious renovation which followed the permission given to Catholics to practise their religion in peace in Ireland. We cannot here refer to all the Augustinians thus distinguished, but shall take two as a type (**an example**) of the others; one of them the celebrated Father (**William**) Gahan<sup>3</sup>, and the other the still more celebrated Dr. (**James**) Doyle<sup>4</sup>, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.

6. The fame of both of these Augustinians still lives, and will for ever live in Ireland because of their writings. But they were, each in his

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<sup>1</sup> **Patrick Comerford, O.E.S.A.** - Appointed on 12 February 1629 and consecrated on 18 March 1629. Died in office on 10 March 1652.

See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop\\_of\\_Waterford\\_and\\_Lismore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop_of_Waterford_and_Lismore)

<sup>2</sup> **Giovanni Battista Rinuccini (1592-1653)**

See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni\\_Battista\\_Rinuccini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Battista_Rinuccini)

<sup>3</sup> **William Gahan, O.S.A. (1732-1804)** - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Gahan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Gahan)

<sup>4</sup> **James Warren Doyle, O.E.S.A. (1786-1834)** -

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Warren\\_Doyle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Warren_Doyle)

own way, very much more than writers. They both knew thoroughly the wants of the Church in Ireland in the age in which they lived; and each one, with a powerful influence, endeavoured to supply these wants. Father Gahan appeared at the precise moment of transition from slavery to freedom. The clergy of the country, educated abroad (**in non-English Speaking countries**) and, because of the prevalence of the native language (**Irish**) amongst the classes from which they were then recruited, having thus little opportunity of mastering English, were necessarily deficient in the latter language. In consequence, the English sermons of the period were defective to a large degree. To supply a remedy, Father Gahan, blessed as he was with a complete mastery of pure English, composed a volume of discourses, moral exhortations, and panegyrics (**eulogies**), which, while of unspeakable benefit to the clergy of the day, have not since been surpassed by any composer of sermons in English. They have been reproduced in numberless forms in all the countries where English is spoken, and, because of the matter they deal with, they remain, to this day, a standard collection found in the library of almost every English Speaking ecclesiastic.

Furthermore, the good Father set about preparing a manual of devotion for the laity. This, called the **Catholic Piety**, was also perfect in its way. Its prayers, whether composed by the pious author or translated, bear the impress of his individuality, and they run on (**continue**) in his peculiarly simple, pure, but most impressive style. He also composed a small **Church History** and other minor treatises. But he was more than a mere writer. He was emphatically a worker. As Provincial of his Order in Ireland, he did much to extend and improve it. He helped in founding a college for its youth, and besides churches, built extensive schools for the poor. He was perhaps the most influential ecclesiastic of his time with the prelates of Ireland. His advice led to much of the renovation in discipline everywhere in the country. The opinion which Lord Dunboyne<sup>1</sup>, the unfortunate Bishop of Cork, had of his prudence and virtue, led to the return of that nobleman to the fold after his sad fall, and to the attempt he made to repair his scandal by founding (**“funding” might be a more appropriate term**) a college<sup>2</sup> for the Church that his conduct was so calculated (**very likely**) to injure.

7. Before Father Gahan had passed to his reward, the greatest Augustinian, and indeed the greatest ecclesiastic that Ireland had produced for many centuries (**Dr. James Doyle**), arose to bless the Church, then emerging into the full noon of her freedom. The wounds inflicted by centuries of persecution were still fresh. The disorder which

<sup>1</sup> John Butler, (1731-1800) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Butler,\\_12th\\_Baron\\_Dunboyne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Butler,_12th_Baron_Dunboyne)

<sup>2</sup> St. Patrick's College, Maynooth

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St\\_Patrick%27s\\_College,\\_Maynooth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Patrick%27s_College,_Maynooth)

the penal days had created was still perceptible everywhere. The salutary discipline which preserves the fervour of the Church in other Catholic lands, was not in vigour. Retreats for the clergy, theological conferences, diocesan synods, and other works had been interrupted in many places. Until then, the clergy could scarcely assemble for any spiritual purpose without arousing the suspicions of the Government. They needed unity of action and of aim, in Ireland as well as throughout Great Britain. Practical religious liberty was allowed, but complete **Catholic Emancipation** was not, at that time, obtained. Catholics were still everywhere compelled to pay tithes of all they possessed to the Protestant clergy - a clergy, in Ireland, without flocks. The people scarcely realised their power. The stamp of past slavery was still upon them. The insolence of the dominant religious faction did not pass away with the measures enacted to give Catholics relief.

A master mind, a mind well stored (**informed**) not only with professional knowledge, but also with that knowledge which commands respect from the whole population; a mind active, fearless, and formed to lead, joined with a heart full of devotion to the Church, was required at that period in the Catholic body. All these qualities appeared in a young Augustinian Father, educated in Portugal, and then employed in a little college of his order at **Ross** in the county of Wexford.

It may not be here out of place to mention that a general college had been established some years previously by another celebrated Augustinian in this town but it afterwards closed. This Father was the **Revd. Fr. John Crane**, a grand-uncle of the present zealous Bishop of Sandhurst (**Martin Crane**) in Australia. He emulated the good example given by his brethren in Dublin, and his college, though but short-lived, did an immense amount of good. It was the cause of sending several worthy subjects into the little novitiate of the Augustinians, and amongst others, the afterwards famous Dr. (**James**) Doyle.

**8.** In the same county (**Wexford**), the Irish Augustinians had established their unpretending novitiate at Grantstown. Mr. Fitzpatrick, the interesting biographer of Dr. Doyle, speaks thus of this establishment:-

« The convent and chapel of Grantstown was an old, unpretending, thatched edifice, providing an example of the modest and gradual efforts made by Catholic Ireland in the last century (**1700s**) to assert its ancient faith. Another chapel of the Order situated at Callan (**in County Kilkenny**) was built of mud; and, the roof falling in one day during Mass, the congregation had to support it with their hands and shoulders until Father Grace, a venerable old friar, completed the Holy Sacrifice. The convent of Grantstown is approached by a long avenue, lined on either side by stately trees. It stands adjacent to the sea-shore, within some miles of Carnsore Point which forms the junction



of the eastern and southern coasts of Ireland. The extreme retirement (**isolation**) of the locality led to its selection for the training of novices . . . . »

« . . . The site of the old Augustinian Convent at Grantstown was selected in consequence of its proximity to Clonmines (**also in County Wexford**), where the majestic ruins of a monastery of the Eremites of St. Augustine still exist. They are situated in a fertile valley, with a gradually rising ground in the rear and an extensive estuary of the sea in front, which is navigable for yachts to the very walls. »

In this primitive novitiate, Dr. Doyle made his first preparation for that which he afterwards became for the Augustinian Order and for the Church in Ireland. He drew his first inspirations from the holy men who trained him in the practices of the life of a religious, and afterwards from the writings of the great Doctor of the Church whose powerful grasp of thought and mastery of expression he appeared to have inherited, together with his vast extent and purity of doctrine. Dr. Doyle was, to the last, a zealous and pious religious and, even if his foreign studies had been made at Rome instead of at the famous schools of Coimbra in Portugal (**where he did study**), no more perfect ecclesiastic would probably have ever appeared in the British Islands.

His vigour, his command of clear, terse, strong English, his real piety, his desire to see the diocese over which he ruled, and all the dioceses of his native land, renewed in true ecclesiastical discipline, his unwearied labour in the pursuit of that grand object, and of every object having for its end the amelioration of his native land and of his co-religionists throughout the British Empire, made him a man feared by enemies and trusted and admired by friends. He became, in his day, the Bossuet<sup>1</sup> of the Irish Church, and of the Catholic Church in the three kingdoms<sup>2</sup>. At a period when a Catholic ecclesiastic was but barely tolerated, and practically (**in practice and in fact**) denied a civil position, he became an (**unavoidable**) factor in the politics of the various administrations which supported or opposed the claims of the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland. His genius and his unwearied industry gained him this proud position. English statesmen were forced to admire him as a very monarch in that cultivated domain of thought, in which, they were accustomed to believe, that no down-trodden member of the Catholic priesthood would dare even to enter. His power over such men was all the greater because of the profound wisdom of his political opinions, his moderation, and his manifestation, in a true light, of that sense of justice and order which the prelacy of the Catholic Church, led by the teachings of their Supreme Chief and by the Spirit of God their

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (1627-1704) -

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques-B%C3%A9nigne\\_Bossuet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques-B%C3%A9nigne_Bossuet)

<sup>2</sup> “England/Wales”, “Scotland” and “Ireland”

Master, know so well how to oppose to the encroachments of anarchy and revolution. England at first feared Dr. Doyle. But she soon learned to admire him; and it may be said that his genius, aided by the political friends of Emancipation in Parliament (such as **Daniel O'Connell**), did more to open the way for a just and impartial consideration of the Catholic claims than any ecclesiastical influence which appeared at that critical period. A Catholic ecclesiastic is now heard whenever he has got anything to say, and when he can say it with the commanding power of J.K.L.<sup>1</sup>. No ecclesiastical writer of any denomination — if we except Cardinal Newman — has been able to attain the same eminence. But if Catholic ecclesiastics were heard at all in the days of religious bondage, it was largely owing to the impression made by the singularly gifted son of St. Augustine, whom Providence raised up for so many wise purposes, at that most critical period in the history of the great struggle to give religious liberty to so many millions of Catholics in Ireland and elsewhere throughout the British Empire.

9. The Irish Augustinians possessed a host of minor lights also, at this period. Amongst them may be mentioned the saintly (i) Bishop of Saldaña, Dr. (**Daniel**) O'Connor; (ii) Father John Crane whose grave is visited as that of a saint by thousands, and whose coffin has been again and again stripped of the earth placed over it by the devout multitudes who desire to have a relic of one they believe to have been favoured with miraculous powers; (iii) Dr. (**Thomas**) Furlong; (iv) Fr. Sheehan; and many other eminent men, contemporaries of Dr. Doyle and of Father Gahan.

10. It was about this period also that they commenced what is now their vast and flourishing American Province in the **United States**. The first Irish Augustinians went to Philadelphia towards the end of the last century (**late 1700s**). These were Dr. Carr and Father Rossiter. After them went the well remembered **Dr. Hurley** who soon became famous for his charity. He gave up his residence (in Crown Street) for the use of the cholera patients in 1832<sup>2</sup>; and when many Protestant ministers left their flocks to the mercy of that plague, he and his brethren of the priesthood remained fearlessly, not only to give their people the last succours of religion, but to console and assist them even in a temporal sense. In 1839 **Dr. Patrick Eugene Moriarty**<sup>3</sup>, a famous preacher and lecturer was appointed first Commissary General of the American Augustinians. Under him the fine tract of land of about 300 acres, upon which the college of St. Thomas of Villanova now stands, was purchased. It is situated about 12 miles from Philadelphia on the

<sup>1</sup> J.K.L. were the official initials of Dr. Doyle as Bishop - James Kildare and Leighlin.

<sup>2</sup> See - A History of Philadelphia By Daniel Bowen (p136) 1839 ~Google Books~

<sup>3</sup> See - The Catholic Record, Volume 9 (p325) 1875 ~Google Books~

Pennsylvania Railroad which intersects the property. Its extensive buildings were commenced by the Commissary General O'Dwyer, and continued under Commissary General Stanton. Other superiors of the Order have added considerably to its beauty and extent and it is now one of the first (**foremost**) religious establishments in America. Its community consists of fifty members including novices. It has an extensive establishment for higher education under the direction of the Fathers. This school enjoys all the privileges of a university, being incorporated as such by the State.

In 1844, the church of the Augustinians in Philadelphia was burned almost to ashes by the fanatical anti-Catholic **Know-Nothings**<sup>1</sup>. The only remnant left was the wall behind the High Altar on which, when the fire ceased, were left distinctly visible the words in gilt letters of an inscription —

**« THE LORD SEETH »**

This created a great sensation, even amongst the Protestant population. The City of Philadelphia gave 40,000 dollars to make good the loss, and the Augustinians, besides having a temporary chapel built for their immediate use, which still serves for schools and confraternities, were able, in 1847, to open one of the finest churches of the city. Nothing, however, could recompense them for the loss of their library and records, both of which completely perished in the flames that had consumed their old church and dwelling. Besides their parish in Philadelphia, they have a very large and growing mission in Lawrence where they have established four parishes and attend to the wants of a Catholic population of some twenty thousand souls. They also attend to the missions of Methune and Andover in the diocese of Boston; to Haverford, Chestnut Hill, and St. Thomas in the diocese of Philadelphia; to Atlantic City in New Jersey; and in Albany, to Lansingburgh, Cambridge, Hoosic Falls, Carthage, and other missions.

**11.** But great as is the progress which the Irish Augustinians have made in America, it bids fair to be eclipsed by that which they are making, and the still greater progress they are destined to make, in the newest of continents, Australia. This progress commenced with the missionary career of a single member of the Order, the present illustrious first Bishop and Archbishop of Melbourne, **James Alipius Goold**<sup>2</sup>, and continues to this day. Within the past few months, the Propaganda has offered to the Irish Province of the Augustinian Order the vast and difficult Vicariate of North Queensland, which is situated entirely in the

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<sup>1</sup> The Know Nothing Movement - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Know\\_Nothing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Know_Nothing)

<sup>2</sup> James Alipius Goold (1812-1886) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Alipius\\_Goold](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Alipius_Goold)  
(Note - The writer, Mons. Dillon, incorrectly referred to him as John.)

Torrid Zone (**The Tropics**). In a truly apostolic spirit, that offer has been accepted, and the actual Provincial of the Irish Province and some of the foremost men of his Order, have volunteered for the glorious but perilous mission to the destitute Catholics and to the heathen (**not belonging to a major religion**) aboriginals of the most northern part of Australia.

Meanwhile Australia has had many Irish Augustinians, several of whom have already given their best years to its service. In Victoria, the names of Archdeacon Dowling, an ex-Prior of Posterula, and of Dean Hayes, appointed first Bishop of Armidale just before his death, are yet remembered. Others still labour on in the service of its many missions, and foremost amongst these is the first of their number who volunteered for Australia at the period of its deepest distress, namely, the zealous and venerable Archbishop we have referred to, and then the no less devoted and zealous Bishop of Sandhurst, who, as we shall see further on, after being twice Provincial of his Order in Ireland, and after accomplishing some of its greatest and most laborious works, was called by the Holy See to undertake the important charge in which he is at present so successfully engaged.

**12.** But it is the venerable Archbishop of Melbourne (**James Alipius Goold**) who brings the Augustinians in Australia most prominently before the world's mind. He has been connected with the Church in Australia from its very infancy. He has made that important portion of it in the colony of Victoria what it is. And, before being appointed to the See of Melbourne, he laboured for nine years on various missions in the larger and mother colony of New South Wales.

How he came to go to Australia is as interesting as any other portion of his eventful and valuable career. He was born, as the learned historian of the Augustinian Order, Father Lanteri, tells us, in the city of Cork, Ireland, in the year 1812. The Irish Augustinians have one of their most flourishing convents in that Catholic city, where still the celebrated old priory of their order in its southern suburb sends its well preserved tower high into the sky. Monsgr. Goold entered the Augustinian Order when young, and was one of those who made their novitiate in the scenic but secluded monastery at Grantstown (**in Wexford**). Thence he passed to Santa Maria in Posterula in Rome; and there, and at Perugia, made his theological studies with so much credit that, in 1835, and while yet under the canonical age, he was ordained priest by the Bishop of Perugia, Bishop Charles Cittadini (**2 Oct 1818 - 16 Apr 1845 Died**).

**13.** Now during the whole course of the studies of Father Goold, the attention of the British public, and the attention especially of his fellow citizens of Cork, was powerfully directed to the condition of the Catholics in the distant penal settlements of New Holland, or, as that continent was then popularly called, « **Botany Bay** », from the name of

that part of it near Port Jackson where the discoverer, Captain Cook, first landed.

The vast majority of the Catholics to be found in Australia at that early period were Irish prisoners, transported generally for political offences arising out of the oppressed condition of their country and religion. At the precise time we speak of, the mass of Catholic convicts were transported principally for **(the offence of)** “rescuing” cattle from tithe proctors; and for similar acts provoked by the fact that Catholic people were obliged to support, from their poverty, the idle clergy of an alien, hated, and hostile heresy. They never believed their punishment to be deserved, nor was it proportionate; and then, the bitterness of religious (**sectarian**) hatred followed them to their place of banishment. Their punishment, in general, consisted of several years of penal servitude, or what was in reality **temporary slavery**. During the periods of sentences, varying from seven years to the length of a lifetime, they were as much at the mercy of their masters as were the Negroes in the service of the slave owners of America. Those who made profit out of their labour were also the ones to decide whether or not they deserved a pardon or a reduction in the term of enforced servitude. As a consequence a pardon was rarely given; and the relief of a prisoner was as infrequent as those who profited by their labour could make it. Some masters were, in fact, very kind indeed, but others were monsters in human shape. The latter starved, flogged, and crushed with every kind of severity the miserable beings confided to them by Government. But worse yet, these petty tyrants were also generally fanatically anti-Catholic. They managed to evade the law which protected the freedom of the convict's conscience, or, as likely, they broke that law without scruple. Besides using a hundred methods to seduce those poor, brave Irish Catholics so helplessly depending upon their good graces, they frequently employed the lash under the pretence of disobedience to lawful commands, in the case of the many whom no arts could persuade to abandon their faith or even to put in an appearance at a Protestant service.

And this happened in Australia at a time when the religious destitution of the Catholics there was complete. Even those whose terms of punishment had expired and who married and had families, had no Catholic Priest to bless their union, no Catholic school to instruct their children, no Catholic service to sanctify the Lord's Day, no consecrated hand to administer baptism to their offspring, to give absolution to them while living, or to console them with the last rites of religion when dying. Worse still, they were themselves, as a rule, the very Catholics of Ireland whom severe penal laws forbade to be educated. They very often had but a poor idea of the English language. Many of them could not repeat the simplest prayers in English.

Necessity sometimes, and sometimes occasion, caused several to intermarry with those not of their own religion. Moreover there were, on all sides of them, strong influences at work to deprive their children, if not themselves, of the faith they held more precious than life. Protestant schools were established everywhere. No other schools were supported or tolerated, at least in practice, if not in law. The Holy See saw with grief and alarm this sad state of danger and desolation in which so many chosen souls were placed. But Catholic Emancipation had not yet been granted, and a hundred difficulties stood in the way of the Holy Father in making any attempt to reach these suffering people, who were at that time at the distance of a twelve-month's voyage from Europe. At last Rome appointed Fr. (**Jeremiah Francis**) O'Flynn<sup>1</sup> to be Archpriest of the territory, with power to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. He landed at Botany Bay; but scarcely had he, British subject as he was, commenced to console his fellow Catholics by his ministrations, when he was forcibly seized, put into prison, and sent back to England by the Governor and Council then ruling New Holland in the name of the British King. He departed on 20th May 1818.

**14.** But that deportation (**turned out to be**) fortunate. It raised a storm of indignation in the mother country. It was brought before Parliament by a brave Protestant statesman; and the consequence was that the Government, ashamed of the act of its underlings in New South Wales, gave authority to officiate and even offered stipends to Catholic chaplains for the penal settlements of the Southern Ocean. (**This did not include Archpriest O'Flynn - E.S.**).

Yet after the experience of Archpriest O'Flynn, it required an amount of heroism of the highest order, to condemn oneself for life to all the petty persecution which a Catholic priest was sure to receive from the military and naval bigots in whose hands Australasia was then placed. A noble man, however, soon offered himself for the task, and achieved it with an everlasting memory for himself, his country, and his religion. That was a young priest from Cork, named **John Joseph Therry**<sup>2</sup>, who, with the permission of his Bishop and the blessing of the Holy See, left Ireland for Australia as early as 1820. On the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, May 3rd 1821, he landed in Sydney after the usually long voyage of that period, and at once commenced that grand, apostolic career, which terminated only with his death at Balmain, on the night of 24th of May 1864.

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<sup>1</sup> **Jeremiah Francis O'Flynn (1788-1831)** -

I feel that Mons. Dillon is **NOT** being fully fair to the authorities in this account. **E.S.(2015)**

See <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/oflynn-jeremiah-francis-2521>

<sup>2</sup> **John Joseph Therry (1790-1864)** - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Joseph\\_Therry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Joseph_Therry)

See also - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St\\_Mary%27s\\_Cathedral,\\_Sydney](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Mary%27s_Cathedral,_Sydney)

15. The writer of these lines<sup>1</sup> had the honour of knowing this great and good man at the period of his life when, worn with years and labour, he was expecting his reward. He (I) succeeded him in the charge of the mission of Balmain. He was in the colony when it was full of his fame, and heard from his own lips much of what he had to endure in the early years of trouble for the Catholics of Australia.

It would be difficult for those at a distance, or even for the present generation in Australia, to realise all he had to do, or indeed, all he did, to meet the requirements of those committed to his keeping. His people were poor and the majority of them Crown-prisoners. They were scattered over an immense space of territory. Settlements were formed on the coast from Moreton-Bay, in what is now the great colony of Queensland, to Adelaide in the present colony of South Australia. A sweep of some two thousand miles had thus to be traversed, to reach the various ports which were in course of formation on the seaboard of New Holland. Inland, the daring enterprise of hardy pioneers was daily opening up new tracts of splendid pasturage for many hundreds of miles in every direction towards the vast and unknown interior. Wherever this enterprise built a small forest town, or established a station for sheep or cattle, the Irish Catholic convict was sure to be found; and generally too he was, unfortunately, exposed to all that danger to his religion to which we have already referred. Near the metropolis, — that is, near for such a country as Australia, within from one to two hundred miles of Sydney —, towns of some magnitude began to spring up. Bathurst, Goulburn, Maitland, all three of which are at present episcopal Sees, began to have fixed populations, and amongst them, Catholics, either in penal servitude or emancipated, constituted a considerable element, and began to form homes and families. A chain of these small towns of the interior ran South from Sydney to Melbourne through a forest route of over six hundred miles, and another chain ran North to Queensland through a route of nearly a thousand miles. There were, of course, in those days neither roads nor bridges. The « **bush tracks** » were of the poorest kind, often obliterated; and the creeks and great rivers had to be forded, or crossed by swimming.

Yet, over all this immense area, the influence of Father Therry soon became felt. Though not endowed with a robust constitution, he travelled unceasingly. His home was with his scattered people wherever they were to be found. Houses were few and far between in those days. The huts of the shepherds were of the most primitive description. Frequently the bed of the missionary was the damp earth, and his covering the canopy of heaven. These trials served only to increase his

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<sup>1</sup> George F. Dillon - See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_F.\\_Dillon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_F._Dillon)



zeal. He soon made the acquaintance, not only of every settlement, but of every Catholic in the land; and before two years passed, he was known, and intimately known, by all his scattered flock in Australia, bond and free.

To the ruling powers, his influence seemed like some magic spell over his own people; and what was more, the influence which he exercised appeared to be equally potent over thousands of Protestants, and, without exception, over all the Protestants of the convict class. He devoted his life to that class. For Christ's sake he loved them with an intense, devoted love; and the fiercest and the worst of them soon began to return his affection. They felt that if all the world else (**everyone else**) had deserted them, there was one man who never would; one who was freely before their eyes, sacrificing his days, his health, his very life for them; one who never despised them. That one was Father Therry.

Their tyrants kept them at a distance (**at arms length**). Whereas, he had for all, the sweet smile, the winning word, yes, even the warm grasp of the hand, just as if they were the first (**foremost**) men in the country. They learned to love him with a deep, sincere, enthusiastic love. The wildest of them, men of desperate deeds and horrible history, when they broke away from restraint and took to the murderous profession of highwaymen, — bushrangers as they are called in Australia —, men who robbed and murdered others without remorse, — invariably respected the beloved form of this wonderful missionary. He often met these men, and so far from being molested, he not infrequently persuaded even the worst of them to give themselves up to justice or to cease their marauding lives. It mattered little whether they were or were not of Father Therry's creed or country. His influence was equal over all. And for his sake, even to this day, that same class, which from time to time breaks out into war upon Australian society, is never known to molest a Catholic clergyman.

The consequence of Father Therry's influence was soon manifest. The children of every Catholic in Australia were restored to the Catholic Church. Those who had been baptised by Protestant ministers, or were privately baptised, received “conditional baptism<sup>1</sup>”. In nearly every case of the mixed marriage of a Catholic with a Protestant, the Protestant party was received into the Church. What is more, a strong disposition to belong to the Church of a minister so good and so devoted, began to manifest itself amongst the Protestant convicts. A large number of them embraced the faith. It was especially remarked that all who came to die for the offences, trivial as well as grave, for which convicts had then to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, nearly all asked for the assistance of Father Therry in their last moments, and died penitent and Catholic.

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<sup>1</sup> See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conditional\\_baptism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conditional_baptism)



Executions, sometimes of a score or more of convicts together, were common in those times, and it is a singular circumstance that at not one of them which took place at the great stations, though so widely apart, was the indefatigable Father Therry ever absent: It was no uncommon thing for him to ride hundreds of miles from one township to another to be in time for one of those « *gaol deliveries* »; and many are the thrilling narratives the old inhabitants tell of how he arrived at Bathurst or Newcastle or Melbourne in time to receive some dozen of Protestants into the Church, and to prepare the Catholics before the moment came when the executioner was to do his duty.

During all this Herculean labour, Father Therry found time to provide for every want of every centre of Catholic population. He dotted the land with his churches and cemeteries. But his great difficulty then, as it has been ever since with Catholics in Australia, was to save the Catholic youth of the colony from Protestant and proselytising schools. He saw when he first came that some of the children even of the « **Ninety-eight men** »<sup>1</sup> — children who bore the rich old Irish names of Doyle and Reilly and Ryan, were lost to Catholicity, not so much through the mixed marriages of their Irish fathers, as the proselytising system of education that they were exposed to. These Irish fathers invariably struggled hard to teach them the Catholic faith and to cause them to love it. But when the Catholic father passed away, the Protestant mother and the Protestant school easily undid whatever the zeal and the anxiety of the Catholic father had effected, and so the children were lost.

Father Therry therefore did all he could, first to establish Catholic schools for his people, and then to defeat the proselytising efforts of the Governor and officials who used all their power to circumvent the great missionary. To cripple his resources and damage his influence, they withdrew his stipend and their recognition of him as a Catholic Chaplain in the colony. But his people, in turn, showered all they possessed upon him. Public opinion also came to his assistance. The Government of the day, though absolute, saw that it could not do without his influence, — always exerted, as it was, in favour of law and order in the colony —, and he had to be re-instated. His influence with all classes became so great that he not only obtained for the Catholic community recognition by the civil authorities, but he also obtained substantial aid for its religious wants in land and grants from the public purse. The splendid and valuable site upon which the Cathedral of Sydney stands — now in progress of reërection after the disastrous fire of 1866 —, was given to him, and upon it he had just completed a church, then the finest in Australia, when the

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<sup>1</sup> “Ninety-eight Men” - People deported to Australia for their involvement in the 1798 Rebellion.  
1798 Rebellion - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish\\_Rebellion\\_of\\_1798](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_Rebellion_of_1798)

welcome intelligence came to him that the Holy See had been pleased to appoint a Vicar-Apostolic to take charge of the immensely extended spiritual interests to which he had attended for fourteen years — and, for the greater part of that period, he did it alone.

This was a great relief to Father Therry, especially as the Vicar-Apostolic brought with him a welcome supply of priests. But his great labours ended only with his death. He himself was appointed Vicar-General in the island of **Tasmania** where his zeal laid the foundations of a new diocese, and where his memory lives in the same benediction that surrounds it in the island-continent itself (**Australia**). It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the veneration and deep love which the population of all Australia had for him. Though he died at an advanced age, the mourning for him was universal, and his funeral was the largest and grandest that had, up to that period, been witnessed in that country. All classes of citizens, Protestant as well as Catholic, — the Governor, the Cabinet, the two Houses of Parliament, the law and other public functionaries, in fact the whole population, joined in doing honour to his remains. When in 1866 — two years after his death — the splendid temple he had erected was burned to the ground, one of the most potent appeals made to the people for funds for its reërection was by connecting it with the memory of Father Therry, whom a grateful people will never cease to revere, and not without reason, as the Apostle of Australia.

**16.** But to return to the Irish Augustinians. About the period of the appointment of the first Bishop for Australia, Fr. Goold of their Order had finished his studies in Italy. He had heard of the great deeds of his fellow citizen, Father Therry, and of the need of additional help. He longed to share in his labours for both the convict and the colonist in distant Australia. He, therefore, offered himself willingly to Mgr. Polding, then Bishop of Hiero Cesarea and Vicar-Apostolic of Australasia, who came to Rome seeking subjects for the new and vast field committed to his care. Fr. Goold served, for some nine years, all of the missions attached to Campbelltown near Sydney, with great zeal and success. Goold was then appointed first Bishop of Melbourne by Pope Pius IX, and, on the 6th August 1848, was consecrated in the cathedral built by Father Therry in Sydney by Monsgr. Polding assisted by Monsgr. Murphy, Bishop of Adelaide.

The late Sir John O'Shanassy K.C.M.G.<sup>1</sup>, who had been, for some nine years previous to the arrival of Monsgr. Goold, resident in many parts of the new diocese, has given the writer a very gloomy picture indeed of the state of the Catholic Church at that period in the now flourishing colony of Victoria. Its material resources were next to

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<sup>1</sup> Sir John O'Shanassy - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_O%27Shanassy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_O%27Shanassy)

nothing. One church and one priest had to suffice for the present great city of Melbourne; and the rest of the colony was yet worse off in the provision made for the religious wants of its inhabitants. Victoria, called at the time the District of Port-Philip, was not then independent of New South Wales. It was difficult to secure advantages, absolutely necessary at the time, from a Government so distant as that of Sydney. Still with incredible zeal, the young Bishop applied himself to the task of making the Church in Victoria that which it now is, one of the most flourishing provinces, not only in Australia, but, for the extent of its population, in the world.

A Protestant, and entirely independent witness, J. K. Heaton Esq., speaks thus of the extraordinary influence for good which Monsgr. Goold exerted. « *Bishop Goold* », he says, « *found the new diocese almost destitute of all the appliances of the ecclesiastical system. There was a very small band of clergymen; the places of worship in which they fulfilled their ministrations were few in number and of humble character; there was neither convent nor college in the whole diocese. But he met the difficulties of his position with great spirit and perseverance. His zeal kindled that of the clergy, and lay members of his Church, and in conjunction with energy and tact, secured to him a vast influence over the minds of his co-religionists. The erection into an independent colony of the territory included in his diocese, the rapid introduction of a numerous population, which followed that event, and the discovery of gold in Victoria, afforded most unusual scope for the efforts of a zealous bishop; and with the help of the clergy he has gathered around him, and the liberality (**generosity**) of the laity, who possessed great advantages for the acquisition of wealth, Bishop Goold has seen, as the result of the labours which he organised and directed, magnificent churches, large convents, and numerous educational establishments springing up in all parts of his diocese.* »

The above account is true in every particular, and yet it is but a part of the truth, which the historian of the first Bishop and Archbishop of Melbourne will have to chronicle. It is valuable, as coming from a source which cannot be suspected of exaggeration. But it does not give even the outside details necessary in order to estimate properly the work of a Catholic Bishop. Monsgr. Goold provided — and that, it must be remembered, for over a quarter of a century, — for the religious wants of the whole colony of Victoria, which now comprises three important dioceses.

During that time, he filled the country with a zealous and superior body of clergy. He called in the invaluable services of the **Jesuit Fathers**, who with his ever ready help, have established two fine educational institutions, one in, and another close to, Melbourne. They have the care

of one of the most extensive missions of the city, and several country districts; in addition, their active and intelligent aid is freely given in conducting retreats and other religious exercises for the clergy, the religious, and the people of the whole colony.

The Fathers of the **Carmelite Order** have also been brought to Melbourne by the zealous Archbishop. They have charge of the growing district of Sandridge, and conduct missions in the various parochial churches of the diocese.

His Grace's indefatigable exertions, have also succeeded in obtaining for his people a large and most efficient staff of the **Christian Brothers**. The schools which these devoted men have established in several districts of the metropolis are, both for solid architectural magnificence and for efficiency, equal to any which their own Order, or any other teaching order possesses in or out of Australia. Besides which they conduct an extensive Catholic Orphanage, and have schools outside Melbourne in various parts of the colony.

The **Sisters of Mercy** and the **Presentation** nuns, both in the city and in several missions of the country, do for females that which the Christian Brothers do for boys. The establishments of the former order at Geelong and Melbourne, are immense and splendid structures, where thousands of female children of every rank and condition of life are educated. Geelong, for instance, contains what may be said to be the largest boarding school for young ladies in Australia; while at the same time, within its ample enclosure, is an industrial school for destitute girls, a house for servants, and other institutions. Its inmates conduct besides, and conduct too to the admiration of even the enemies of the Catholic religion, the extensive female day-schools of Geelong, devoted to ordinary and high-school teaching.

But of these establishments, the very first in Victoria, and equal to any of its kind in the world, is the vast and splendid Convent-Reformatory and Magdalen Asylum, which Mgr. Goold has established at Abbotsford, within a few miles of his Cathedral. Many hundreds of unfortunate females there find a home — and for life if so inclined — under the care of the **Sisters of the Good Shepherd**. Others are reclaimed and, in various ways, provided for by the zeal and care of the same excellent nuns. Besides this, the sisters conduct a large reformatory for young girls rescued from the ways of crime. This part of their institution is seldom without from two to three hundred inmates. The nuns have also a female orphanage, and in addition to all this, they find means to educate the female children of their neighbourhood in day-schools. The merit of this institution is acknowledged not only by the Catholic but also by the Protestant population of Melbourne. The latter, as well as the former, supply washing and other remunerative labour by

means of which the inmates contribute to their own support. Protestants as well as Catholics subscribe largely (**generously**) to the building funds of the good nuns, who, besides erecting superior accommodation for the many hundreds they care for, have just completed a large church containing ample and, when needed, separate space for the inmates of various kinds who fill its enclosure. This edifice has been erected at a cost of over ten thousand pounds.

All the missions of Monsgr. Goold are supplied, and well supplied, with church accommodation of a very superior and solid description, in which the hard black stone of the colony plays a very conspicuous part. It is usually relieved by an ornamental white stone, imported at great expense from the other Australian colonies. The sites upon which all these churches stand are, in general, the most excellent that can be found in their several neighbourhoods. The reason of this is that Mgr. Goold, from the first moment of his appointment to the present hour, never spared any pains in securing, by every means at his disposal, these excellent sites in every locality which the slightest circumstance indicated as being one calculated at any future time to become the centre of a population. In the earliest years of his Episcopate many circumstances favoured him in obtaining these sites; and he cultivated his good fortune with remarkable care and assiduity. The earlier Governments were disposed to be liberal (**generous**) to him, and many of the Victorian cabinets were either directed by such leaders as Sir John O'Shanassy, an earnest Catholic, or by such Protestants as owed their seats in Parliament to Catholic influence. While the heads of other denominations were careless (**remiss**), Monsgr. Goold was up and active. He asked and he obtained not only for his own diocese of Melbourne, but for every diocese now existing in Victoria, these splendid sites in great abundance, before the Parliament of the colony refused to grant further aid to any religious denomination. The late Sir John O'Shanassy assured the writer that the lowest estimate of what these sites would reach at the present moment, through increase in the value of land, to several millions of pounds sterling, — a sum which the whole Catholic community in Australia could now only with difficulty raise, notwithstanding their generosity.

Before the division of Mgr. Goold's diocese, the Cathedrals of Ballarat and Sandhurst and a number of other fine, spacious, and solid churches were erected upon those sites. His present diocese is full of such churches, many of which, like those of Geelong and St. Kilda, are structures of great beauty and costliness. They are all built in excellent taste; and in this they contrast favourably with the edifices of other religious denominations, notwithstanding the greater poverty of the Catholic community. There is observable in them all, a marked

superiority of architectural taste, — a superiority owing largely to the fact that the Archbishop had at his command, for many years, the rare professional skill of one of his flock, Mr. William Wardell<sup>1</sup>, a pupil of Mr. Pugin and the Government Architect of Victoria. It was this Gentleman who planned for Monsgr. Goold the grandest building which the Catholics, or indeed any other religious body, at present possess in Australia, namely the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Melbourne<sup>2</sup>, now drawing near its completion.

We have said that the Catholic church, school, and convent sites are amongst the very best in Victoria, but this Cathedral site is superior to any of them. It could not be better situated if it had been selected in the ages of faith, and by a people entirely Catholic. It towers over the Government buildings which cluster at a respectful distance at its feet. Four acres of the cream of the city lands are consecrated to its purposes. At present, it forms the most conspicuous, and decidedly the most beautiful object, in that city of public palaces. And, although it is a Catholic Cathedral and dedicated to St. Patrick the Apostle of Ireland, it seems as dear to Protestants as to Catholics. Indeed, its services are always ~~largely~~ attended by (**large numbers of**) Protestants, and many of them have already received the grace of the true faith within its new but yet venerable looking walls. It remains, and no doubt will remain, at least until St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney<sup>3</sup> — a portion of which is only partly erected and temporarily roofed in — is finished, the first (**foremost**), by far, of all ecclesiastical edifices of any kind not only in Australia, but in the Southern Hemisphere. Its great towers fast approach completion. Its vast interior is well nigh finished. Its decorations are daily advancing, and fond anticipations (**hopes**) are indulged by the devoted flock of the Archbishop, that he will live to see it perfectly completed before he is called to his eternal reward.

Mgr. Goold possesses immense influence over his own people, and is deeply respected by every other class in Victoria. He shows remarkable prudence and tact in dealing with those who differ from him in religion. No man in Australia either is, or has been, more decided and vigorous in the demand for educational rights for Catholics. No other man has manifested such power of effecting political union for the securing of these rights. He and his flock have overturned several ministries in their pursuit of this one object. Yet never has he been otherwise than respected by his opponents. He thoroughly understands his people and they understand him. They confide in his wisdom, and well know that he has no other interest but theirs at heart. To his moderation and prudence is

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<sup>1</sup> See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Wardell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wardell)

<sup>2</sup> See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St\\_Patrick%27s\\_Cathedral,\\_Melbourne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Patrick%27s_Cathedral,_Melbourne)

<sup>3</sup> See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St\\_Mary%27s\\_Cathedral,\\_Sydney](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Mary%27s_Cathedral,_Sydney)

largely owing the fact that, in Victoria, there is very little exhibition of that bigoted persecution of Catholics which has been manifested of late years so virulently in other colonies; and that the success of the Orange faction has been so small. He has, moreover, shown the world the vitality of the faith of his people; when the parliament took away the educational grant from all religious denominations, the Catholics, at the call of Monsgr. Goold and his suffragans spent, in a few years, no less than a quarter of a million of their money for the Catholic education of their children, independent of the State.

Monsgr. Goold, from his earliest years in Rome, has been most devoted to Our Lady of Good Counsel. Her sacred Image is engraved upon his coat of arms. The late illustrious Cardinal Deschamps, as we have before noticed, had also his escutcheon beautified by the same mark of deep devotion to God's Virgin Mother.

**17.** Another Irish Augustinian who has done much for the Church in Australia, is the Most Reverend **Monsgr. (Martin) Crane**<sup>1</sup> D.D. the first Bishop of Sandhurst in Victoria. This zealous and exemplary prelate arrived in his Cathedral City in 1875, where his life has since been one of unceasing and fruitful activity in the cause of religion. The most mountainous and difficult districts of Victoria fell to his charge. But he has nevertheless done wonders for them. He has increased the number and the efficiency of his clergy, established convents and schools, and in the short period of nine years (**to 1884**), erected no less than thirty five new churches. Indeed church and school building appears to be a passion with this good prelate.

Previously, during his time as an Augustinian Father, he took the principal part in commencing (**in 1862**) and bringing to its present state of completion the magnificent church of his order in John Street<sup>2</sup>, Dublin, a church which is now one of the very first (**foremost**) Catholic edifices in that most Catholic city. It opened for public worship in 1874. To raise funds for this great undertaking, he travelled over the British Islands and over America. It was a first-class preparation for the work before him in Australia. As we have said, he had the rare honour of being twice elected Provincial of his Order. During his tenure of this office he extended his ancient institute to England by opening a church and convent at Hoxton Square, London. These occupy the site of the house of no less a personage than Nell Gwynn, and they form the first establishment of the Austin Friars in England since the suppression of their houses by Henry the Eighth. He did much besides to increase the number, efficiency, and strictness of discipline amongst the members of his Order. In his time,

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Crane OSA (1818-1901) - See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin\\_Crane\\_\(bishop\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Crane_(bishop))

<sup>2</sup> Known now (2017) as Johns Lane Church.



perfect common life, which the missionary condition of the Fathers in the penal times rendered impossible, began to flourish again with renewed vigour.

Mgr. Crane was collecting funds in Philadelphia for his church at John Street when his career as a zealous friar was interrupted by the tidings that the Holy Father had appointed him to the new and important See of Sandhurst in Australia. He had, therefore, to repair at once to Ireland, where he received episcopal consecration at the hands of the late lamented Cardinal Cullen assisted by the Bishops of Ossory and Ferns, on the 21st September 1874. His Lordship visited Rome in 1883, to give the usual account of his See. From this we find that the number of Churches in his diocese was at the time of his departure for Rome, fifty eight, — more than one half of which had been erected since his arrival. The Catholic population scattered over the whole extent of country in his charge was only thirty thousand. Yet this population had contributed in eight years no less a sum than eighty thousand pounds for the purposes of religion and Catholic education. The number of priests when Dr. Crane arrived in Sandhurst was eight. When he left on his visit to Rome they numbered twenty-one, and others were daily expected from the colleges of Ireland. Besides this, his Lordship had established a large community of nuns in his Cathedral City, who besides conducting large female day-schools, attended to the wants of the upper classes by means of an excellent boarding-school for young ladies.

**18.** We here close our chapter on the Irish Augustinians, and with it the whole of this work, written to make God's Virgin Mother better known and loved. The beautiful Image which She Herself brought to Her Sanctuary and committed to the care of Augustinians at Genazzano is the simple means adopted to spread Her devotion in English Speaking lands where many Augustinians are now to be found. **That they may be, in these countries, the fervent promoters of a devotion so precious, is the earnest desire of the writer of this book.** But it must be remembered that devotion to Our Lady of Good Counsel, though indeed advanced by Augustinians, was neither in the past, nor now, confided to them exclusively. Far from it. In the progress of this history we saw that many, in fact most of its most zealous propagators, - St. Liguori, Benedict XIV, Canon Bacci, Father Rodotà etc - were not Augustinians. Many of course, both men and women, have, like the Blessed Petruccia, been Tertiaries; but the mass of the pilgrims who come to the Shrine are not Augustinians. They are found there of every rank and order in the Church of God. Urban VIII, Pius IX, and innumerable cardinals, bishops, and prelates most devoted to Our Lady of Good Counsel, were none of them Augustinians. The devotion is for the whole Church; and the writer hopes that the same breadth of universality will distinguish its



propagation in the **English-speaking** countries for which he writes, as has distinguished it, and still distinguishes it, at the Shrine and in Europe. No doubt the Augustinians will continue in English Speaking lands, as in older ones, to spread a devotion which springs from the Sanctuary confided to them. It will be to them, as one of their greatest Generals said, as « the very apple of their eye » (**See Chapter XVI**). But many others also, who, like the writer, are not Augustinians, or even called by God to the religious state, will not be the less zealous to promote a devotion which to know is to love. The essence, the philosophy of it, is to cause Mary the Virgin Mother of God to be better known, better loved, and better served, by all of God's children.

Her miraculous Image at Genazzano is a powerful means to these ends. The Pious Union is another. The Feast and the Proper Mass and Office of Our Lady of Good Counsel established canonically in a diocese, form a third. Parochial and family altars erected in Her honour are a fourth. Each one's love for Our Lady will suggest other means. May all of them advance until the whole world is inflamed with the love of Mary, and receive at Her feet that heavenly Counsel which infallibly strengthens, consoles, and directs God's People on earth, until it brings them to enjoy the fruits of devotion to the Virgin Mother of Good Counsel in Heaven.

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## THE PROPAGANDA FIDE<sup>1</sup>

In the short notices given at the end of the chapter treating of the advantages of a Roman Ecclesiastical Education (**Chptr XXVII**) for those destined for the mission in distant countries, space did not permit us to do more than glance at the unjustifiable act of the ruling powers in Italy, in despoiling the most valuable institution the world possesses for the spread of the faith. This institution, it must be remembered, includes the Urban College in Rome for the education of Foreign Missionaries; and in that college, a large number of the students are, and were at all times, destined for the service of English Speaking countries. It never was without several of Irish birth and blood. Cardinal Cullen, Monsgr. George Conroy, Delegate Apostolic to Canada, and a host of celebrated Irish and American prelates were its alumni.

But besides the inestimable advantages which this college confers upon the world, and upon no part of it more than upon those countries where English is spoken, the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide, under which it is placed, does other and even still more important works for the Church spread over Asia, Africa, North America and Australasia; as well as for the Church in the British Islands and in the other countries of Europe where the ravages of the so-called Reformation have interrupted the ordinary relations between the temporal governments and the Holy See. It provides for all the spiritual wants of the faithful in these vast and varied regions. It selects the prelates, provides for the supply of the clergy, arranges the affairs of the religious orders, sees to the celebration of provincial and national councils, to the holding of diocesan synods, to the establishment of seminaries for ecclesiastics, of colleges, and intermediate and common schools for the laity, and concerns itself with the care of works of beneficence, such as reformatories, orphanages, hospitals, houses of refuge, and other institutions of Christian charity and Christian civilisation for the people of Christ. It attends to the diffusion of the faith in all heathen lands. It sends Vicars-Apostolic and missionaries to guard infant churches; and watches over them, provides for them, and cherishes them, until it can form in them the ordinary hierarchy of the Catholic Church. In this way it nourished and preserved the faith with wonderful solicitude in the British Islands, in Canada, in the United States, in India, in Africa, and in Australia, until the Church grew, as it were to manhood, in these countries; and it exercises over all these national churches, now grown great and magnificent under its care, the watchful superintendence of the Vicar of Christ.

At the present moment in China and Japan, in Corea and Tartary<sup>2</sup>, in the back woods of the American Indian, in the innumerable islands of

<sup>1</sup> **Propaganda Fide** - The following has been copied from the Vatican Museum Website (2015) -

It is the Department (Congregation) of the Holy See founded in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV with the double aim of spreading Christianity in the areas where the Christian message had still not arrived and of defending the patrimony of faith in those places where heresy had caused the genuineness of the faith to be questioned. Propaganda Fide was therefore, basically, the Congregation whose task it was to organize all the missionary activity of the Church. Through a provision of John Paul II (in order to better define its tasks), since 1988 the original Propaganda Fide has been called the "Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples".

<sup>2</sup> **Tartary** - See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartary>

Oceanica, in Madagascar, in central Africa, in lower Egypt, in every country where heathens are found, it is doing what it did for English Speaking countries when the faith was everywhere assailed and almost destroyed in most of them by heresy. And great are the fruits of its labours.

At the same time, the solicitude of a special department watches over the spread of Catholicity amongst the Oriental Christians<sup>1</sup>, whose varied and beautiful rites were to a large extent corrupted by schism and even by heresy. In this way it has kept union with the Holy See alive amongst the many peoples of the Greek Rite, amongst the Armenians and the Maronites, the Copts and the Melchites. It has converted many Nestorians, while its learned men have rendered invaluable services to Biblical knowledge and to learning generally by keeping alive the study of those oriental languages necessary to throw light upon religion and history.

The gain to civilisation — to science, language, and history, as well as to Christianity, from its unwearied labours has been simply incalculable. Its library contains documents collected by its savans (**learned persons**) and its missionaries which are invaluable. Its museum and its records are of immense service to the learned world; and connected with it, is a vast printing establishment for the preservation and the diffusion of not only religious but secular knowledge such as no institution except itself ever did or can possess again. For no body of men or nation — even supposing them to have the will — could ever command the power which the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda possesses in its missionaries — all, as they are, learned, devoted and conscientious men, and spread over, and intimately acquainted with, every country under heaven.

Over the minutest as well as the gravest concerns of the immense expanse of its jurisdiction, the Propaganda has always watched with a sleepless vigilance. Sustaining with an instinct and a power that must be surely largely infused by the Holy Ghost, the divine principle of authority, it has never been blind to the slightest manifestation of abuse of such authority. The humblest missionary, the humblest child wronged anywhere in the vast extent of its care, is certain to receive from its officials a just and a paternal hearing, and, if wronged, is certain of redress. There is not, and there never was on this earth, a tribunal more just, more patient, more kind to all committed to its keeping. Then too, it watches over the interests of souls with constant assiduity. The most difficult questions are daily submitted to its judgment, and find invariably a solution which cannot be given except where the Vicar of Christ reigns and rules.

The reason for this is because the Propaganda is, and has been, from its foundation, the organ through which the solicitude of the Vicar of Christ is exercised in the widely extended territory over which it rules. And it has also been providentially enabled, from its very foundation, to discharge this sublime office in a manner worthy of the character and dignity of Christianity. « *Gratis accepistis, gratis date* » said Our Lord to His disciples. « Freely you have received, freely give. » The Supreme Pontiffs have had at all times the will, and, through the providence of God, the means also of carrying out this injunction of Christ. Their wealth, whether little or great, was always at the

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<sup>1</sup> **Note added in 2015 by Eugene Shannon** - The expression "Oriental Christians" is not here a reference to China etc. It is a reference to such as the Greek Orthodox Church.

service of those whom they sent to evangelise the heathen, from the days of St. Peter to the days of the so-called Reformation. So Ireland and England, so Germany and Northern Europe became converted. And so the Propaganda, by means of which the Popes organised the efforts of Catholicity for the spread of the faith, has been able to carry on that blessed work without any cost whatever to the immense multitudes committed to its keeping. The Providence watching over the Church was never more strikingly manifested than in the generous supply of means by which so great, effective, and vigilant an institution has been, at all times, enabled thus to discharge its manifold duties. How comes this? It comes chiefly from the abundant charity and the constant solicitude of the Popes; then from the generosity which they awakened amongst the faithful in purely Catholic countries; and lastly from the rare care and economy which has so remarkably characterised the administration of its means, always regarded as the most sacred and inviolable possessed by the Church.

The Cardinals and Consultors who take such unwearied care of all its concerns, have from its foundation discharged, in most instances, gratuitously (**without cost**) their onerous duties. Only the officials absolutely necessary are paid from its funds. Even these are helped from sources independent of the funds of Propaganda. A special department watches over the economies of the establishment. Those Cardinals in high employment in other congregations who bring to the varied and difficult questions treated of in the Propaganda such a wealth of learning and experience, receive nothing from, and often give much to, its resources. Its work must be done, by order of the Pope, gratuitously in all the tribunals of Rome. All this we shall see by considering its history and formation.

We have just said that in times anterior to the unhappy period of the apostasy of Luther, the Roman Pontiffs exercised their sublime duty of evangelising heathen nations without the aid of any special congregation. The almost universal ruin occasioned by the so-called Reformation, needed an organised and constant vigilance on the part of the Holy See in order to prevent further mischief, to repair the damage which had been effected in Europe, and to spread the faith in the rest of the world. The great Pontiff, **Gregory XIII**, appeared to have been specially raised up by Divine Providence to effect this. His zeal and generosity were boundless in founding institutions for the restoration and the spread of the faith. To him is due the foundation of the German-Hungarian College, the English College, and many other educational establishments destined to supply a continual stream of missionaries for the world. To aid him in watching over interests so vast and important, he established a small committee or congregation of cardinals, specially devoted to the consideration of all matters having for their object the propagation of the faith.

His successor, **Clement VIII**, continued his work, and under **Gregory XV** the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide was definitively founded and organised by the bull *Inscrutabili* on the 22nd June 1622. At first, thirteen cardinals were commissioned to compose it. On the same day, the Pope issued another bull providing that every Cardinal created for the future should, on his promotion, pay to the holy work of this congregation the sum of five hundred crowns of gold. Cardinal Sauli, the Dean of the Sacred College, and the Pope's nephew, Cardinal Ludovisi, the generous founder of the

Irish College, were deputed by the Pontiff to sign the papers of the Congregation. He further arranged that all the offices of Rome should supply *gratis* to officials of the Congregation, all documents, bulls, briefs, dispensations, consultations etc., and withdrew its dependents (**matters for which it had responsibility**) from the jurisdiction of the tribunals of Rome. **Pope Urban VIII** who as Cardinal Barberini, was one of the thirteen who composed this first Congregation under Gregory XV took up the work of the Propaganda with a zeal equal to that of his predecessor. Under him, partly through the zeal of Mons. John Baptist Vives, a Spaniard, and partly through Pontifical munificence, the premises which the Sacred Congregation has since occupied were obtained and fitted up for their manifold uses for the maintenance and diffusion of the faith. The Urban college was the first part of the new institute which came into existence; and, before long, it had within its walls missionaries destined for every nation under heaven, and soon after, the natives of every land which their zeal had evangelised. From that time to this, visitors to Rome are made familiar with the appearance in the streets of the Eternal City, of representatives of every race of men, Egyptians and Arabs, Chinese and Indians, Negroes and Islanders of the Southern Seas. These mingled with the children of Japhet from many nations, and destined for the great work of the evangelisation of the world, have been educated gratuitously (**free of charge**) now for over two hundred years, by the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda.

But how was all this effected? We have already referred to the endowments provided by the care of Gregory XV and Urban VIII; Popes, Cardinals, and Prelates vied with each other in generosity to it. Soon after its foundation, Cardinal Barberini, the Brother of Urban VIII, provided for no less than eighteen places in perpetuity for students; Mons. Vives, for ten. Then, **Pope Innocent XII** gave the institution one hundred and fifty thousand crowns in gold, and **Clement XII** gave it seventy thousand. A host of Cardinals have left it either the greater part of their inheritance or an annual income in perpetuity. It may be further noted that the greater number of its benefactors were Cardinals who had been prefects or members of the Sacred Congregation itself, and the fact that these left large sums to it, shows their faith in the genuine charity and worth of an institution whose revenues were disposed of by themselves.

Of course, other nations besides Italy gave generously also to make up the funds of the Propaganda. But the fact remains that, in the beginning, and at the time when its aid was most required by our Catholic ancestors in Ireland and Great Britain, it was Italian generosity that brought the great institution into existence and kept it flourishing. The French Directory and **Napoleon I** had an insane hatred for it, and they suppressed it when they put their iron heel on Italian independence. It was the Popes who again resuscitated it, and brought it to what it is now, when infidel rapacity aims at equalling the barbarism of that French Revolution from which Italian infidelity springs.

The time, then, is come for the whole Church, and for the churches which have been kept alive and made great by the Propaganda, to do their duty and show their gratitude. In the countries where the Catholic faith has been carried by Irish emigration chiefly — in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the British Colonies generally — the children of Irish Catholics, whose ancestors owe so much to the Propaganda, are now, many of them, as

wealthy as the Italian Cardinals and Princes who so splendidly endowed that institution in the past. It would be but a fitting duty, and one in every way worthy of Irish generosity and faith, for such of them as can do so, to emulate now the zeal of the benefactors of their ancestors and of themselves. The Propaganda has also formed, supplied, and well and ably administered the Church, and that too gratuitously, in their new homes as well as in Great Britain and Ireland. The time at last has come to make a return; to declare to infidelity — for it is infidelity that strikes at it in hatred for Christ — that Catholic generosity will never permit such an institution to die for want of means. When the need is known, the great heart of Catholicity will show itself equal to the occasion. The rich will give from their plenty and the poor from their poverty.

The honour of Catholics is concerned in its success now more than ever. It would be a lasting disgrace to two hundred millions of them, if a handful of fanatical sectarians in America and England were enabled to overspread the earth with their missionary enterprise and if, at the same time, from simple lack of zeal, the Catholic Propaganda should perish or become less useful, through the malignity of the Freemasons who now work their will upon the Church in Italy.

The Propaganda must be near the person of the Vicar of Christ. But it is not necessary that its means should remain in Italy, or in France, or in any one country. It were better that the funds of an institution, so cosmopolitan in its character, should be invested in as many solid securities as can be found in the best and most honourable nations. The Bishops of the Church have to consider how to secure the local Church property in their several countries. If say in every country or province, measures were wisely taken according to local law, to form a reliable trusteeship for the holding of property for the Propaganda, and for the safe investment of funds on its behalf, — whether in real estate, government bonds, or other reliable securities — and for the due payment of the annual proceeds to the institution, there can be no doubt but that by the exercise of zeal on the part of those whom it most concerns, means would be abundantly provided to make up not only what the Italian Government have resolved upon taking now, but that which they are likely — if not perfectly certain — to take in the near future; namely, all the property held by the Propaganda in Italy. Such a provincial fund as this would be decidedly and deservedly popular both with the clergy and laity. It would have all the real claim of service which the bishops and clergy have for their own support, in the countries over which the Propaganda exercises jurisdiction and provides for all the wants of souls with such ceaseless care.

And it would have much more claim, for it is the sole means that Catholics have of extending the faith to the heathen, the heretic, the schismatic, and the Jew. Not only would it receive, in periodic donations, in collections and subscriptions, but many people, when acquainted with its heavenly work and with its careful economy, would certainly leave largely (**large sums**) to it in their wills. Many a missionary would gladly leave it the “little all” which circumstances may have placed at his disposal for his wants, when the time came for passing to the presence of the Prince of Pastors. And certainly to no purpose more agreeable to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, more intimately connected with His ministry, or more necessary, could means be left. As this work (**book**) on God's Virgin Mother of Good Counsel will reach

the hands of many of his brethren in the sacred ministry, the writer considers that he could not more fittingly end it than in calling their attention to the noble institution which happened to be despoiled before his eyes, and to say a word upon it for the benefit of many who may not be fully acquainted with its merits and its wants.

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Since the above was written, two very remarkable documents have emanated from the Holy See relative to the spoliation of the Propaganda. **One** was in the form of memoranda, known as « **Appunti** », from the Sacred Congregation itself, in which the main facts of the issues between it and the Italian Government were put forward in a clear and able manner. **The other** was a diplomatic note on the subject to the diplomatic agents of the Pope at foreign courts.

Both documents touch upon most of the facts which we have given above. But they do more. They put forward, very prominently, the fact that, without the funds of the Propaganda, the Holy Father cannot carry on with freedom the work of the Church, and that therefore the vaunted « **laws of the guarantees**<sup>1</sup> », violated on so many other occasions, are now rendered completely null in effect.

The **Appunti** says with great force of argument:-

*« If the Government, therefore, does not wish to show clearly to all people that the pretended guarantees actually guarantee nothing, as is evident from other sources, it must abstain from limiting in any fashion the free possession of those means which are destined to the exercise of its great office. But whatever its aggressions are, and whatever device it may adopt to oppress the Holy See, it is well that it should be known that the Apostolate among the infidels is a natural and a divine right, and, at the same time, a binding duty of the Pontiff, for the exercise of which he needs absolutely to have at hand the pecuniary means free from the supervision of the State. »*

The « **Appunti** » meet the argument that there is no injury done by the forced conversion as follows:

*« But it may be urged that the freedom of the ministry entrusted to the Propaganda incurs no loss by the sale of its estate, seeing that it has the free disposal of the amount inscribed in the Gran Libro. Now let us repeat it again, does not the payment of this income depend entirely on the good will and the solvency of the Italian Government? If it were to fail, many large and necessary missionary establishments would suffer; and, what is more important, the very centre, from which emanates the action for diffusing the gospel throughout the world, would be so weakened as to be unable to supply its most ordinary undertakings. »*

The « **Appunti** » then show what the nature of the extraordinary expenses of the Propaganda are:-

*« Besides the ordinary expenses, which are many, and very heavy, the Propaganda has continually to come to the aid of the extraordinary needs of*

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<sup>1</sup> See - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Question](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Question)

*the various missions. Taking only, for instance, the decade from 1860 to 1870, a good two millions of capital were consumed in extraordinary grants; and if these means had failed, besides other evils, the Constantinople mission would have died out, for whose rescue it was necessary to expend over a million and a half. With these funds were saved large numbers of Christians during the recent famines in China and Tonquin (**Northern Vietnam**); and recently, after the sale, pendente lite (while litigation continues), of Propaganda property by the Royal Commissioners, if extraordinary resources had not been obtained from abroad, no aid could have been given to the missions in Egypt, Central Africa, the Christian communities of India, China and Oceania, tried by terrible disasters. »*

These are telling facts, but what arguments can move infidels bent upon the ruin of the Church ?

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## ENDNOTES DIVISION OF THIS BOOK

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**Endnote 1****from Chapter II**

**Carpineto**, the birth place of Leo XIII, is now an object of considerable interest to the Catholic tourist. Its situation is one of the most beautiful and romantic that could be imagined. It nestles, so to speak, in a slight depression between two lofty peaks of the Lepine or Volscian ranges and is, itself, considerably elevated. It lies about 15 miles from the railway station at Segni, where a diligence (**a large four-wheeled stagecoach**) meets the morning train from Rome. The drive is a most interesting one. The road passes first by Gavignano, then winds round the base of the mountain of Segni, and finally sweeps through a defile of several miles by the side of a mountain torrent, the bed of which is remarkable for the fine quality of its limestone rocks. About four miles from Carpineto, Montelanico, a good substantial looking town, is passed through. Then, an excellent road ascends the steep and gradually narrowing defile to the Pope's native city.

About a mile from it, the visitor is struck by the appearance of a chateau of the French character amidst a grove of ancient chestnuts, and well situated on a large platform of good land, which rises in the midst of the depression between the mountains. This is the villeggiatura of the Counts Pecci, whose palace is in the city above.

As you enter the town, one of the most remarkable structures of the place challenges attention. It is in every sense modern, very wide and deep, and some six storeys in height. It would suit for some colossal hotel; and, one is apt to think that it is being erected by some speculator to accommodate summer visitors, of the better class, who may choose to select the cool, bracing air and romantic scenery of those mountains for the sake of health. But it is for a better purpose. It is the school-house recently erected by the Pope for the children of Carpineto. It is meant to accommodate a number of religious ladies destined to conduct in the vast establishment, first a pension, then a high-school, and finally a day-school for all the infants and female children of every age in the neighbourhood.

On a height opposite the town and not far from these schools, is an extensive Franciscan monastery. Workmen are employed making improvements in one of its wings. Possibly a seminary, or a school for boys, or both may be formed here. The poor friars, after being turned out

by the Revolutionists, were reinstated by the charity of the Holy Father who bought their property for them and is repairing it at his own expense.

In the town, the Palace of the Counts Pecci is the principal object of interest. Adjoining this is a large and excellent parish church, solidly and sensibly built. At one side it has apartments for the clergy, and at the other side there is accommodation given for the inmates of the palace to attend the services of the sacred edifice. One is pleased to hear that this fine building has taken the place of an old, ruined parish church, and that it now gives ample room to some two or three thousand persons.

Through the courtesy of the gentleman in charge of the palace of Count Pecci, who was absent, the writer was shown through the now interesting building in which Leo XIII was born on the 2nd March 1810. It is a fine old specimen of the Italian palazzo, large and well kept. It is splendidly situated on the loftiest plateau of Carpineto. From it, grand views of the country may be obtained. It contains several fine rooms covered with antique tapestry. But the visitor is most struck by the family portraits which are numerous. The most remarkable amongst them are those of the parents of the Pope. His father, who, when his likeness was taken, must have been a singularly handsome man of about thirty years of age, appears in the uniform of a French colonel of the period of Napoleon the First (**Napoléon Bonaparte**). The reason is probably because Napoleon forced the young nobles of Italy into his military service during the many years that his influence lasted over the country. The mother of the Pope, however, is perhaps the most remarkable figure. She was a native of the ancient Cori, and it is probably through her that a part of the property of the family of the Counts Pecci is found there. Her features bear a strong resemblance to both of her living (**in 1883**) children, the Pope and Cardinal Pecci. The traditions of the place represent her exactly as we should expect the mother of Leo XIII to have been, a lady of great goodness and piety with more than an ordinary share of mental endowments. A fine, soft toned, life-sized figure of the Pope, seated, has been added to the group of family likenesses, many of whom have been high dignitaries in the Church. Carpineto, though very close to the episcopal see of Segni, belongs to Anagni. Leo XIII is (**was**) the last of five Popes, all great men in their time, which this latter diocese has given to the Chair of St. Peter. He is now (**in 1883**) in his seventy fourth year, being two years younger than his brother, the Cardinal.

**Endnote 2****from Chapter II****The worst part of the Campagna**

This is at the ancient and celebrated abbey of the Three Fountains “*Tre Fontane*” at the Salvian Waters — *Aquae Salviae* — about a mile beyond the great basilica of San Paolo. One of the churches of the monastery covers the precise spot where the Apostle of the Gentiles (St. Paul) was decapitated. Tradition has it that Nero was present at the execution for a reason of vengeance. The head, upon being severed from the body, made three bounds; and at each bound, as it struck the earth, a fountain of water gushed forth. These three fountains are very close to each other. They have continued to flow ever since. In the sacred edifice which the piety of the faithful placed over them, is also preserved the column upon which the head of the Apostle lay whilst being severed from his body. It is stated by some writers, that milk instead of blood issued from the opened veins.

The same locality, which seems to have been a usual place for public executions, was the scene of the martyrdom of St. Zeno and his companions, to the number of ten thousand, under Diocletian and Maximin. These martyrs were all soldiers. When the tyrants wished to purge the army of Christians, these and their commander were found steadfast professors of the hated religion (**Christianity**). They were first condemned to labour at the baths of Diocletian, and, at the completion of that immense work, were put to death, lest their numbers and bravery might prove dangerous. A church dedicated to Our Lady arose over their remains; and in it, St. Bernard, in after ages, had, while celebrating mass, his celebrated vision of souls liberated from purgatory during the holy sacrifice.

From the earliest times, the Christians had the deepest devotion for the locality. Notwithstanding its always unhealthy situation, a community of priests celebrated there, night and day, the divine offices. St. Gregory the Great, in A.D.604, gave all the surrounding territory to the Basilica of St. Paul, built where the body of the Apostle lay, and adjoining which, the zealous Pontiff established a community of Benedictine monks. In A.D.626, Honorius I founded, at the Three Fountains, a monastery which he dedicated to Sts. Vincent and Anastasius. Greek monks served the basilica of St. Anastasius from A.D.649, when many came from the East to Rome to escape the persecution of the Monothelites. In A.D.1114, Pope Innocent II withdrew the Benedictines, who held the Abbey of the Three Fountains for many centuries, and gave over the whole of the

churches and the monastery to his friend St. Bernard, for the Cistercians. The first colony, which left Clairvaux for this new foundation, had at its head, as abbot, Peter Bernard di Paganelli, who, strange to say, succeeded to the Papacy five years afterwards as Eugenius III. It was on the occasion of the elevation of this son of his, to the highest, but by him, most dreaded dignity, that St. Bernard wrote his celebrated work on "*Consideration*". It is worthy of remark that Eugenius had abandoned high Church preferment, some years before, for the security and peace of the rigid rule of Cîteaux. The monastery remained in the hands of the Cistercians until the suppression of religious houses under Napoleon I (**Napoléon Bonaparte**). It was, many years after, confided, so as not to fall utterly to decay, to the Franciscans, by Leo XII. Pope Pius IX, however, recalled the French Cistercians, and then commenced, at once, the work of endeavouring to make the place healthy enough to live in all the year round. In old times, the monks always left the monastery in the middle of the June of each year, and did not return until some time in September. Death from pernicious fever was sure to be the penalty for those who remained to inhale the poisonous air of Summer. However, this new band of Cistercians were determined to brave all hazards. In the time of Pius IX, Mons. De Merode did much by excavating drains to render the locality, in some degree, habitable.

On the coming of the Revolutionists, the good monks were permitted, but simply as a company of French agriculturists, to get a recognition from the state, and to become the masters of about 2000 acres of land, principally the confiscated property of some poor nuns in Rome. They also obtained, for payment, the assistance of convict labour. At once, they set about planting the "*redgum*" and other varieties of the Eucalyptus; and, up to the present, many thousand of these invaluable trees are vigorously growing upon the beautiful, gentle hills and rich, luxuriant soil which no one would suspect as being possessed by the fatal malaria. Scores of acres on the estate are being covered with vines, and are producing wine of excellent quality. The Eucalyptus in the vicinity has favoured the formation of the vineyards, and the vines in turn help to destroy the malaria of Summer. We may remark that the vine-leaves possess an absorbing and respiratory power little inferior to the Eucalyptus. In consequence, the health of the locality is so much improved that a large community is able to stay there during the hot season. Pernicious, malignant, or fatal fever is already banished. The prisoners enjoy excellent health. They deem it a favour to be sent under the kind and gentle treatment of the good monks. Attempts at escape are unknown. Lately, some convicts brought home a sick guard, arms and all. Many postulants seek admission into the monastery. Consequently, the

community, whose grand chants arise once more in the fine old choir of the Cistercians of the most fervent ages, is increasing.

The very first of these postulants, Father Joseph Mary, is at present the Abbot. He is a native of Northern Italy. Under his enlightened and able management, not only are the religious healthy and happy but, by his intelligent care in the cultivation and drainage of the soil and, above all, by his scientific propagation of the Eucalyptus, he has taught the powers that be in Italy, how to cure the long existing and fatal malaria of the rich Roman Campagna.

Pius IX, and his minister, Mons. De Merode, would, most assuredly, have extended the valuable discovery they made at the Tre Fontane to the rest of the Campagna. Unfortunately, however, they had but commenced operations, when they were driven from the power of doing this (**c.1870ish**) and many other beneficent works, by the present secular (**Italian**) government. This latter, after twelve years of opportunity, and with the successful experience of the monks before its eyes, has attempted nothing. One senator has forced Parliament to grant some small allowance to proprietors who may desire to plant the Eucalyptus in the Campagna. A number of scientific men sit occasionally together at the Tre Fontane. Millions have passed into the national exchequer from the sale of the property of the religious corporations (**congregations?**) in the Campagna itself. Many unnecessary millions are being borrowed, to keep the uneasy element, brought by the Revolution to Rome, quiet by employment. The same money, if laid out upon the Campagna, would make the city healthy, and be remunerative besides. It would make the **Agro Romano**, instead of being a plague in Summer, bloom as a garden.

The policy, however, that prevails, seems to be to draw all that can be got out of the Pope's dominions, to overload his city with a crushing debt, and when he comes by his own again — as none know better than his enemies, that some day he must (**did not happen**) — he will have to cure, from his diminished resources, the malaria of the Campagna. It was a Pope who drained the Pontine Marshes, it was a Pope who commenced the work of draining, and planting the Eucalyptus at the Tre Fontane, and a Pope too, notwithstanding the great things we hear of about being commenced, will be left, most likely, to extend the beneficent provisions inaugurated by Pius IX to all the pestilential country in the neighbourhood of Rome.

**Endnote 3****from Chapter II****Modern towns and villages in Latium**

Amongst these may be mentioned Valmontone, on the line of railway between Rome and Naples, and Paliano, a remarkable fortress of the feudal period. Valmontone contests with the village of Colonna the honour of being the site of the ancient town of Labicum. In the town are a magnificent church and a fine palace belonging to the Doria-Pamfili family, the owners of the adjacent territory.

Paliano is in many ways remarkable. Its situation as a stronghold could not be surpassed. Built on a steep, detached eminence, just at the entrance to the country of the Ernici, it commanded the surrounding country for miles, while its own fortifications were so constructed that it could defy any siege in the middle ages, and might even now be considered a position of immense strength. The massive ramparts and bastions which still encircle the town are well worth the inspection of the tourist. Within the walls is a fine old palace of the Colonna family, adjoining which is the parish church. The latter is large and splendidly built. It is served by an archpriest and a number of canons, who owe their benefices to the munificence of the feudal lords. Monuments to leading members of the Colonna family fill the choir, and their bodies rest in the vaults beneath. Amongst the monuments, is one to Marc Antonio Colonna I, and another to Marc Antonio II. Paliano changed hands frequently. It belonged to the Conti, the Colonnas, the Caraffas, and finally to the Colonnas again. It produced many eminent men, amongst whom may be mentioned Cardinal John Simeoni, late Secretary of State to his Holiness Pius IX and at present Prefect of Propaganda Fide, of which Congregation his Eminence, previous to his being sent as Papal Nuncio to Madrid, was for many years, Secretary.

In the Church of Paliano may be observed a special altar to Our Lady of Good Counsel Whose Shrine (**at Genazzano**) is but six miles distant. In fact, Genazzano forms an excellent centre from which many famous sanctuaries and remarkable places in Latium may be easily visited. Subiaco, the cradle of Western monasticism, the first home of St. Benedict, is but eighteen miles distant. Menturella, the scene of the conversion of St. Eustachius, Martyr, and where one of the oldest and most interesting churches of Italy is built, crowns a mountain not six miles away. Rojate, the place where the impress of the body of St. Benedict is shown in the solid rock, is about mid-way between Genazzano and Subiaco. Tivoli, is not more than eighteen miles away.

There, an extraordinary miracle takes place yearly on the occasion of the feast of St. Lawrence. Some of the Martyr's blood, preserved in a phial, gradually liquefies and gradually dries again. By train from Valmontone such places as Aquino, Monte Cassino, and all the ancient towns and fanes (**dictionary - a temple or shrine**) between Rome and Naples, may be reached in a few hours. Palestrina, Cave, San Vito, Capranica, Civitella, Olevano, Guadagnola, are all within a radius of some six miles.

A comfortable and not expensive inn has just been opened in Genazzano, chiefly with the view of accommodating English-speaking visitors to the Sanctuary, by the proprietor of the omnibus which meets the morning and evening trains from Rome to Valmontone, the nearest railway station. The drive is a delightful one (fare 1 ½ lire) over a new road opened by Pius IX on the occasion of his famous pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel in 1864.

**Endnote 4****from Chapter III**

There are evidences of Christians having been in Latium in Imperial Pagan times. Many of them, no doubt, were captives reduced to slavery; but others were of the noblest families.

In the reign of Aurelian, St. Agapitus, a youth of fifteen, suffered a cruel death for his faith during the festivities which Palestrina then celebrated in honour of the Emperor's victories. The Christians, who were then, as true Christians must be always, loyal subjects of the cruellest rulers, entered cordially into the general jollity. But, of course, they could not take part in the idolatrous portion of the proceedings. Agapitus, detected in the offence of not sacrificing to the gods, was brought before Aurelian, who ordered him to be flogged, and then handed over to the cruel ingenuity of one Antiochus. This latter kept the poor youth without food for four days, and then caused boiling water to be poured over his naked and empty stomach. He was then suspended, head downwards, over red hot coals, so that his burning hair and flesh might atone for the incense he refused to offer. His jaws were smashed, and his teeth dropped with his blood to the ground. Antiochus, at this point, fell dead; but Aurelian, undeterred, ordered the dying boy to be cast to wild beasts. These animals refused to touch him. He was, finally, decapitated before the temple of Fortune. A soldier, seeing his constancy, cried out, that the God of Agapitus was the only true God and, together with the tutor of the martyr, was put to death by order of the Emperor.

St. Eustachius a noble Roman of the court, was, while hunting at Menturella, a mountain near Genazzano, converted, on seeing a Crucifix between the horns of a stag he was pursuing. He afterwards, with his family, died for the faith. On the spot of his conversion is an ancient church and monastery erected by Constantine and consecrated by Pope St. Sylvester. It is now (1883) in possession of a Polish Missionary Congregation, who are engaged in restoring the church.



**Endnote 5****from Chapter VII (Part 1 of 2)****Scanderbeg changes side.**

In many of the notices (**articles**) of Scanderbeg found in English literature, the prevailing Protestant spirit prompts the writers to do but scant justice to the Catholic hero. This is observable in the article upon him, even in such a professedly impartial work as **Chambers Encyclopaedia**. That writer, evidently, had all his sympathy for Amurath, and Mahomet, and the Turks generally, while the merit of the exploits of both Hunniady and Scanderbeg, who saved not only Catholicity, but even Protestant Christianity, and European civilisation from ruin, is both grudgingly and ungraciously admitted. One might imagine that a Turk had written this article if it were not known that the Turks themselves take a far more generous view of these Christian heroes than the writer employed by the presumably Christian publishers. In that article, Scanderbeg is plainly charged with apostasy, perfidy, and unjustifiable cruelty in his treatment of the Turks, and of their sultan "*who had so splendidly educated him*". It is further stated that the reason for his leaving them, was that Amurath had confiscated the estates of the Castriotas in Albania. This is a most unjust way of putting the state of the case. It was not surely the fault of George Castriota that Amurath took him as a hostage by force from his father. The writer does not mention the fact that his three elder brothers were murdered by order of their captor, by means of slow poison - a fact stated by Barletto, Du Poncet, Feller, and every trustworthy historian of the period. The fact that all three died soon in captivity is admitted by everyone. Under such circumstances, the subjecting of a mere lad to the rite of circumcision could not be considered to have made him so far a Moslem as to have ruined his Christian faith. To save his life, and to qualify himself to be able, one day, to avenge his murdered brothers, his father, his country, and his real faith, made him dissemble (**conceal his true beliefs**). Young as he was, he should have preferred death with his brothers rather than do this. Such would be his duty as a Catholic. But then, on the other hand, the Turks could not complain if one so treated as he was by them in his kindred and in his country, does not keep an allegiance to them who had acted so treacherously in the case of his brothers. Neither honour nor conscience could compel either himself or his fellow Christians to stay with the perfidious enemies of their faith, their freedom, and their fatherland, one moment longer than they could help.

It is quite true that when Scanderbeg went over to the side of the Christians, he made use of the knowledge that he had acquired of Turkish customs to crush the Turks in Albania. Having made the secretary of the sultan a prisoner in the first engagement, he compelled that functionary to write out a firman (**mandate or decree**), in the name of Amurath, directed to the Turkish governor of Albania, ordering him to deliver up his command to whomsoever should present the document. The Secretary did so, and Scanderbeg then immediately put him and all his Turkish suite to death, so that no one of them might be able to carry the news of the occurrence to the Sultan. The firman subsequently enabled him to gain possession of the throne of his father. This was a stratagem which one of the age, the antecedents, and strong sense of injury under which Scanderbeg laboured, thought fair, when used against the unjust aggressors of his country, who never scrupled to use any perfidy in their dealings with Christians. They murdered his brothers, despoiled his family, butchered his fellow countrymen, led his countrywomen into a horrible slavery worse than death, and ravaged and destroyed his fatherland. Whatever offence then, was in the using of such a stratagem, there was certainly much to palliate (**disguise the seriousness of**) it. But such is the effect of anti-Catholic feeling, that writers like him of Chambers's Encyclopaedia appear to have neither reason, sympathy, nor justice, when treating of those who serve God's Church. Judith took the life of Holofernes by stratagem. The Turks, who certainly acted no better towards the Christians than that enemy of God's people, had, of course, to be prepared for the consequences. It must be borne in mind, however, that, from the moment this first stratagem had its effect, until the last moment of his life, the innumerable conflicts in which Scanderbeg was engaged, showed him to be a warrior of the purest type, equal in every respect to the Cid, to Bayard, or to Godfrey de Buillon; and superior by far to every non-Catholic hero of whom we have any knowledge.

**Endnote 6****from Chapter IX****About Father Mariano**

Father Mariano of Genazzano was one of the remarkable men of the age in which he lived. He was born in Genazzano in the year 1450. In 1467, the very year of the miraculous Apparition, he was received into the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, and subsequently attained to its highest dignities. He was for many years stationed in Florence, where he stood deservedly high in the estimation of the celebrated **Lorenzo de'Medici**. When **Savonarola** commenced his attempts at the reformation of the Church and State, Mariano opposed him. Both these preachers had immense power over their hearers. The political partisans of Savonarola accuse Mariano of being too tender and pathetic, and of having tears at will. But they admit that he preached "*gloriosamente*" and attracted immense audiences. Savonarola however prevailed for a time. Lorenzo de'Medici died, his son Pietro had to fly.

Father Mariano departed with his patron. He then obtained high favour with (**Pope**) Alexander VI, who used him on several diplomatic missions connected with his family and the state. On one of these missions, he was attacked by robbers and owed his life to the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Whom he invoked in his distress. A picture of this incident, long graced the stairway of the old convent of Genazzano. On his return, the Pope permitted him to retire to his native city, then in the zenith of its fame, in consequence of the miraculous translation of the sacred Image from Scutari. It is certain that Father Mariano employed himself during his stay at the convent in looking after the interests of the Sanctuary. He obtained from Alexander VI, the rare privilege which the altar of the holy Chapel has since enjoyed. On his being subsequently sent, by the Pontiff, on a mission to the King of Naples, he incurred the displeasure of the former. He had every reason at the time to fear for the most valuable records of the Sanctuary. War was general everywhere in the Pontifical States, and Genazzano was in the very centre of the disturbed districts. He therefore ordered Father **Felix da Prato**, to bring a large quantity of writings and valuable effects to Naples. Amongst these, most probably, were the important documents relating to the coming of the Madonna, which are now not to be found. They would naturally form the first object of his solicitude. As it was, the ship containing them foundered at Pozzuoli, just at the entrance of the bay of Naples. All were lost. Father Mariano died at the latter city shortly after, at the early age of 48.

**Endnote 7****from Chapter IX****What Senni says regarding Petruccia**

Senni says regarding Petruccia. “While therefore, as we have said, Genazzano became embellished with beautiful fabrics and new churches, the ancient temple and altar of Most Holy Mary of Good Counsel, where first in Genazzano, a place at one time so abominable (**at the time of the Roman Empire**), the name of God commenced to be invoked, was allowed to remain humble and neglected. To revive therefore the faith of the people, an Augustinian tertiary, advanced in age, named Petruccia of Jenco, of a family belonging to Genazzano, was inspired to undertake, not only the reconstruction, but also the enlargement of that church. She, though of little fortune, sold all she had and gave a commencement to the pious work. (Coriolano. defens. part. II.) And for this being reproved by her own and by others who entertained an affection for her, as having deprived herself of her all in the extreme needs of her decrepit state, and alienated the love of her relatives, to undertake an impossibility; she replied that the work was not hers but of heaven, and that she expected the completion of it from Mary. This her candour, instead of bringing peace to her, rather increased her affliction. There were then (**at that time**) some examples of churches built by means of revelations: but the abuse of these examples caused the princes of the Church to be more cautious, and to make a law not to pay any attention to the revelations of any person whomsoever in similar circumstances. **Nam quae per somnia, et inanes revelationes quorumlibet hominum ubicumque constituuntur Altaria omnino reprobentur (De Censur. Dist. I, 26. C. Placuit)**. Not only therefore by human considerations, but even by Canon Law, the undertaking of Petruccia was deprived of every subsidy and assistance.”

It must be remembered that Senni wrote in 1838. Since that time many documents of value have been found, which must have escaped the notice of that author. Writing regarding them, Buonanno says. “*For certain, these new documents prove to us the existence of a Petruccia still living in the year 1461, the epoch to which the documents reach. And these represent her as firstly, wife, and then widow of **John Antony di Polani**, born at Nocera and domiciled in Genazzano. They represent her to us as a woman very good and pious, a fact which is manifested above all by the goodness of her husband to her. And in fact the latter, having taken up his residence in Genazzano was married while yet young to the said Petruccia, whose family we are ignorant of (**do not know***

*anything about*). Being without children, both were more free to give themselves to a life of piety. As the procurator for a long time of the church and of the convent, he studied (**he was very earnest**) always to promote their interests by every possible means, to provide sacred vestments and furniture, and finally to care in his residence the more precious objects. Nor was this enough. Amongst the many legacies in favour of the church and of the confraternities of Genazzano, in his Will, dated 2nd November 1426 he left sixty florins for a bell for the church of St. Mary of Good Counsel. By this Will, he constituted his wife Petruccia universal heiress of all his goods, movable and immovable, present and future. It seems that he passed to a better life in 1436.”

In support of this statement as to the position of John of Nocera, Senni writes in a note page 64. "In due (**two**) Membrane antiche segnate A.1 et A.9. contenenti gl'Inventari delle cose del Convento e della Chiesa scritti in diversi tempi e da diverse mani, si legge qualche volta questa o altra somigliante postilla: Et omnia ista (paramenta) posita sunt in manibus Johannis de Nocera procuratoris saecularis Conventus et Ecclesiae. Nella Membrana A.9. poi trovasi scritto da quarta mano: Item unum palium de diversis coloribus, factum de seta cum rosis et figuris in campo rublo et azurino, quod donavit Johannes de Nocera procurator Ecclesiae pro sua Cappella Sancti Blasii MCCCCXXXIII die XXI mensis novembris in manibus provincialis Fratris Martini de Roma. Item praedictus Joannes de Nocera dedit pro praedicta Cappella cum dicto palio unam Thobaleam cum listis de serico etc. Nella Membrana A.1. fol. 2. pag. 1. leggasi: Item una Vineam quam donavit Joannes de Nocera pro dote suae Cappellae Sancti Blasii, in contrata barano juxta rem Cole arrigi etc.etc."

Of the legacy, he says in another note. "Questo legato fu certamente eseguito; e con molta probabilità questa antica campana è quella, che ancora esiste nel Campanile della Chiesa. In essa si legge con lettere del tempo non molto guaste: Ave Maria Gra Plea Dus Tecm Benedicta Tu in Mulieribus - Benedict Fructus Ventris Tui - Sca Maria Ora Po Nobis" (**these latter words are a sort of shorthand**).

As to the prohibition of Canon Law, which Senni states to have been a reason why the church was not completed by the people when Petruccia failed, Buonanno says -

"It is not to be supposed that the Ecclesiastical authority ever intervened, *as some have been of opinion*, to cause the works commenced by Petruccia to be suspended; because, it is to be believed, that the religious would not permit her to put a hand to the building without first informing that authority. For the rest, Coriolanus, a co-eval (**lived at the same time**) historian, assigns as the sole reason the want of means. Nor is it outside the purpose to suppose that the religious as well as Petruccia

had from the beginning hoped in the assistance of the people, in as much as the church was truly one of common interest. But God permitted that no one should make an effort to aid them, precisely because he wished to employ extraordinary means in this, His (**God's**) work.”

Senni's opinion springs probably from his desire to find some excuse for the extraordinary want of zeal and generosity on the part of his fellow townspeople and their wealthy princes. But, whatever may be his motive, his ideas have been largely (**widely**) disseminated. Both Reason and valuable documentary evidence, however, are on the side of the statements of Buonanno.

**Endnote 8****from Chapter IX****Pope Sixtus IV and Cardinal D'Estouteville**

The Church of St. Augustine in its beautiful simple façade, still contains the evidences of the gift of Cardinal D'Estouteville, the then ambassador of France to the Holy See, and the fast (**faithful**) friend of the reigning Pontiff Sixtus IV. An inscription runs along its entire front recording the fact. The stone for its formation was taken from the Colosseum, and its architect was the celebrated Florentine, Baccio Pinatelli. An old church dedicated to St. Triphon M., whose festival is still kept in the new edifice, existed previously on the site, but so complete was the alteration made by the Cardinal that he may in truth be looked upon as its founder. The church of Santa Maria del Popolo was built also at a very early date, on the spot where the ashes of Nero were supposed to have been discovered and scattered to the winds. An inscription, still to be found on the floor of the choir, states that the reason for the first church being there built was to protect the people from ghosts that haunted the spot. It was rebuilt by the people of Rome in 1227, and therefore called St. Mary of the People. Pope Sixtus IV employed the same architect as did Cardinal D'Estouteville to do the same for this ancient and celebrated church as his friend did for that of St. Augustine.

Both churches were placed under the care of the Fathers of the Augustinian Order. The reason why these churches were selected for the generous care of the donors, in preference to so many other and much more remarkable Roman churches then needing attention, was, as Crusenio states, their desire to serve an Order whom the Mother of God so visibly honoured at that precise time by sending to its care Her sacred Image, in so miraculous a manner, from Scutari. The church of St. Augustine was completed in 1783, and must, of course, have been in process of erection some time previously. Therefore, both the Pope and the Cardinal must have been thoroughly convinced of the truth of all that was stated regarding both the miraculous apparition, and the not less miraculous translation.

The words of Nicholas Crusenius in his *Monastico Agostiniano*, Monachii 1623, p. III, c. 29. are “*Hoc miraculo commoti Sixtus IV et Cardinalis Guilelmus d'Estouteville Gallus, certatim Ordini Eremitarum Sancti Augustini addicti, duas in Urbe Roma Ecclesias eidem Ordini erigendas deliberant eisque liberalem manum apponunt: unam gloriosae Virgini Mariae de Populo, quam suis expensis Sixtus Pontifex, et alteram*

*Divo Augustino, quam Cardinalis affabre longe maioribus sumptibus creavit, ad invidiam et aemulationem sanctam.”*



**Endnote 9****from Chapter XII****Position of The Sacred Image**

Although the Office of the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel states distinctly that the sacred Image appeared on the wall of the church of the Augustinians - *mirabiliter apparuisse in pariete*, yet a constant tradition mentioned by many writers exists, to the effect that it stood at first near, and in no manner touching the wall. There is nothing contradictory in these statements; for it could well have occurred that the holy Image did not rest at once upon the wall, though it afterwards may have touched it above or below.

The archivists **Cajetan and Calistus Marini**, already mentioned, who took such pains to examine every circumstance connected with the Translation and the Apparition, have not noticed (**remarked upon**) the matter, nor has it been alluded to by the advocate who placed the arguments in favour of the one and the other (**both**) before the Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1789. It is, however, perfectly certain -

- 1°. that the Image has never been removed from the position it so miraculously selected; and
- 2°. that many who have had to examine it, through the course of ages, have stated that they believed it to rest isolated without any support whatever.

**Buonanno**, after recounting many of the wonders connected with the sacred Image, says (chap. I, page 43 of his book "*Della immagine di Maria Santissima del Buon Consiglio che si venera in Genazzano, memorie storiche per Raffaele Buonanno, prete dell' Oratorio napoletano.*" Napoli 1880.) « and all these marvels are summed up in fine, in the continued wonder that the Image is found today in the same place and in the same manner in which it was left by the cloud on the day of its Apparition in the presence of an entire people, who there for the first time had the good fortune to see it. It took up its position not very far above the ground, at about a finger's distance from the new and rough wall of the chapel of St. Biagio, and there remained suspended without any support whatever. »

Upon this, he has the following note -

« That the holy Image is now found in that same position in which it first appeared is a historically proved fact, as will be seen, and one of such evidence (**certainty**) that it falls under the notice of whosoever visits

the Sanctuary. For every one must see clearly that the Image is not found in the centre of the wall which looks towards the small nave of the church; and therefore, the chapel constructed afterwards, could not be formed in a symmetrical and regular manner. Although, at present (**c. 1880**), it is not visible to all, nor is it easy to be able to see that the Image does not rest upon the wall, because of the ornaments which cover it around in a most beautiful manner, nevertheless this is today an undeniable fact. **First**, because a constant tradition affirms it. **Second**, because we ourselves have been assured by persons worthy of all confidence who, being obliged upon the occasion of the centenary of 1867 to clean the Image, that they perceived that it yielded under the slightest pressure of their hands, as a thing isolated and detached from the wall. **Third**, this fact is further affirmed by seven most reliable witnesses, in a deposition dated June 11th 1747, printed and published. **Finally**, we find a splendid attestation of it in the following letter, hitherto unpublished, from Father **Fulgentius Ricitelli**, Prior of the Convent of Genazzano, and written to the Most Revd. Father **Dominic Ricitelli**, General of the Order, to give an account of the solemn incoronation (**crowning**) of the holy Image. (Extract from the 4th register of the Archives of the whole Order, page 48.).

#### **Most Revd. Father.**

The Chapter of St. Peters has sent a Canon with two crowns of gold, one for the Most Holy Madonna, and the other for the Child. Tuesday the 17th inst., with the assistance of Signor, the most Excellent Constable, (many other Canons having come along with him) and the whole people, the said Canon, having removed the glass, ornamented all round with silver, which covers the Image, he took off the crowns which the aforesaid Images held, at the same time manifesting no ordinary astonishment (**he was very astonished**), because he saw that the Images were simply formed on a thin plaster, which only at the extremity above the head, touched the wall. The remainder stood without support, a sign of which was that when the aforesaid Canon touched it on the face and on all the rest, the plaster bent and yielded as if it were a piece of cloth without support of any kind. This fact caused in him, and in all the by-standers no ordinary wonder, considering that naturally the plaster alone without support could not maintain itself; whence they firmly concluded that it was miraculously sustained. In order to place the above mentioned crowns of gold, it was necessary to use strings, and to attach these to nails which were placed in the wall above the Image, it not being possible to fasten them to the picture itself, that being simply a thin crust of plaster without any support whatever. I am

**The most humble and devoted servant  
Of your most Revd. Paternity  
B. FULGENZO RICITELLI Agno.  
Genazzano, 22 Nov. 1682.**

So far Buonanno. But it must be remarked that the premises from which he draws what seems to him a necessary conclusion, will, on examination, scarcely warrant that conclusion.

Luigi Tosi and these who deposed with him do not say that the picture is completely isolated. They state that, behind it, - *al dietro* - it has no support whatever. Like the preservation of the colours it seemed to them, as indeed it does to every one else, to be a miracle how such a fragile substance could stay upright so long, without crumbling to atoms. They say this and no more. Again, a thin crust of plaster resting on its edge would yield almost as freely on being dusted or touched, while resting on the wall underneath, as if it were isolated and in mid air.

It is also certain that it would be equally difficult to fix crowns of gold upon it. That it touches the wall somewhere, appears to be most conformable to the language of the Church - *in pariete*. This does not exclude the fact that, at first, the picture, for a time more or less indefinite, stood in air. It then probably touched the verge of the wall, where it remained in an upright posture, while the incomplete structure was carried on at a distance behind it. The present writer, who obtained the very rare privilege of examining it, found that, though he could not see any support whatever from the wall at the back, the fresco seemed to him to touch either a projection of the wall or the cornice in front, at its lower extremity. It is easy to conceive that at other times - at seasons of great necessity or devotion, for instance - the Image may have been entirely elevated in the air. This would be in no sense more remarkable than the wonderful changes in colour, of which there can be now, no doubt whatever; and certainly not more wonderful than its passage through the air from Scutari to Genazzano.

**Endnote 10****The Dominican Irish College of San Clemente - from Chapter XXVII**

(Note added by Eugene Shannon - 2017 - This Endnote not Checked)

**De iurisdictione Adm. Rev. Patris Provincialis Hiberniae**

ex "Hibernia Dominicana" et "Reg. Rmi Magistri Ordinis"

Anno 1667 quando Provincia Hiberniae diris persecutionibus afflicta, ut nec domi nec foris locum haberet, commiseratione motus Rmus Magister Ordinis De Marinis, dedit literas patentes P. Ioanni O'Connor, Procuratori Generali Provinciae Hiberniae in quibus omnes Provinciales Ordinis hortatus fuit ut sponte ac liberaliter unum vel plures conventus in suis provinciis cederent pro refugio Fratrum Hibernorum. Tales conventus hoc modo resignatos ex tunc pro semper applicavit et incorporavit Provinciae Hiberniae, atque totum hoc fecit auctoritate apostolica speciali qua in eo declaravit se fungi (Vide Bullar. Tom. V, pag. 227): -

« Volumus et declaramus quod omnia et singula huiusmodi collegia ubicunque Dei ope Fidelium munificentia tuaque e Successorum industria excitabuntur, ipso facto sint et permaneant *vera membra solius provinciae Hiberniae* ita quod *nulli alteri ordinis superiori subsint praeterquam suo Provinciali Hiberniae et Magistro Ordinis* ».

P. Ioannes O'Connor institutus fuit Vicarius Provincialis Hiberniae cum amplissimis facultatibus subditus tamen Provinciali:-

« Porro ut omnibus his quae sperantur novellis coenobium plantationibus de optima et stabili forma regiminis prospiciatur ex nunc horum serie te, tuosque successores in hoc tuo Procuratoris Generalis officio, omnibus huiusmodi coenobiis, collegiis ac domibus praeficimus cum titulo *Vicarii Provincialis Hiberniae pro tempore* cumque omnibus in spiritualibus et temporalibus etc. etc. » « Praeterea si contingat supradicta collegia, coenobia, monasteria vel aliquod eorum ab ipso Provinciali personaliter visitari; ipso praesente quiescit ibidem tua tuorumque successorum auctoritas. »

Hae literae confirmatae fuerunt de verbo ad verbum apostolicis literis Clementis IX. « Creditae nobis » et « Nuper emanarunt » et etiam Clementis X. « Exponi Nobis » (Vide Bullar. Tom. VI, pag. 227, 230, 309).

Quo factum est ut Rmus Magister Ordinis P. Ioannes Thomas de Roccaberti in hoc Provincialibus universis suo praeire volens exemplo statuerit Coenobium S. Syxti quod vigore Bullae Clementis VIII. (Bull. Tom. V, pag. 599) immediatae iurisdictioni Magistri Ordinis subdebatur et annexum conventum S. Clementis dare et incorporare Provinciae Hiberniae. Effectu tamen haud secuto ad initium usque Generalatus Rmi

Antonii de Monroy qui prompte et libenter executricem manum apposuit, idem fuisse unanime votum totius Definitorii Capituli Generalis, ut ipse Magister Ordinis refert, inter alia in suis literis patentibus haec habet: -

« Itaque amborum nostrorum Antecessorum providae intentioni inhaerentes et utriusque Romani Pontificis mandata apostolica reverenter, ut par est, exosculantes harum serie ac auctoritate nostri officii, ex nunc Provinciae Hiberniae damus, incorporamus, appropriamus, datumque incorporatum et appropriatum declaramus nostrum hactenus Magister Ordinis subiectum in Alma Urbe conventum S. Syxti una cum sibi annexo conventu S. Clementis, idque iuxta adaequatam dispositionem intentum approbationem praenominatorum Brevium apostolicorum decernentes quodammodo uterque ille conventus sic accenseri debeat proprium verumque membrum Provinciae nostrae Hiberniae ad quam deinceps pertinet et pertinebit cum omnibus suis redditibus. Fundis etc. etc. » « Cum vero nunc praesens in urbe existat R. P. Ioannis O'Connor eiusdem Provinciae Procurator Generalis et tu Ultramarinis Vicarius Provincialis cum facultatibus in utroque brevi supra citato expressis nempe acceptandi ubique locorum, si qua Domus, aut fundatio eidem Provinciae adquiratur. Ideo praesentium tenore illum veluti legitimum dictae Provinciae procuratorem seu repraesentantem immittimus in praefatorum duorum conventuum realem possessionem. »

Sequentibus saeculis nullum invenire possum documentum quo huiusmodi iurisdictio limitatur, solum in contrarium opponi potest quod apparet ex libris Consiliorum Conventi S. Syxti scilicet quod a tempore visitationis conventu Rmi Magistri Ordinis Ripoll die 6. Septembris 1732 (Vide Reg.lit.Mag.Ord.) omnes Priores instituti fuerunt literis patentibus Magistri Ordinis, sed ex hoc nihil concludi potest. In denuntiationibus enim huius visitationis nec verbum quidem invenitur de mutatione regiminis conventus, sed potius oppositum insinuat; inter alia enim haec denunciantur de institutione syndici et Patrum Consilii: -

« Inter alia oportet in memoriam revocari quod syndicus cum vices conventus agat, debeat a conventu institui et nominari praevio consensu PP. a Consilio et non a solo Priore etiam cum consilio Patrum, et terminato biennio officii sui non potest continuare sine nova a conventu institutione, licentia prius habita a superiore *sive Provinciali* sive *Magistro* ordinis ».

« Scire tamen vos volumus quod consilium PP. non habet auctoritatem instituendi PP. a consilio ut a vobis factum est cum nec *Provincialis* illam habeat nisi limitatam et cum certis conditionibus in instituendo reperiendis. »

Ioannes O'Connor alumnus fuit conventus Galviensis S. Theologiae magister praeclarus Haebraice et Graece peritus, Procurator Generalis provinciae Hiberniae ac in ultramontanis partibus

Vicarius. Vir sapientissimus ac in rebus agendis dexterrimus atque in corpus suum severissimus tam oratione ieiunio ac studio, quam etiam visitatione sacrorum locorum in Italia praesertim S. Domus Lauretanae quam profunda devotione crebro adibat, meritis plenus, Romae diem clausit extremum mense Decembris 1678. Eius cadaver translatum fuit ad Ecclesiam S. Syxti ubi lapis sepulchralis: -

R. P. FR. IOANNES O'CONNOR ORD. PRAED.  
HIBERNO  
COENOBII GALVIENSIS ALUMNO  
DOCTORE THEOLOGO  
PROVINCIAE PATRIS PROCURATORIS GENERALIS  
IN ULTROMARINIS REGIONIBUS VICARIO  
COMITIORUM GENERALIUM DEFINITORI  
VIRO INTEGRITATE SAPIENTIA RELIGIONE  
SPECTATISSIMO  
HEIC  
AB ANNO MD.CL.XXVIII MENSE DECEMBRIS  
CONDITO  
FRATRES HIBERNI ORDINIS  
QUOD  
MD.CL.XXVII  
PROVINCIA TAM DIRIS PERSECUTIONIBUS AFFLICTA  
UT  
NEC DOMI NEC FORIS  
LOCUM HABERET UBI FILII CAPUT RECLINARENT  
GEMINA SS. XYSTI ET CLEMENTIS COENOBIA  
FUERIT ADEPTUS  
NE TANTI BENEFICII MEMORIA UNQUAM EXCIDERET  
MD.CCCL.III  
HOCCE GRATI ANIMI MONUMENTUM POSUERE  
QUISQUIS ADES PACEM PRECATUR

**Fr. Joseph Mullooly, Prior**